Please read in conjunction with the information provided in the introductory section above.

FRENCH TEST SPECIFICATION

1 AIMS

The AEA in **French**/German/Irish/Spanish should require students to:

- demonstrate a greater depth of understanding of the spoken and written forms of **French**/German/Irish/Spanish than required at Advanced GCE;
- apply their understanding in critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis; and
- communicate confidently, clearly and effectively in **French**/German/Irish/Spanish through the written word, using accurate, complex and varied language at a higher level than required at Advanced GCE.

2 CONTENT

The AEA in **French**/German/Irish/Spanish should require candidates to:

- listen and respond to a variety of authentic spoken sources;
- read and respond to a variety of written texts from authentic sources;
- understand and study aspects of the contemporary society, cultural background and heritage of one or more French-/German-/Irish-/Spanish-speaking countries or communities, demonstrating a high level of critical awareness;
- use appropriate registers in written communication;
- use written **French**/German/Irish/Spanish to organise facts and ideas, present explanations, opinions and information, analyse, hypothesise, evaluate, argue a case, justify, persuade, rebut, develop arguments and synthesise;
- demonstrate their capacity for critical thinking, to relate different aspects of the subject and to perceive their field of study in a broader context; and
- understand and apply accurately the grammatical system and a range of structures as detailed in the Advanced GCE subject criteria for **French**/German/Irish/Spanish (see Appendix 1).

3 ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE

The AEA in **French**/German/Irish/Spanish will assess candidates' abilities to apply and communicate effectively their knowledge and understanding of French/German/Irish/Spanish using the skills of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis.

4 SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

In response to a written text or texts in **French**/German/Irish/Spanish, which may be literary or non-literary, candidates complete various written linguistic tests (such as comprehension, explanation, rephrasing and transfer of meaning into English) including a thematically linked cloze test. With reference to the same text(s) and to an additional thematically related short audio recording, candidates produce a piece of extended writing in French/German/Irish/Spanish in which they are required to compare and contrast the different points of view represented in the stimulus texts.

Supervision and duration of assessment

External assessment (ie examination under controlled conditions) must normally be, and not exceed, three hours in duration. Individual cassette players with headphones must be available. Candidates may listen to the recording(s) at will.

Mark schemes

Some questions will be objectively marked (eg the cloze test) while others will require detailed mark schemes (eg linguistic tests). The overall weighting of marks should be:

- 40% for knowledge and use of **French**/German/Irish/Spanish (including accuracy, the range of syntax and lexis used, knowledge and application of the grammatical system); and
- 60% for understanding and the application of that understanding, clarity of expression, the coherence and organisation of ideas, critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis.

Descriptive marking grids should be developed to reflect this weighting.

Use of resources

In common with Advanced GCE examinations, the use of dictionaries will not be permitted.
Options within individual modes of assessment
There should be a choice of two different extended writing tasks.

5 PERFORMANCE LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

Candidates who achieve a **Distinction** will demonstrate all or nearly all the qualities outlined below with a consistent performance at this level.
Candidates who achieve a **Merit** will demonstrate most of the qualities outlined below, but performance may be less consistent across the required knowledge, understanding and skills.
Candidates:

- show in-depth understanding of a wide range of complex spoken and written texts in a variety of registers, and a high level of awareness of structure, style and register;
- understand the detail of texts and infer meaning and points of view;
- respond with insight and imagination;
- apply their understanding in effective critical analysis and evaluation;
- communicate information, concepts and opinions clearly with language and expression which are appropriate to the subject and convey effectively their thought and argument;
- use an extensive and varied range of syntax and lexis, including idiom and specialised vocabulary and show fluency and ease in their manipulation of language;
- demonstrate a high level of accuracy;
- present views, arguments and insights with clarity, logic and sophistication;
- demonstrate independent judgement, using appropriate evidence in well-structured, coherent essays in which they synthesise different aspects or points of view.

APPENDIX 1

Candidates will be expected to have an understanding of, and be able to apply accurately, the grammatical system and structures of the modern foreign language. In the examination they will be required to use actively and accurately grammar and structures appropriate to the tasks set, drawn from the following lists. The examples in italics are indicative, not exclusive. For structures marked (R), receptive knowledge only is required.

FRENCH

Nouns: gender
singular and plural forms
Articles: definite, indefinite and partitive
Adjectives: agreement
position
comparative and superlative
demonstrative (*ce, cet, cette, ces*)
indefinite (*chaque, quelque*)
possessive
interrogative (*quel, quelle*)
Adverbs: comparative and superlative
interrogative (*comment, quand*)
Quantifiers/Intensifiers (*très, assez, beaucoup*)

Pronouns: personal
reflexive
relative
disjunctive/emphatic
demonstrative (*celui*)
indefinite (*quelqu'un*)
possessive (*le mien*)
interrogative *(qui, que)*
use of *y, en*
Verbs: regular and irregular forms of verbs, including reflexive verbs
modes of address (*tu, vous*)
impersonal forms

verbs followed by an infinitive (with or without a preposition)
dependent infinitives (*faire réparer*)
perfect infinitive
negative forms
interrogative forms
tenses: present
perfect (including agreement of past participle)
imperfect
future
conditional
future perfect
conditional perfect
pluperfect
past historic (R)
passive voice: all tenses
imperative
present participle
subjunctive mood: present
perfect
imperfect (R)

Indirect speech
Inversion after speech
Inversion after adverbs
Prepositions
Conjunctions
Number, quantity and time (including use of *depuis, venir de*)