

GCSE



Chief Examiner's Report German

Summer Series 2019



Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2019 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 section on our website at www.ccea.org.uk.

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GCSE GERMAN

Chief Examiner's Report

Subject Overview

GCSE German 2019 examined the performance of six hundred and seventy candidates in the four component skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. In three of the four components: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, candidates were entered for either foundation or higher level examination: ability specific. In Speaking the entry was single-tiered and the outcome was ability specific. Candidates were able to enter different components at different levels, facilitating an individual and inclusive examination process accounting for a range of abilities and diverse outcomes. CCEA centres entered a large majority of candidates for higher level examinations in each of the three choice components which reflected the historic trend since GCSE German comprises a cohort of predominantly grammar school entry; namely six hundred and thirty five candidates of six hundred and seventy. The examining teams felt centres had been judiciously precise and accurate in their choice of entry levels for their candidates and were impressed by the appropriate range of outcomes in each of the components which reflected a fair and accessible examining process.

The outcomes in each of the four skill components were diverse and broadly reflected the historic performance of candidates over previous years in the examination and assessment of the legacy specification. The candidature of 2019 was similar in ability and outcome to the candidature of recent years and this was reflected in the final examination individual component and final grade outcomes.

The examination team of German GCSE Summer 2019 was consistently impressed by the response of candidates to the examination process which reflected a clear understanding of each of the examination papers and facilitated a comprehensive and accurate examination of their knowledge, understanding and skills in each of the four components. The examination process was accurate and rigorous; there was maximum consistency in the application of the mark schemes within the teams enabling an examination process, which was fair, consistent and candidate-centred.

Assessment Unit 1 Listening

Foundation Tier

Unit Overview

This was the first Listening exam of the new GCSE specification and it was pleasing to see that all candidates entered for foundation level were able to cope with the demands of the new paper.

Eighty-six candidates from fifteen centres attempted foundation level. There was a range of outcomes with the lowest mark achieved being 37/60 and the highest mark achieved was 56/60. The performances of most candidates suggest that they were appropriately entered at foundation level. The diversity and range in results demonstrate a fair paper appropriate to GCSE level: candidates were given the opportunity to show and use their listening skills in German across all areas of the specification. All candidates attempted to answer all questions.

- Q1** Shopping. This question was well answered by the majority of the candidates; only very few candidates chose the wrong answer for part (c) which suggests their understanding was partial.
- Q2** Family. This was a discriminating question, testing specific vocabulary. Candidates gave a range of answers. Answers to part 2 (b) showed that the term “gut gelaut” was frequently not recognised and misunderstood.
- Q3** School Uniform. Questions 3 (a) and 3 (c) were answered correctly by almost all candidates whilst a number of candidates ticked the wrong answer for part 3 (b). The phrase “sehen gleich aus” was not understood by many candidates.
- Q4** In town. Most candidates were able to identify the places in town and to understand the directions. There were a few mistakes when longer passages were examined.
- Q5** Holidays. This question was successfully answered by most candidates. A small number of candidates did not demonstrate recognition for “Osterreich”. In part 5 (e) a lot of candidates opted for “went shopping” instead of “went swimming” which proved to be a good discriminator, requiring candidates to listen precisely.
- Q6** School Timetable. This question surprisingly proved to be discriminating. Marks were lost when school subjects were misunderstood and when the gap for Wednesday period 6 was wrongly filled in and when candidates offered seven instead of six answers, one mark was deducted.
- Q7** Food. This question proved more demanding: more highly performing candidates answered all questions correctly. Whilst parts (a), (c) and (e) were largely answered correctly, parts (b), (d), (f), (g) and (h) were frequently inaccurately attempted, suggesting many candidates found it challenging to understand the content of this conversation.
- Q8** At home. This question was successfully answered by many candidates: parts (a) and (b) proved most accessible whereas the vocabulary in parts (c) and (d) was more frequently misunderstood.
- Q9** At the supermarket. This question had a largely successful outcome.
- Q10** Media. This question was most successfully answered by those candidates scoring highly at foundation level. Although many candidates demonstrated understanding in some of the more complex language, fewer candidates answered all questions correctly.
- Q11** School clubs. Most candidates were able to identify the correct activities.
- Q12** At the hotel. This question provided a good realistic challenge. Many candidates struggled to obtain the correct answer in part (b) deciphering an incorrect age and in part (d) they made frequent mistakes with the correct time of arrival.

Readability of question papers

The instructions throughout the Listening foundation level examination were very successful in securing candidates understood the requirements of each task; there was no evidence of ambiguity or misunderstanding of any instructions by any candidates.

Comments upon mark schemes

The mark scheme was comprehensive and applied with consistent rigour and application by all examiners. The standardisation process prior to marking was crucial in establishing consistency within the team.

Time allowance

There was no evidence to suggest that any candidate had insufficient time to complete the examination.

Higher Tier

Unit Overview

This was the first Listening exam of the new GCSE specification and it was pleasing to see that all candidates entered for higher level were able to cope with the demands of the new paper style.

On the whole, all six hundred and sixty-one candidates responded positively to this paper. The topics covered were accessible, of interest and relevant to candidates at this level.

This paper was handled with varying degrees of success hence there was an appropriate range of outcome. Candidates were generally able to demonstrate what they could do, what they knew and what they understood. The standard of the responses was reflective of the cohorts from previous years, taking into account the particular cohort we have in German, it proves that the paper provided ample opportunity to demonstrate a range of listening ability in German. Whilst there were a few candidates who gained full marks, the lowest mark achieved was 36/60.

All papers were answered in full, which indicates that there was adequate time to complete the exam.

Candidates need to remember to write clearly and try to write in the boxes provided otherwise it could cause them to lose marks unnecessarily. In a few cases failure to read the instructions accurately also meant marks were lost e.g. ticking 3 boxes when only 2 were required.

- Q1** Family. This was a discriminating question testing specific vocabulary. Only a small number of candidates gained full marks. The term “gut gelaunt” was surprisingly infrequently correctly translated.
- Q2** At home. This question was successfully answered by most candidates.
- Q3** Messages. ‘Buchhandlung’ was regularly misunderstood as ‘library’.
- Q4** Holidays. This question was well answered by most candidates with the exception of part (e) when some candidates opted for “went shopping”.
- Q5** Free time. This question provided a wide variety of results: part (a) generally was answered correctly however parts (b) and (c) had variable responses.
- Q6** Announcements. This question was answered with a high success rate.
- Q7** Home-life. This question highlighted a frequent misunderstanding of specific vocabulary for example “staubsaugen”.
- Q8** At home. This question was successfully undertaken by most candidates.
- Q9** Freiwillige Arbeit. This question was generally answered accurately.
- Q10** Schulclubs. This was another common question with foundation level and was answered correctly by most higher candidates.
- Q11** Verkehrsprobleme. Part (d) proved the most demanding aspect of this question with frequent answers of miscomprehension.
- Q12** Handyverbot. This question provided a topical theme and a discerning test for the most able candidates. The dialogue had some unpredictable elements to it. Therefore, there were more frequent incorrect answers to this question.

Readability of question papers

The instructions throughout the Listening higher level examination were very successful in securing candidates understood the requirements of each task; there was no evidence of ambiguity or misunderstanding of any instructions by any candidates.

Comments upon mark schemes

The mark scheme was comprehensive and applied with consistent rigour and application by all examiners. The standardisation process prior to marking was crucial in establishing consistency within the team.

Time allowance

There was no evidence to suggest that any candidate had insufficient time to complete the examination.

Assessment Unit 2 Speaking

Unit Overview

The Speaking Examination was the only un-tiered component of GCSE German, which provided a single-option entry to all candidates, differentiation being determined by outcome. The range in results was great: the lowest score was twenty-four and the highest sixty with the vast majority of candidates scoring above forty. Centres are to be commended on the quality and timing of the recordings which were sympathetically and sensitively conducted, enabling candidates to give their best performances under examination conditions.

The examination consisted of three elements: two role-plays, a conversation on a prepared topic and a conversation on an unprepared topic. Examiners were highly encouraged by the consistently good performances at role-play. There was a similarity in performance and therefore outcome in the Conversation Topic 1 and Conversation Topic 2. In a few instances, candidates exceeded all expectations and went beyond the remit of the criteria in the mark-scheme which was applied consistently enabling a fair and consistent allocation of marks to all candidates. It was very gratifying for examiners and commendable to centres that candidates approached the Speaking examination with confidence and determination. Their performances reflected high levels of preparation and warranted a large majority of excellent results.

Section A

The Role-plays

Generally the role-plays were very well attempted and the results were high in this section of the examination.

Candidates were awarded only one mark for a single word utterance but they were not required to form a full sentence to achieve the maximum two marks per response. When candidates were instructed to “give two details”, one mark was given for each. If a candidate made a serious error with a verb tense, verb conjugation, item of vocabulary or subject matter a mark was deducted, however a system of positive marking was consistently adopted by all examiners.

Almost all role-plays were conducted with an impressively accurate performance by capable candidates.

Some rare consistent problems with communication arose in the following instances:

- Situation A** Some candidates did not spell their names accurately mispronouncing letters of the alphabet. There were only a few instances of an incorrect use of the past tense.
- Situation D** Some candidates failed to request “the bill”.
- Situation J** When a candidate cited only the month of birthday without the date, only one mark was awarded.
- Situation P** “Ich bin krank seit.....” was seldom accomplished but variations were accepted. Asking the question “how often” was not consistently successfully accomplished.
- Situation S** Say you are from Northern Ireland proved problematic with not all candidates remembering “Ich komme aus.” Only one mark was awarded for “ich wohne in”.

A conversation on the prepared topic

Generally this part of the examination was very impressively conducted by candidates and the majority of results were very high. Candidates’ performances reflected high levels of preparation and competence. The scores for communication were consistently high with only a small number of candidates falling into Band 3 or below. Many candidates demonstrated a very impressive level of competence and fluency. The highest marks for communication were awarded when there was good evidence of relevant detail, engaging descriptions and accounts, personal ideas and opinions which were frequently justified, good intonation and pronunciation. The marks for grammar and structures were only sometimes marginally lower with the highest marks awarded for an impressive range in variety and accuracy of language. When a candidate failed to ask a question in the course of this conversation, one mark was deducted.

A conversation on an unprepared topic from the remaining Context for Learning

Perhaps surprisingly this part of the examination was conducted by candidates with equal competence to the conversation on the prepared topic. Candidates’ performances again reflected high levels of preparation and competence. The scores for communication were once more high with only a minority of candidates falling into band 3 or below. Many candidates demonstrated for a second time a highly impressive level of competence and fluency. The highest marks for communication again were awarded when there was good evidence of relevant detail, engaging descriptions and accounts, personal ideas and opinions which were frequently justified, good intonation and pronunciation. The marks for grammar and structures were again only sometimes marginally lower with the highest marks awarded for an impressive range in variety and accuracy of language. When a candidate failed to ask a question in the course of this conversation, again one mark was deducted.

Readability of question papers: the role-plays

The level of language used in the examination was very successful in securing candidates understood the instructions and requirements of each role-play; there was no evidence of ambiguity or misunderstanding of any instructions by any candidates. The documents and instructions produced with regard to the pre-prepared topic were well understood. All guidelines were appropriately and effectively followed.

Comments upon mark schemes

The mark scheme was comprehensive and applied with consistent rigour and application by all examiners. The standardisation process prior to marking was crucial in establishing consistency within the team.

Time allowance

There was no evidence to suggest that any candidate had insufficient time to complete the examination.

Assessment Unit 3 Reading

Foundation Tier

Unit Overview

The paper examined a diverse range of language with a good variety of question formats allowing all candidates a fair and adequate opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skill. The language was clear and there was adequate time for candidates to answer. No particular question or aspect seemed to be inaccessible or problematic.

The paper successfully combined more easily accessed questions mixed with more challenging ones, thus allowing candidates of differing abilities to respond positively with varying, appropriate levels of success. In general all questions elicited a response; in only rare instances were no attempts made to answer.

The examination provoked a range of results and provided sufficient challenge: scores ranged from 34 to 60 with the majority of candidates scoring 40 or above. The cohort of entry for Reading foundation level examination was small: sixty-four, all of whom had been appropriately entered for this level.

- Q1** Time. This question was answered with good success by the majority of candidates: part (c) proved the most frequently incorrectly answered element with a significant number of candidates misunderstanding “halb”.
- Q2** At the youth hostel. The question demanded the understanding of single lexical items of specific vocabulary and was answered largely successfully. Errors occurred more frequently with the correct understanding of “Stadtpläne” and “Getränke”.
- Q3** Helping others. This question necessitated reading short paragraphs and understanding more complex vocabulary. It was answered with varying degrees of success but there was no particular pattern of error.
- Q4** School. This question examined candidates understanding of single words of vocabulary and was answered consistently with a high level of success.
- Q5** Health. This question provided a more difficult challenge of reading sustained text with more complex vocabulary and the range of outcome in results reflected this. There was not any question which was answered consistently incorrectly and no one item of vocabulary proved consistently incomprehensible.
- Q6** Supermarket noticeboard. This question was answered with a large majority of success; the only item of vocabulary which proved consistent misunderstanding was “Schach”.

- Q7** A pet story. This question was the most challenging of the Foundation paper and elicited the lowest scoring results. The text was written in the past tense and some past participles were frequently misunderstood. The vocabulary was challenging and candidates rarely scored highly in this question which demanded a higher level of skills and some reading for gist.
- Q8** The last question of Section A provided three short sentences for translation from German to English. This question was impressively undertaken with a large number of candidates scoring highly. More frequent errors occurred with the correct translation of single words “Geschichte” and “einfach”. The past tense in part (c) was generally recognised and translated appropriately.
- Q9** Im Fundbüro. This question demanded the understanding of a range of single lexical items and was answered with a good degree of consistent success. More frequent miscomprehensions were apparent with “Schmuck” and “Schlittschuhe”.
- Q10** Ferien. This question demanded more complex reading skills and was reassuringly well answered with almost all candidates scoring at least half marks. There were no noteworthy repetitive patterns of error.
- Q11** Berufe. This question required six answers: Candidates should be reminded to read all instructions very carefully as a significant minority answered with seven responses thus self-penalising by instantly eliminating one mark from the total. This question was generally very well answered with a high level of success.
- Q12** Wohnorte. This question included more complex vocabulary, therefore provoking a greater variation in successful response rate. Some candidates failed to demonstrate understanding of the references to the environment. The results from this question showcased the higher level of skill and understanding of some candidates.

Readability of question papers

The instructions throughout the Reading foundation level examination were very successful in securing candidates understood the requirements of each task; there was no consistent evidence of any ambiguity or misunderstanding of instructions by the candidates. Candidates should be reminded by centres to give the correct number of answers to all questions as in rare instances affording an extra response, surplus to requirements, resulted in the penalty of a loss of one point.

Comments upon mark schemes

The mark scheme was comprehensive and applied with consistent rigour and application by all examiners. The standardisation process prior to marking was crucial in establishing consistency within the team.

Time allowance

There was no evidence to suggest that any candidate had insufficient time to complete the examination.

Higher Tier

Unit Overview

The paper covered a wide range of key topics as well as a range of question types. The language was clear and there was adequate time for candidates to answer. No particular question or aspect seemed to be overly challenging or causing problems.

Overall, the paper offered a combination of accessible questions mixed with more challenging questions and it thus allowed candidates of differing abilities to respond positively. In general, candidates attempted all questions; however, a few candidates left blanks.

Many candidates performed well on this paper. A few candidates achieved full marks and many scored above 50/60.

The lowest mark seems to have been 20/60, many of the responses were left blank by this candidate.

Overall, candidates should have left the exam feeling positive about their performance and the stronger candidates would have been aware of the challenges.

- Q1** At the youth hostel. Question 1 offered an encouraging start to the paper in which many candidates achieved full marks.
- Q2** Candidates helping out. This question was well handled. A small number of candidates lost marks through mistaking 'freiwillige Feuerwehr' for L and not C. Some candidates had difficulty with Annegret, and those, that did not know the word 'Imbiss' focused instead on 'wenn er Hilfe braucht' and opted for L.
- Q3** Young people's ideas about their future. Question 3 was well answered although some candidates chose predictable options such as 'wish for a better future' in part (b) and 'money' in part (c). Many did not know the word 'besorgt' and nobody thought environmental issues could be exciting.
- Q4** Health. This question generated good marks. Some candidates misunderstood 'Halsschmerzen' to mean 'sore stomach' and chose Jens for part (a). It was unfortunate that a very small number of candidates failed to follow the instruction and answered naming the relative in German rather than citing the name or giving the relationship in English and thus lost all marks. In Section A questions and answers must be in English: therefore any answers in German such as 'Großvater' could not be accepted.
- Q5** School. This was the most discriminating question in the examination and produced the greatest range in results as answers were expected to be precise in detail. Many candidates confused 'media studies' with 'medical studies' but it was encouraging to see that some candidates dealt successfully with the words 'Entwicklung', 'Ablenkung' and 'Austausch'. 'Sneezing studies' as a translation for 'Gesundheitsstudien' made examiners smile but was not otherwise credited!
- Q6** Environment. This question generated a good range of results. Those who achieved less than 6 often confused D and G. "Pfandflaschen" was not a word that many knew.
- Q7** Translation. This question required candidates to translate three short sentences from German to English. These all proved very accessible but 'Geschichte' in part (b) was sometimes misunderstood as geography and in part (c) candidates may have understood that the sentence was in the perfect tense but occasionally chose the wrong verb as in 'I relaxed in the garden'.

- Q8** Advertisement. This was an effective discriminating question. In Question 8 (a) some candidates took 'Fluss' to be a place name and left it in German; in part (b) a variety of answers which implied 'wedding reception' were acceptable but "honeymoon", "wedding anniversary" and "hightime eating" were rejected.
- Q9** Eine Biografie. Candidates struggled at times with the idea of leaving a box blank in the answer table and gave one surplus answer thus self-penalising by one mark, reinforcing the necessity to consistently read and follow all instructions to candidates.
- Q10** Berufe. Again occasional failure to follow the instruction and the correct number of answers resulted in rare but noteworthy penalty. The vocabulary in this question was well understood and the question was answered with a high degree of success.
- Q11** Soziale Medien. The answers to this question produced high marks despite the fact that gap fill tasks in the past often proved challenging. Less able candidates guessed indiscriminately and were not aware that a verb was needed in the first part.
- Q12** Kinder der Welt. Many candidates coped surprisingly well with this text and questions. 'Die Klassenräume sind überfüllt' was quite challenging in Question 12 (b). In part (a) some chose Maisans Mutter, in part (c) 'weil sie auf ihre Geschwister aufpassen musste'. Most candidates got 'in der Landwirtschaft' but 'auf dem Markt' acted as a discriminator.

Readability of question papers

The instructions throughout the Reading higher level examination were very successful in securing candidates understood the requirements of each task; there was no consistent evidence of any ambiguity or misunderstanding of instructions by the candidates. Candidates should be reminded by centres to give the correct number of answers to all questions as in rare instances affording an extra response, surplus to requirements, resulted in the penalty of a loss of one point.

Comments upon mark schemes

The mark scheme was comprehensive and applied with consistent rigour and application by all examiners. The standardisation process prior to marking was crucial in establishing consistency within the team.

Time allowance

There was no evidence to suggest that any candidate had insufficient time to complete the examination.

Assessment Unit 4 Writing

Foundation Tier

Unit Overview

The paper was accessible to a small number of candidates of differing abilities and provided a wide range of outcomes: the lowest mark awarded was 18/60 and the highest 60/60. Questions 1 and 2 necessitated short sentence responses which required a verb in the correct tense. Question 3 was a translation exercise and Question 4, which accounted for 30 of the 60 marks, was an extended writing task. The paper was successful in allowing candidates of all abilities to respond positively to the examined tasks. All learning contexts were examined and there was a fair and consistent requirement to showcase; appropriate, legible, fluent communication, independent and engaging responses, relevant knowledge of the subject matter, grammatical knowledge and application. None of the questions presented ambiguity and the paper was successful in eliciting an appropriate diversity in differentiated outcome.

- Q1 (a)** Pets. This question required candidates to write four pets in German. Articles were not necessary and minor spelling mistakes were not penalised. The majority of candidates scored full marks.
- (b)** Hobbies. This question required candidates to write three short sentences to describe their hobbies. Whilst some candidates gave surplus information, which was not credited, most did gain full marks and fluent, clear communication was achieved. Minor errors were not penalised. The correct conjugation of a verb was necessitated: even if a spelling mistake in the verb, which did not impede communication, was apparent, full marks were awarded.
- Q2** School Exchange. This question was generally well attempted. Candidates, however, were required only to respond with one sentence. As stipulated in the mark scheme, maximum marks were awarded for a short single sentence response; therefore excessive information did not equate to higher marks. Candidates should be reminded of the need for a short sentence response only to the Questions (a) to (e) in Section 1 since a significant number of candidates went unnecessarily beyond the remit. Largely the five questions were clearly understood and answered accurately: minor errors did not impede the awarding of maximum marks. A misuse of verb tense deducted one mark. There were some noteworthy misunderstandings to Question 1 (c), whereby candidates misunderstood the questioning word “wie” and answered giving information pertaining to the location of their house, suggesting an understanding of “where”. In a large number of instances, candidates demonstrated a level of difficulty in Question 1 (d) with the irregularity of the verb “essen” and the need to respond to the question in the second person singular “du” with an answer in the first “ich”. Question 1 (e) was encouragingly answered with most candidates attempting an accurate use of the perfect tense. The total marks awarded for Question 2 were generally lower than those awarded for Question 1, reflecting the increasing difficulty of this task for foundation level.
- Q3** Daily Routine. This question presented a range of five short sentences to be translated from English to German. The sentences required a knowledge and understanding of German syntax whilst examining the specification’s required knowledge of vocabulary.
- (a)** This sentence was translated with a pleasing consistency in accuracy and most candidates gained two marks.

- (b) Again, this sentence was translated with a pleasing consistency in accuracy with most candidates gaining two marks.
- (c) Necessitated the correct use of “fahren” which proved difficult for some candidates.
- (d) Presented some difficulty with a correct translation of “in the town”.
- (e) Many candidates failed to observe the rules of word order but this was not penalised at foundation level.

Q4 Extended Writing. Question 4, which accounted for half of the total marks, produced the greatest range in outcome.

Of three options for response, parts (b) and (c) proved significantly more popular than (1); however the full specification is covered in Question 4 and all areas examined allowing differentiation through choice and outcome. Each of the three Contexts did elicit a similar outcome in terms of the total average mark out of 30 obtained.

Candidates generally gave equal measure of attention in their answers to each of the five bullet points: this is to be commended as it positively impacted their results; on the few occasions where candidates omitted one or more bullet points it had the adverse effect. Centres are reminded to emphasise the instruction to candidates “You must include all five bullet points” and encourage candidates to choose their option according to their ability to respond to all five points in equal balance.

In Question 4 the best answers were characterised by: clear and unconfused communication, relevant detail, a balanced account adhering to each bullet point equally, some expression of personal opinion and ideas which were occasionally justified, a realistic range of grammar and structures, errors and inaccuracies which did not impede communication.

Candidates should be reminded that the best answers show a diverse range of language and that repetition of any content, including overarching bullet points, should be avoided in accessing the higher bands of marks for both communication and grammar and structures.

Examiners of the Writing examination at foundation level were consistently impressed by the very good ability of a large number of candidates to communicate fluently and accurately in written German and felt the examination facilitated a meaningful, accurate and comprehensive assessment of their skills in written German.

Readability of question papers

The level of language used in the examination was very successful in securing candidates understood the instructions and requirements of each task; there was no evidence of ambiguity or misunderstanding of any instructions by any candidates. The only instruction which was not followed with consistent accuracy by candidates was in Question 4 to “include all five bullet points”; however this was a reflection of the candidates’ knowledge and understanding of the specification rather than inability to understand the instruction.

Comments upon mark schemes

The mark scheme was comprehensive and applied with consistent rigour and application by all examiners. The standardisation process prior to marking was crucial in establishing consistency within the team.

Time allowance

There was no evidence to suggest that any candidate had insufficient time to complete the examination. In the one instance whereby the examination was not completed, time was not deemed to be a restricting feature.

Higher Tier

Unit Overview

The paper was accessible to candidates of differing abilities and provided a wide range of outcomes: the lowest mark awarded was 26/60 and the highest 60/60. Questions 1 and 2 necessitated short sentence responses which required a verb in the correct tense. Question 3 was a translation exercise and Question 4, which accounted for 30 of the 60 marks, was an extended writing task. The paper was successful in allowing candidates of all abilities to respond positively to the examined tasks. All learning Contexts were examined and there was a fair and consistent requirement to showcase; appropriate, legible, fluent communication, independent and engaging responses, relevant knowledge of the subject matter, grammatical knowledge and application. None of the questions presented ambiguity and the paper was successful in eliciting an appropriate diversity in differentiated outcome.

- Q1** School Exchange. This question was very well attempted, candidates, however, were required only to respond with one sentence. As stipulated in the mark scheme, maximum marks were awarded for a short single sentence response; therefore excessive information did not equate to higher marks. Candidates should be reminded of the need for a short sentence response only to the Questions (a) to (e) in Section 1 since a significant number of candidates went beyond the remit unnecessarily. Largely the five questions were clearly understood and answered accurately: minor errors did not impede the awarding of maximum marks. A misuse of verb tense deducted one mark. There were some noteworthy misunderstandings to Question 1 (c) whereby candidates misunderstood the questioning word “wie” and answered giving information pertaining to the location of their house, suggesting an understanding of “where”. In some instances, candidates demonstrated a level of difficulty in Question 1 (d) with the irregularity of the verb “essen” and the need to respond to the question in the second person singular “du” with an answer in the first “ich”. Question 1 (e) was very encouragingly answered with most candidates achieving an accurate use of the perfect tense.
- Q2** School Life. This presented a range of questions on the topic of School, which were readily accessed and well responded to by almost all candidates. The range in outcome resulted firstly from the compound nature of part (c) whereby a description and opinion were both necessary to obtain two marks and secondly a misunderstanding of AGs in part (d) which meant some candidates answered the question incorrectly and cited a list of school subjects rather than extra-curricular activities. Questions (b) and (e) both accepted the use of the present tense to obtain full marks.
- Q3** Daily Routine. This question presented a range of five short sentences to be translated from English to German. The sentences required a knowledge and understanding of German syntax whilst examining the specification’s required knowledge of vocabulary.
- (f)** Required the correct formation of a separable verb, application of word order and the use of the relevant preposition “um”.

- (g) Examined subject specific vocabulary, some candidates surprisingly fell short on the translation of “breakfast”.
- (h) Necessitated the correct formation of the past tense and one mark was deducted for an incorrect verb tense or a misconjugation.
- (i) Presented some difficulty with a correct translation of “in the countryside”
- (j) Many candidates failed to accurately translate “later”. Present future was accepted for full marks.

Q4 Extended Writing. Of three options for response, parts (a) and (b) proved significantly more popular than part (c); however the full specification is covered in Question 4 and all areas examined allowing differentiation through choice and outcome. Each of the three Contexts did elicit a similar outcome in terms of the total average mark out of 30 obtained.

Candidates generally gave equal measure of attention in their answers to each of the five bullet points: this is to be commended as it positively impacted their results; on the few occasions where candidates omitted one or more bullet points it had the adverse effect. Centres are reminded to emphasise the instruction to candidates “You must include all five bullet points” and encourage candidates to choose their option according to their ability to respond to all five points in equal balance.

In Question 4 the best answers were characterised by clear and engaging communication, a lot of relevant detail, a balanced account adhering to each bullet point equally, a high frequency of an expression of personal opinion and ideas which were largely justified, a wide range of grammar and structures, few errors and inaccuracies (which when they did occur did not impede communication).

Candidates should be reminded that the best answers show a diverse range of language and that repetition of any content, including overarching bullet points, is to be avoided in accessing the higher bands of marks for both communication and grammar and structures.

Examiners of the Writing examination at higher level were consistently impressed by the very high ability of a large number of candidates to communicate fluently and accurately in written German and felt the examination facilitated a meaningful, accurate and comprehensive assessment of their skills in written German.

Readability of question papers

The level of language used in the examination was very successful in securing candidates understood the instructions and requirements of each task; there was no evidence of ambiguity or misunderstanding of any instructions by any candidates. The only instruction which was not followed with consistent accuracy by candidates was in Question 4 to “include all five bullet points”; however this was a reflection of the candidates’ knowledge and understanding of the specification rather an inability to understand the instruction.

Comments upon mark schemes

The mark scheme was comprehensive and applied with consistent rigour and application by all examiners. The standardisation process prior to marking was crucial in establishing consistency within the team.

Time allowance

There was no evidence to suggest that any candidate had insufficient time to complete the examination.

Contact details

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