

# University Entrance Examination: reading proficiency in French

## Information for candidates

### University Entrance Examination: French language test

The Language Centre arranges some of the tests which are part of the University Entrance Examination, including the French test. The tests are closely linked to how the language will be used in the course that you are planning to follow. This means that, for French, only your reading proficiency is tested, concentrating on the need to be able to read the academic literature in this language during the course.

### Content and level of the test

The test consists of a discussion with an examiner, in which you will be asked about two French texts which you will have just read. The content of the texts would be comprehended by a wide, yet highly educated, public - for example, articles from supplements of quality newspapers. You will be given two texts to read; one will be more or less in the field in which you intend to study, the other will be a popular academic text, for example, in the area of psychology or sociology.

The required level in order to pass the test is set at **reading proficiency B2** (Common European Framework), in general terms: advanced level.

#### **Overall reading comprehension, level B2:**

..can read with a large degree of independence adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low-frequency idioms.

The sub-level is:

#### **Reading for information and argument, level B2 lower:**

..can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular stances or viewpoints.

As the test is totally focused upon the language skills necessary for the course you wish to undertake, there is no direct intrinsic link to the VWO (pre-university education) exams.

### Structure of the test

The main part of the French reading proficiency test is a 30-minute talk about the two articles you will have just read. Each text is about 800 words long. You are allowed 45 minutes to read the texts and to prepare for the talk. You may use a dictionary. You will not be given any questions about the text at this stage. You are allowed to take notes. You may consult your notes, as well as the texts, during the talk. To improve the fluency and progression of the talk we would advise you to use these options selectively. As well as being asked about the general content of the texts, you will also be asked about particular paragraphs and sentences. It is important that you are able to describe the texts in your own words. Attention will also be paid to your ability to distinguish between the major and sub-themes of the articles. The medium of communication will essentially be the Dutch language. If you wish, the talk can also take place in English or French. You will not be judged on your speaking skills, or fluency, during the test.

The talk will be recorded and your results will be marked on a score sheet.

## **Result**

You will be informed by telephone of your results a few days after the test. The reasons for a pass or a fail will be explained to you. A written confirmation will follow.

## **Resit**

You are allowed to resit the test once. The examiner can best advise you on the length of time you should prepare before resitting. He or she can also give you advice about revision.

## **Inspections and appeals**

If you wish to appeal against your result, or wish to review the test in order to prepare for a resit, you may listen to the test and look at the score sheet under the supervision of the examiner or another member of the Language Centre staff. If you disagree with the result, you may begin an appeal process. The Language Centre examination regulations will be applied; you can ask for these at the Language Centre or download them from the website.

## **Preparation and study**

The Language Centre does not organise a special course to prepare for these tests. The Language Centre organises practical language courses in French a number of times per year.

An example of the exam can be downloaded from the Language Centre website. It consists of two texts with questions (and answers) similar to what you could expect in the exam. If you wish to gain a general view of your reading proficiency beforehand, you can do a Dialang computer test at the Language Centre.

## **Registration, enrolment and further information**

The Language Centre secretariat takes care of enrolments for courses and will make an appointment for you with an examiner.

You can also request an appointment with a tutor/examiner for more information from the secretariat.

The exams are held in four or five two week periods, in November, February, April and June. They can occasionally be taken, by appointment, at other times.