The CEFR Grids for Writing, developed by ALTE members

Alliance Française Sample Test Tasks
www.alliancefr.org

Report on analysis of	Certificat de Français Pratique 1 Niveau A2
Target language of this test	French
Target level (CEFR) of this test	A2
Task number/name	writing a letter

General Information about the writing component *

3	Number of tasks in the writing paper	1
4	Integration of skills	Writing (with written prompt)
5	Total test time	30 minutes
6	Target performance level	A2
7	Channel	Handwritten
8	Purpose	General French

Background to the Examination

Certificat d'Etudes de Français Pratique 1 (CEFP1) is a general French qualification which is part of the Alliance Française Main-suite examinations. Set at level A2 of the CEF, CEFP1 recognises the ability to cope with everyday written and spoken communications. It tests the language skills needed to survive in situations of everyday life in a French-speaking environment.

CEFP1 is designed for learners whose French skills are adequate for many practical purposes, including work, study and social situations which require a predictable use of language.

* The numbers in the left hand column of the tables refer to the categories in the ALTE CEFR Writing Grid

Candidature
CEFP1 is taken by 2,000 candidates per year in over 50 countries which represent more than 100 centres. Candidates are aged over 16.

Structure of the Test
CEFP1 tests the skills of Reading and Language Knowledge, Writing, Listening, and Speaking – which Writing skills (Reading, Language Knowledge and Writing) weighted (total score of the Test: 90 marks) at 40 and Oral skills (Listening and Speaking) at 50, Producing skills (Writing and Speaking) weighted at 40 and Understanding skills (Reading and Language knowledge, and Listening) at 50.
CEFP1 is administered in four separate papers. Paper 1 Listening, Paper 2 Reading, Paper 3 Language Knowledge, Paper 4 Writing.
There is a raw score for each skill and two grades: pass or fail. Results are based on candidates' aggregate scores across the four skills.

The Certificat Français de Français Pratique (CEFP1- Writing Paper/Paper 4)
Writing component
The paper has a fixed format, with only one part. Candidates are assessed on their ability to produce written French at word and sentence level. Candidate should be able to give information, report recent events and describe people, objects, places and activities as well as express simple opinions…. They should also be able to use the words they know appropriately and accurately in simple contexts of daily life, and be able to produce variations on simple sentences.

In the task, candidates have to answer in an informal letter (or postcard, e-mail) of about 80 to 100 words, to a message, advert, letter…. The answer must be recognisably linked to the question and the candidates should pay particular attention to any information given in the question. Candidates should take into account the person it is addressed to (relatives or friends).

Specific Information about the example task

Mark distribution
There are 10 marks for Paper 4 Writing. Candidates at this level are expected to show their ability to deal with simple, straightforward information and begin to express themselves in familiar contexts, write short simple letters related to personal information. They have to be able to use a repertoire of basic language which enable them to deal with everyday situations with predictable content. They are able to use basic sentence patterns, use simple structures correctly, but still systematically making basic mistake.

Two global criteria are taken into account when marking the written production: communicative appropriateness (task fulfilment and discursive ability), and linguistic ability (grammatical accuracy and lexical control).
There are a maximum of 10 marks for the Writing component: 5 for the communicative appropriateness and 5 for the linguistic ability.

http://www.alliancefr.org//pdf/Sujet_CEFP1.pdf

Task Rating

The rating scale takes the form of a list of marking criteria provided, which interpretation and level requirement are given apart the marking grid, in the specific examiner handbook.

The exam is marked by agreed examiners under the supervision of Team Leaders. Mark scheme are discussed and standardisation meeting takes place before marking begins. Marking is controlled by 5% double checking. The teacher training adviser checks problem cases.

Effective Level

Pretesting on experimental versions with target students (a range of age, nationality and socio-cultural groups is represented in the pre-test population which roughly corresponds to that of the live candidature), and with experimented teachers (feedback on the existing material is obtained by asking teachers for comments on the difficulty and appropriateness of texts and items in reference to the CEFR descriptors).

Sample task:

> **Randonnée en montagne !**
> **Vacances sportives: marche à pied, observation de la nature…**
> **Stage d'une semaine : 300 euros**
>
> **www. Vacancessportives.fr**

Depuis trois jours, vous participez à ce stage sportif. Vous écrivez une lettre (d'environ 80 mots) à un(e) ami(e) pour lui dire où vous êtes et pourquoi, ce que vous avez fait et ce que vous allez faire les jours suivants. Vous dites vos impressions et vous lui conseillez ou vous lui déconseillez de participer à ce stage.

i) Task input/prompt

9	Rubrics and instructions are in...	French
10	Language level of rubric	Same level of test A2
11	Time for this task	30 minutes
12	Control/guidance	Semi-controlled
13	Content	Specified
14	Discourse mode	Personal specified letter
15	Audience	Friend
16	Type of prompt	Instruction/textual input: advert
17	Topic	Daily life, free time
18	Integration of skills	Reading

ii) Response (description of written response elicited by the prompt(s)/input)

19	Number of words expected	80 to 100
20	Rhetorical function(s)	Description, giving options
21	Register	Informal
22	Domain	Personal
23	Grammar	Only simple grammatical structures
24	Vocabulary	Only frequent vocabulary
25	Cohesion	Extremely limited use of cohesive devices
26	Authenticity: situational	High
27	Authenticity: interactional	High
28	Cognitive processing	Reproduction of known ideas only
29	Content knowledge	Personal, daily life, basic communication needs
30	Task purpose	Referential (telling)

iii) Rating of Task

31	Known criteria	Yes on paper and they can be viewed on the web site of AF: www.alliancefr.org
32	Task rating method	Analytical method
33	Assessment criteria	Grammatical accuracy, cohesion and coherence, lexical control, content, orthography
34	Number of raters	2

iv) Feedback to candidates

35	Quantitative feedback	Raw score and CEFR level
36	Qualitative feedback	None

Example answer

```
Chère Jing                                    Le 8 oct

Comment ça va? Maintenant je suis en montagne. Je
participe à un stage sportif. Je l'ai trouvée sur
www.vacances sportives.fr. Je marchais à pied en
montagne. Je observais la nature. Il y avait beaucoup de
l'arbres. J'ai vu quelque animaux. Le paysage était très
magnifique. Je vais marcher au sommet de la montagne. Je
suis un peu fatigué. Mais je suis content de participer à
ce stage. Je te conseille de participer à ce stage aussi.
Ce sera très bon chose. Je te déconseille de apporter
beaucoup de choses.
Bisou!                                             Xu
```

Commentary

This is a good answer to the question. The candidate has used correct letter format with appropriate opening and close and early reference to the reason for writing. All points have been covered and it is written in an appropriate style.

The range of language is appropriate to the needs of the task. There are some errors of verbs and structure, for example: "*je marchais*", "*je observais*" which are minimal linguistic errors for this level. Concerning vocabulary range, the candidate displays only few lexical elements, different of those given in the instructions.

Score allocated

5/5 for communicative performance and 3/5 for linguistic ability, this gives a global score of 8/10 for the achievement of the task.

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Alliance Française Sample Test Tasks
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Report on analysis of	Certificat de Français Pratique 2 Niveau B1
Target language of this test	French
Target level (CEFR) of this test	B1
Task number/name	Part 2: writing a short message

General Information about the writing component *

3	Number of tasks in the writing paper	2
4	Integration of skills	Writing (with written prompt)
5	Total test time	40 minutes
6	Target performance level	B1
7	Channel	Handwritten
8	Purpose	General French

Background to the Examination

Certificat d'Etudes de Français Pratique 2 (CEFP2) is a general French qualification which is part of the Alliance Française Main-suite examinations. Set at level B1 of the CEF, CEFP2 recognises the ability to cope with everyday written and spoken communications. It tests the language skills needed to interact in social and work situations in a French-speaking environment.

CEFP2 is designed to learners whose French skills are adequate for many practical purposes, including work, study and social situations which require a predictable use of language

* The numbers in the left hand column of the tables refer to the categories in the ALTE CEFR Writing Grid

Candidature
CEFP2 is taken by about 2,000 candidates per year in over 50 countries which represent more than 100 centres. Candidates are aged over 16.

Structure of the Test
CEFP2 tests the skills of Reading and Language Knowledge, Writing, Listening, and Speaking – which Writing skills (Reading, Language Knowledge and Writing) weighted (total score of the Test: 80 marks) at 40 and Oral skills (Listening and Speaking) at 40, Producing skills (Writing and Speaking) weighted at 40 and Understanding skills (Reading and Language knowledge, and Listening) at 40.
CEFP2 is administered in four separate papers. Paper 1 Listening, Paper 2 Reading, Paper 3 Language Knowledge, Paper 4 Writing.
There is raw score for each skill and two grades: pass or fail. Results are based on candidates' aggregate scores across the four skills.

Certificat de Français Pratique (CEFP2- Writing Paper/Paper4)
Writing component
The paper has a fixed format, with two parts. Candidates are assessed on their ability to produce written French at word and sentence level and whole text level. Candidates should be able to give information, report recent events and describe people, objects, places and activities as well as convey reactions to situations, express hopes, regrets, and congratulate, apologize…. They should also be able to use the words they know appropriately and accurately in simple contexts of daily life, and be able to produce variations on simple sentences.

Part Two
In the task, candidates have to answer in a short message (note or e-mail…) of about 50 words, to a message, advert, letter or situation given by instructions…. The message must be recognisably linked to the question and the candidates should pay particular attention to any information given in the question. Candidates should take into account the person it is addressed to (relatives or friends).

Specific Information about the example task

Mark distribution
There are 15 marks for Paper 4 Writing and only 5 marks for the second task. Candidates at this level are expected to show ambition writing notes conveying simple information of immediate relevance to friends, service people, teacher and others who feature in their everyday life, getting across comprehensibly the points they feel are important. They can take messages communicating enquiries, explaining problems. They have to be able to use enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express themselves with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel and current events, but lexical limitations cause repetition and even difficulty with formulations at times.

Two global criteria are taken into account when marking the written production: communicative achievement (content, language use or speech act) and linguistic ability (grammatical accuracy and lexical control).
There are a maximum of 5 marks for this part of the Writing component: 3 for communicative achievement and 2 for linguistic ability.

Task Rating

The rating scale takes the form of a list of marking criteria provided, which interpretation and level requirement are given apart the marking grid, in the specific examiner handbook.
The exam is marked by agreed examiners under the supervision of Team Leaders. Mark scheme are discussed and standardisation meeting takes place before marking begins. Marking is controlled by 5% double checking. The teacher training adviser checks problem cases.

Effective Level

Pretesting on experimental versions with target students (a range of age, nationality and socio cultural groups is represented in the pre-test population which roughly corresponds to that of the live candidature) and with experimented teachers (feedback on the existing material is obtained by asking teachers for comments on the difficulty and appropriateness of texts and items in reference to the CEFR descriptors).

Sample task:

Rédigez un message court mais clair et précis (environ 50 mots) en relation avec la situation suivante :

```
Exp. : sophie.durandwanadoo.fr
Dest : catherine.martinfree.fr
Date: Jeu 30 oct. 2003   10h38
Objet: conseils pour l'anglais

Catherine,
Je sais que tu as appris l'anglais assez rapidement et
que tu maîtrises bien la langue orale maintenant. Je
connais les bases mais j'ai besoin de parler couramment
pour mon travail. J'aimerais que tu me donnes deux ou
trois conseils en quelques lignes.
Réponds-moi vite !
```

Vous êtes Catherine et vous répondez à Sophie dans un bref e-mail

i) Task input/prompt

9	Rubrics and instructions are in…	French
10	Language level of rubric	B1
11	Time for this task	40 minutes for the two tasks
12	Control/guidance	Semi-controlled
13	Content	Specified
14	Discourse mode	Specific message
15	Audience	Friend
16	Type of input	Instruction/textual input: message
17	Topic	Daily life
18	Integration of skills	Reading

ii) Response (description of written response elicited by the prompt(s)/input)

19	Number of words expected	50
20	Rhetorical function(s)	Description, giving options, expressing feelings
21	Register	Informal
22	Domain	Personal
23	Grammar	Mainly simple grammatical structures
24	Vocabulary	Mainly frequent occuring vocabulary
25	Cohesion	Limited use of cohesive devices
26	Authenticity: situational	High
27	Authenticity: interactional	High
28	Cognitive processing	Reproduction of known ideas only
29	Content knowledge	Personal, daily life, basic communication needs
30	Task purpose	Referential/emotional

iii) Rating of Task

31	Known criteria	Yes on paper and they can be viewed on the web site of AF www.alliancefr.org
32	Task rating method	Analytical method
33	Assessment criteria	Grammatical accuracy, cohesion and coherence, lexical control, content, orthography
34	Number of raters	2

iv) Feedback to candidates

35	Quantitative feedback	Raw score and CEFR level
36	Qualitative feedback	None

Example answer

```
Parle tout le temps et n'a pas peur, parce que c'est la
seule solution.
Ecouter à la radio est très efficace.
Fais attention aux erreur que tu fais régulièrement.
Mais n'oublie pas qu'il faut pas avoir honte et il faut
pas avoir peur
Bon courage !
```

Commentary
This is a good answer to the question: good efficiency for communicative skill.
The message is in complete adequacy with the prompt. The situation is adapted to the target reader and message is written in an appropriate style according to the reader. Concerning grammatical accuracy, candidate has a rather good control. He/she can communicate with accuracy. He/ she can use different forms and tenses to make suggestion.

Score allocated
3/3 for communicative performance and 1/2 for linguistic ability which gives a global score of 4/5 for the achievement of the task.

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Alliance Française Sample Test Tasks
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Report on analysis of	Diplôme de Langue Niveau B2
Target language of this test	French
Target level (CEFR) of this test	B2
Task number/name	Part 2 of Paper 4

General Information about the writing component *

3	Number of tasks in the writing paper	2
4	Integration of skills	Writing (with written prompt)
5	Total test time	75 minutes
6	Target performance level	B2
7	Channel	Handwritten
8	Purpose	General French

Background to the Examination

Diplôme de Langue (DL) is a general French qualification which is part of the Alliance Française Main-suite examinations. Set at level B2 of the CEF, DL recognises a good competence in all the language skills: understand extended speech, read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems, interact with a good degree of fluency and spontaneity, present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects, explain a viewpoint, write essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view.

* The numbers in the left hand column of the tables refer to the categories in the ALTE CEFR Writing Grid

DL is designed for learners whose French skills are adequate for many practical purposes, including work, study and social situations which require a predictable use of language. DL is recognised abroad as proof of language ability and is part of the qualification required in order to teach French (for example in Portugal), to do clerical work (for example in Switzerland)....

Candidature
DL is taken by about 4,000 candidates per year in over 50 countries which represent more than 100 centres. Candidates are aged over 16.

Structure of the Test
DL tests the skills of Reading and Language Knowledge, Writing, Listening, and Speaking – which Writing skills (Reading, Language Knowledge and Writing) weighted (total score of the Test: 150 marks) at 90 and Oral skills (Listening and Speaking) at 60, Producing skills (Writing and Speaking) weighted at 75 and Understanding skills (Reading and Language knowledge, and Listening) at 75.
DL is administered in four separate papers. Paper 1 Listening, Paper 2 Reading, Paper 3 Language Knowledge, Paper 4 Writing.
There is raw score for each skill and three pass grades: pass with very good merit, pass with good merit, pass, and fail. Results are based on candidates' aggregate scores across the four skills.

Diplôme de Langue (DL- Writing Paper/Paper 4)
Writing component
The paper has a fixed format, with two parts. Candidates are assessed on their ability to produce written French at whole text level. Candidates should be able to give information, report recent events and describe people, objects, places and activities as well as convey reactions to situations, express hopes, regrets, express viewpoints, develop arguments and justify.... They should also be able to use some complex sentence forms to do so. They can express themselves clearly and without sign of having to restrict what they want to say.

Part Two

In the task, candidates have to write a composition of about 150 words: article or answer to a discussion forum on website..., explaining their point of view with justification and argumentation.
The answer must be recognisably linked to the question and the candidates should pay particular attention to any information given in the question. Candidates should take into account the person it is addressed to.

Specific Information about the example task

Mark distribution
There are 30 marks for Paper 4 Writing and 20 marks for the second task. Candidates at this level are expected to show ambition. They have to be able to develop arguments with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail. They can plan what is to be said and the means to say it, use circumlocution and paraphrase to cover gaps in vocabulary and structure. They could use a range of

tenses, appropriate expressions and different vocabulary.

Three main criteria are taken into account when marking the written production: text organisation (coherence and cohesion: 4 marks), communicative appropriateness (content, development of ideas: 6marks) and accuracy (syntax, morphology, orthography and lexical control: 10 marks)
http://www.alliancefr.org//pdf/Sujet_DL.pdf

Task Rating
The rating scale takes the form of a list of marking criteria provided, which interpretation and level requirement are given apart the marking grid, in the specific examiner handbook.
The exam is marked by agreed examiners under the supervision of Team Leaders. Mark scheme are discussed and standardisation meeting takes place before marking begins. Marking is controlled by 5% double checking. The teacher training adviser checks problem cases.

Effective Level
Pretesting on experimental versions with target students (a range of age, nationality and socio-cultural groups is represented in the pre-test population which roughly corresponds to that of the live candidature) and with experimented teachers (feedback on the existing material is obtained by asking teachers for comments on the difficulty and appropriateness of texts and items in reference to the CEFR descriptors).

Sample task:

> **Participez à notre enquête !**
> **En France, certains réclament la création d'un « salaire étudiant ».**
> **Un tel système existe-t-il dans votre pays ?**
> **_L'étudiant, octobre 2004_**
>
> **Vous avez décidé d'envoyer votre témoignage sous forme d'un article au magazine L'Etudiant. Dites quel est votre avis sur cette question, argumentez et justifiez votre point de vue par des exemples.**
> **Votre article doit comporter environ 150 mots.**

i) Task input/prompt

9	Rubrics and instructions are in…	French
10	Language level of rubric	B2
11	Time for this task	45 minutes
12	Control/guidance	Semi-controlled
13	Content	Specified
14	Discourse mode	Article
15	Audience	General public
16	Type of input	Instruction/textual input: advert
17	Topic	Contemporary problems of daily life
18	Integration of skills	Reading

ii) Response (description of written response elicited by the prompt(s)/input)

19	Number of words expected	150
20	Rhetorical function(s)	Description, giving opinion, expressing feelings, argumentation, comparison and contrast, exemplification….
21	Register	Formal
22	Domain	Public
23	Grammar	Limited range of complex structures
24	Vocabulary	Extended vocabulary
25	Cohesion	Competent use of cohesive devices
26	Authenticity: situational	Medium
27	Authenticity: interactional	Medium
28	Cognitive processing	Knowledge transformation
29	Content knowledge	Common, general, non specialised
30	Task purpose	Referential/conative

iii) Rating of Task

31	Known criteria	Yes on paper and they can be viewed on the web site of AF www.alliancefr.org
32	Task rating method	Analytical method
33	Assessment criteria	All categories
34	Number of raters	2

iv) Feedback to candidates

35	Quantitative feedback	Raw score and CEFR level
36	Qualitative feedback	None

Example answer

Je pense qu'un salaire peut beaucoup aider les étudiants à se consacrer à leurs études. Mais est-ce que ce projet est viable? D'où débloquer ces fonds?

En Uruguay, cette question ne se pose pas, car on n'a pas les moyens de soutenir financièrement ce projet. Le gouvernement ne pourra jamais assumer les frais d'un tel projet. En plus, il faudra d'abord résoudre des problèmes plus urgents par rapport à l'éducation. De sorte que nous sommes loin d'entamer une telle démarche.

En France, le cas est différent. Je crois qu'un salaire étudiant est une très bonne idée.
Mais on peut développer aussi des idées déjà en cours.
Par exemple, accentuer des avantages socio-économiques come la sécurité sociale; reductions de loyer, de charges des impôts; plus des réductions sur les transports, entre autres.

131mots

Commentary
This candidate shows a rather good communicative ability for the level but the adequacy to the task is not well evaluated because text isn't well opened and closed (which could be specially penalising for the publication of an article in the real life). The script is only 131 words and this confirms that elements are missing: for example, candidate didn't develop arguments with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail.
Candidate has a good range of vocabulary, lexical accuracy and grammatical control presents high degree. He/she uses cohesive devices to link his utterances into clear, coherent discourse.

Score allocated
3/4 for discourse competence, 4/6 for communicative performance and 9/10 for linguistic ability which gives a global score of 16/20 for the global achievement of the task.