

Judith Rowland-Jones (Head of Curriculum: Languages, AQA): GCSE MFL Assessment – Looking Back at 2018 and Forward to 2019 Judith started her keynote by congratulating MFL teachers for preparing students well for the 2018 assessments saying it was clear that there was less prevalence of rote learning and much more spontaneity. However, she was clear that there are questions to consider:

Advice for teachers:

1. Teachers must carefully consider all tiering decisions especially the grade 4/5 students. There was a reminder that all higher tier papers are for higher attainers where two thirds of the paper will feature grade 6 and above level questions.
2. Learn from where students did well therefore request scripts to better support 2019 and 2020 cohorts.
3. Students need to have a good knowledge of KS3 vocabulary; following analysis this was not always the case. This will assist across all of the papers.
4. Students still find the listening paper very challenging therefore the question was asked how has teaching and learning in MFL adapted in response to the new exams? The point being made that it needs to.
5. Questions are still being unanswered missing key marks; teachers must encourage students to attempt all questions.
6. Teach students how to deal with distractors. This is critical.

Advice for students:

Listening

1. It is important to maximise use of the 5-minute reading time where it is a feature.
2. In two-part questions, answer both parts, check that you have and don't leave elements out.
3. Listen more than once. Remember that there are elements where students will need to listen carefully, and one listen will not elicit the correct answer as there may be nuance, red herrings and negatives and timeframes to contend with.
4. Look carefully at the wording of questions before answering.
5. Familiarise yourself with the marks to be awarded and how to maximise on marks.

Speaking

1. Create a bank of questions and work through these with students giving them the opportunity to be spontaneous.
2. Encourage students to ask questions throughout, not just at the end.
3. Examiners stop marking after 5 minutes so anything after this will not be marked.
4. Any repetition of questions must be in the target language.
5. Pronunciation is important.

Reading

1. Two thirds of the higher tier papers are grade 6 and above so this is extremely challenging for level 4/5 students. Be mindful of this.
2. Translation tasks are fully accessible for all grades so should be attempted. Support students in developing confidence in this.
3. Read exam rubric carefully to ensure students answer in the correct language.

4. If one detail is requested, give only one. If two then two. Do not waste time giving more details than you have to.
5. Time management of this paper was poor so teach students how to complete this paper to maximise on time and marks.
6. In translation tasks precision is important. Small errors matter e.g. le chien translated as a dog is incorrect and constitutes a small error. Also, students must reread the translation carefully to ensure it makes sense.

Writing

1. Students did well in this paper.
2. All bullet points have to be covered but *not equally*.
3. Variety of language is important *not* just complex language.
4. Use the exam pro question bank to help guide students through exam questions.
5. Teachit Languages speaking booklets are excellent materials to support written and spoken work.
6. Use the teacher support materials to increase teacher understanding to better assist and prepare students.