
GCSE

GERMAN

8668/LF Listening Foundation tier
Report on the Examination

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General Comments

The first Listening examination of this new GCSE specification differentiated well between the students for which it was set. The mean mark on the paper was just less than 24 out of 40 (60%) and it was pleasing to see that many students understood a good deal of what they had heard and were able to respond well to the questions that were set on this material. Section B, the part of the examination where students have to understand questions written in German and in some cases answer them in written German, was more challenging, and only the most able scored highly here. Students' handwriting was generally legible although it could occasionally be very small and difficult to read. Few students left questions unanswered, except in Section B where there were more students who did not attempt the hardest questions on the paper.

Teachers should remind students to maximise the 5 minutes' reading time by:

- reading all the questions carefully, particularly those in Section B;
- looking at any examples given, as these point out the level of detail required;
- highlighting or underlining key words which have been highlighted in the rubrics/questions;
- identifying the questions which have two parts to answer from the same utterance;
- sign-posting Section B as it requires answers in German.

Section A

Questions 1 – 2

These two questions provided a straightforward introduction to the examination, with 93% of students getting question 01 correct and 96% of students choosing the correct answer for question 02. In this specification, comprehension questions cannot test single lexical items, even at the lowest grades, and this means that questions of this type must contain distractors; it was very pleasing to see that students coped well with these distractors and were able to choose the correct answer in a large majority of cases.

Question 3

Question 03.1 was relatively well answered, with 76% of the students gaining the mark. There were some poor spellings of 'soup' and 'tomato' in evidence, but examiners accepted any clear indication of 'tomato soup' as the answer. Common errors in 03.1 were "tomato" (by itself), "soup" (by itself), "tomato salad", "omelette" (the distractor) and "pasta". Question 03.2 had a much lower degree of success (25% of the students were awarded a mark), with many students thinking that *Schinken* meant 'chicken'. Almost every conceivable pizza topping was offered by students; the number who correctly knew that *Schinken* means 'ham' was disappointingly low.

Questions 4 – 6

Questions 04 and 06 were answered successfully by a large number of students, whilst question 05 had a lower success rate; 95% got the correct answer for question 04, 58% got question 05 correct and 93% chose the correct answer for question 06. Again, it was pleasing to see that students were able, on many occasions, to discount the distractors that these questions contained.

Questions 7 – 9

Question 07 was answered correctly by 72% of the students, with many recognising *sonnig* and translating it correctly; vaguer answers, such as “the weather is nice”, were rejected, as were answers which suggested that she was going to Italy to visit her family. Question 08 had a reasonable level of success with 52% of the students getting the correct answer, ‘at the coast’. “Near the coast” was rejected as being too vague, and there were incorrect references to many different types of holiday accommodation (hotel, villa, caravan, beach hut...); only ‘flat’ or ‘apartment’ were accepted as the correct answer. Question 09 was not answered well (14% of the students scored the mark here), with many students writing “museum” in the singular; examiners insisted on a plural ending for the mark to be awarded. There were also references to music, presumably because students struggled with understanding the word *Museen*. The questions test detailed understanding of the material heard and students should be discouraged from giving vague answers in response to them.

Question 10

54% of students got question 10.1 correct and 84% scored the mark in question 10.2. The distractors used in this question meant that students had to listen carefully before choosing their answer, and this question discriminated well between those who understood fully what was being said and those whose understanding was only partial.

Question 11

Although only 38% of the students gained a mark in question 11.1, perhaps because of the obvious distractors in the question, they coped very well with the positive and negative elements contained in question 11.2; 83% of them gained the mark here.

Question 12

Question 12.1 was generally done well, with 63% of the students getting the mark. However, there remain some problems in recognising numbers, with “3 minutes”, “13 minutes”, “3 hours”, “30 – 40 minutes” being some of the incorrect answers offered by students. Sometimes students missed out ‘minutes’ and therefore lost the mark, and there were some interesting attempts at spelling this word. Question 12.2 was well answered, with 73% scoring a mark here. Many more students wrote ‘dancing’ rather than ‘walking’, but some students were clearly guessing their answer with “running/jogging”, “sport”, “football” and even “Zumba” making appearances. Question 12.3 was more demanding, however – 37% of students scored a mark. More students chose to refer to “eating vegetables” rather than to ‘not eating too fast’, but some students failed to mention ‘eating’ vegetables and therefore failed to gain the mark because their answer was too vague. There were also quite a lot of erroneous references to “fruit” or “fruit and vegetables”, clear examples of a wrong answer contaminating a correct one. A few students heard *schnell* and then leapt to the wrong conclusion, referring to ‘fast food’ in their answers.

Questions 13 – 15

These questions did not pose too many difficulties for the majority of students, with 66% getting Question 13 correct, 76% scoring a mark for Question 14 and 81% getting a mark for Question 15. Most students are clearly comfortable with the topic of school and are familiar with the vocabulary used to talk about life there.

Questions 16 – 17

In Question 16, many students recognised ‘comedy’ and scored a mark for this answer, although occasionally “comedian” was given, for which a mark was not awarded. *Zeichentrickfilm* was not well known, surprisingly, and many students wrote “sci-fi”, “horror” or “adventure”. This question tested students’ understanding of different tenses and it was a pity occasionally to read ‘comedy’ written in the wrong box. 18% of the students got both marks here and a further 63% got one mark. Question 17 was not answered as well. It was surprising that not that many students understood *deutsche Geschichte*, with “Germany” (by itself), “German culture” and “German language” seen. “German geography” was seen as well, suggesting that students had mixed up their school subjects and “German story” was also a wrong answer. *Die Arbeit der Polizei* was not well expressed by a large number of students; to score the mark, their answers had to make it clear that they were referring to the day-to-day work of the police, rather than to applying for a job in the police force. There were also many references to “politics”. Again, there were some examples of students writing the correct answer in the wrong box, indicating that their understanding of tenses was not secure. Only 6% of the students scored both marks in this question, while a further 28% scored one mark. Almost two-thirds of the candidature failed to score any marks on this question.

Question 18

This question was aimed at the higher grades at Foundation Tier. Questions 18.1 and 18.3 performed better than expected, with 70% getting question 18.1 correct. Question 18.3 was particularly well answered, with 73% of the students gaining the mark here. 35% of the students got question 18.2 correct – there were some clear distractors in this question. It is pleasing to see that many students were able to listen to relatively complex language and pick out the correct answers from among the distractors.

Questions 19 – 23

There was a pleasing performance on these questions, which again were aimed at the higher grades at Foundation Tier. Questions 19 (81% correct), 21 (66%), 20 (55%) and 23 (55%) performed better than Question 22 (24%), perhaps because the vocabulary used in this question was more challenging.

Section B

Questions 24 – 25

The first two questions in Section B were a straightforward introduction to the German section, with 94% gaining a mark for question 24 and 79% for question 25. The vocabulary used here was relatively simple.

Question 26

Again, many students were able to listen carefully and discount the distractors, with 56% gaining the mark for question 26.1 and 79% getting question 26.2 correct.

Question 27

This question was more challenging for students, with only 17% scoring two marks; however, a further 74% scored one mark. The question tested detailed understanding of some complex vocabulary and structures and, although many students understood that the family tries not to use plastic bags when they go shopping, many students did not understand that *macht das Licht aus* means turning the lights off, or that *meine Mutter vergisst oft, dass wir Wasser sparen müssen* means that the mother wastes water.

Questions 28 – 29

Students responded less well to these questions, which were the only ones on the paper where they had to write a response in German to questions in German. They were often inhibited by their ability to use the target language clearly and correctly. There were more gaps or blank spaces than in previous questions and some students answered in English. Some students tried to write out a large part of what they had heard, often incorrectly, with the result that what they wrote made no sense. A more concise answer would have been more successful.

In question 28, there were a lot of incorrect answers. 28% of the students gained the mark here. *“Habe Kinder”* implies that she already has children, which is not the case; there were many *“(es ist) romantisch”* rather than *‘sie ist romantisch’*, which did not answer the question; *‘sie möchte’* was quite often rendered as *“sie mochte”* and the past tense was not accepted in answering this question. Similarly, *“sie möchte auf Kinder”* and *“sie möchten”* or *“sie möchtest Kinder”* were felt to be ambiguous; phonetically equivalent spellings of *‘romantisch’* were accepted but *“romantic(k)”* was not. Many students were unable to communicate their response without ambiguity in German.

Question 29 also had a mixed response, with some students leaving this question blank or answering in English. There were many spellings of *‘schlecht’*, some of which were accepted as phonetic (near-)equivalents and others of which were not. A few students bravely tried to transcribe *‘ist dagegen’*, but without much success. Unfortunately many students used *‘schwierig’* in their answer, either on its own or contaminating an otherwise correct response. *‘Idee’* was often spelt incorrectly (*“Idea”* was not accepted) and *‘Ehe’* was also often incorrectly spelled. This question proved to be difficult for many students, with only 23% gaining the mark.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.