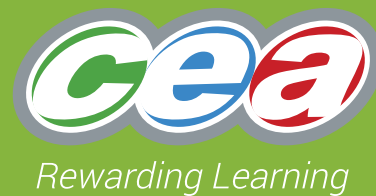


GCE



Chief Examiner's Report German

Summer Series 2017



Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Education (GCE) in German for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at www.ccea.org.uk.

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GCE GERMAN

Chief Examiner's Report

Introduction

The change to the new specification has brought a welcome increase in candidature at AS level German. This is due to some new centres having returned to CCEA as well as some schools having larger German A-level groups than in previous years. This is a promising development and it is hoped that the new specification will continue to motivate and enthuse candidates.

In contrast to previous years there were no candidates repeating the AS specification which created a slightly different profile of candidature – particularly in the AS2 paper.

Assessment Unit AS 1 Speaking

As in previous years, teachers and school staff were very welcoming, enthusiastic and helpful everywhere, and arrangements for accommodation were very good with glass panels in the doors/walls and appropriate furniture, creating a professional atmosphere in the rooms and meeting the evermore stringent requirements of child protection.

Centres provided visiting examiners with the necessary paperwork including the pro forma with candidates' 60 words. Where this was not the case, candidates had chosen not to use the pro forma at all.

Presentation

The new specification requires candidates to give a presentation based on an AS level theme related to an aspect of a German-speaking country or community. This change did not present any problems for the candidates.

Most candidates were well prepared and, as in previous years, a well delivered presentation got candidates off to a good start. It is worth reminding candidates that presentations should last 3 minutes. Candidates going over 3 minutes will be required to complete their discussion promptly.

Candidates had chosen to give presentations on a wide range of subjects.

The following topics were particularly interesting:

- Bayerische Ernährung
- Homosexualität in Deutschland
- Deutsch als Fremdsprache
- Tourismus in deutschsprachigen Ländern
- Oktoberfest
- Schokolade in der Schweiz
- Die Bundesliga
- RB Leipzig
- FC Bayern
- BVB Dortmund
- Sollen deutschsprachige Länder Tourismus als Vorteil sehen?
- Feldhockey in Deutschland

- Reitsport in Deutschland
- Johann Sebastian Bach
- Jazz in Deutschland
- Beethoven
- Leni Riefenstahl
- Robert Enke
- Ingrid Klimke- mehr als eine Olympionikin
- Hans Zimmer
- Rammstein
- Max Beckmann
- Ulrich Mühe
- Angela Merkel
- Rock am Ring
- Weihnachtsmärkte in Deutschland
- Neuschwanstein
- Liechtenstein
- Nordrhein Westfalen
- Berlin
- München
- Hamburg

It is important that presentations demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the chosen topic, but a good presentation requires more than simply downloading and learning material from the Internet. The best presentations were those that reflected the candidate's personal interest and were delivered with conviction and enthusiasm. Candidates also need to make sure that their presentation has a clear conclusion rather than petering out or ending abruptly.

Teachers or assistants should check their candidates' presentations for mistakes. It is also advisable to invest time and effort in pronunciation, intonation and, especially, the delivery of the presentation. Some candidates speak too fast which makes it difficult for the examiner to understand what is said.

Presentations on the same topic in one centre should be discouraged, as there is a risk that one of them may be deemed not as good as the other one and therefore might not get as many marks as it may deserve.

Conversation

As in the old legacy specification, the general conversation in this New Revised specification still focuses on whether candidates respond readily and fluently, how well they develop their answers and how grammatically correct they speak in German.

It is worth pointing out that the topics of school, university and part time jobs have now moved to A2, and will no longer be a focus of the AS conversation unless a candidate wishes to discuss these matters as part of the general conversation.

It is pleasing that so many candidates were able to engage in a genuinely interesting exchange and these were the candidates who achieved the highest marks. A few candidates put in an outstanding performance and made very, very few mistakes. Some did, however, still prefer to depend on pre-learned answers. Candidates should be encouraged to strike a balance between thorough preparation and dependence on rehearsed answers. To underpin the natural flow of conversation, candidates should be encouraged to learn a few idiomatic phrases, such as “das ist eine schwierige Frage” or “es kommt darauf an”.

As expected, Linguistic accuracy was less convincing in this part of the examination. Whilst some candidates were able to impress with correct conditional and subjunctive forms as well as sophisticated idiomatic phrases, others showed weaknesses in basic grammar and vocabulary. Mistakes occurred in the use of the perfect tense, modal verbs, word order, gender, or in the incorrect use of vocabulary: e.g. “Zeit passieren” or “Geld spenden” are incorrect uses for “Zeit verbringen” or “Geld ausgeben”; “nächstes Jahr möchte ich auf die Uni gehen”.

It is still surprising how few candidates can give a correct answer to: *Wie geht’s?*

Once again and against the backdrop of small numbers of German AS candidates, it was a great pleasure to meet such enthusiastic and dedicated students and teachers in schools all over Northern Ireland.

Assessment Unit AS 2 Listening Reading and Use of Language

Section A: Listening

Candidates generally performed very well on this paper.

Some candidates scored (0) in Question 2 as they answered in German and could therefore not be given any marks.

In Question 1 fewer candidates offered the response 'Gottesdienst wird geleitet' in Part (a) and 'gehen woanders hin' in Part (b). Parts (c) and (d) were well answered although few candidates were able to spell 'Gerechtigkeit' and 'Frieden' and 'Tod' correctly. Examiners took a practical approach to these and accepted slight errors as long as the meaning was clear.

Question 2 has to be answered in English, and it is important that candidates are precise. In Part (a) few candidates used 'got out notebook and pencil' and others wrote that Cornelia Funke 'brings a roll and a drink' suggesting that she might bring it from home. In Part (b) candidates understood that Frau Funke found the laptop inconvenient but not many got the mark for charging the laptop. While Parts (c), (d), (e) and (h) posed few problems, not all mentioned best ideas in Parts (f) and (g) was not so well answered.

Section B: Reading

The text for reading comprehension proved to be very accessible for the majority of candidates and most coped very well with the questions. As there are no longer marks available for quality of language when answering in German, candidates were able to copy the information from the text without having to try and manipulate the language. This type of test makes marks very accessible for candidates and many scored high marks here.

Translation

Although candidates may have perceived the passage for translation to be difficult, marking proved that not to be the case. The majority of candidates coped well with translating the article from German into English. Some candidates experienced difficulties with the words/phrases 'zahlreiche', 'immer mehr', 'Brücken', 'sehen sich als Künstler', 'je ... desto' and 'vor allem'. Words like 'dann', 'oft' and 'manchmal' were sometimes omitted.

Section C: Use of Language

This is the section that teachers and candidates probably feared most as students have never not been tested in grammar for a very long time. Their fears were not realised. It seems that teachers and candidates have been practising grammar intensely over the past year and this has clearly paid off. Adjective endings were quite well done.

The second part on pronouns proved challenging and many candidates lost marks here – a lot of candidates did not get any marks for this question. The tenses were quite well done, except 'ist aufgestanden'. It was pleasing to see how many got from 'hat geholfen' to 'hilft'.

The section on word order was also very well done, the only exception was the sentence with 'denn' and occasionally the sentence with 'wenn'.

Finally, the translation of sentences was better handled than examiners had anticipated. Candidates made mistakes in case e.g. 'meinen Bruder' and verb forms such as 'haben verbringt'. Some failed to put that sentence into the past tense. Many misspelt 'letztes Österreich'.

Candidates are reminded that handwriting is important! Candidates should avoid giving alternative answers in brackets (e.g. 'young people'/'teenagers' ('walls'/'streets')). It must be clear which information is to be considered as the answer.

Assessment Unit AS 3 Extended Writing

This is an entirely new paper at AS level in which candidates choose to write a response to one of the two alternative questions on a text that they have read or a film that they have seen. Apart from the text 'Ich fühl mich so fifty-fifty' all the film titles were completely new to A-level study in Northern Ireland and examiners are pleased to say that many candidates performed really well and some, indeed, wrote outstanding essays on their chosen topic.

Part reason for the success of this paper may be that teachers and students had worked really hard on their chosen topic and had prepared a number of sample essays. All the questions were very accessible and the better candidates must have remembered large parts of their prepared essays. This was also reflected in the quality of language with which candidates responded.

The majority of candidates opted for Question 3 on the film Good bye Lenin. In contrast to that, only a very small number of candidates wrote about the film Die letzten Tage der Sophie Scholl. About 10% of the candidates opted for Ich fühl mich so fifty-fifty and about 16% wrote about the film Almanya.

The majority of candidates showed evidence of excellent knowledge of the film/text and they were able to demonstrate their understanding of the task. On the other hand there were many essays which gave the impression of pre-learnt material that did not always match the question and did not address the issues appropriately. However, those pre-learnt essays were impressive in terms of the level of language used and also regarding the length (some candidates had written about 800- 900 words!).

Due to the intense nature of the film Die letzten Tage der Sophie Scholl Question 2 was the most challenging task. However, some candidates responded well to the questions and showed a mature knowledge of the topics and issues raised.

Despite the length of some of the essays candidates appear to have had enough time to complete the paper and to check their work.

Examiners would like to compliment teachers and students for having adopted the new Revised specification so enthusiastically and for having prepared so well – particularly for those elements that are new to this examination.

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