
A-level

GERMAN

Paper 1 Listening, Reading and Writing
Report on the Examination

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General comments

Students for future series are reminded to take careful note of the rubric for different question types, especially for the two summary tasks and for those questions requiring short answers in the target language. In the summaries it is vital to keep within the specified word count, as markers will stop marking at the first natural break between 90 and 100 words. Students are also advised to avoid transcribing or copying whole sentences, partly because they cannot earn credit for AO3 for copied material and partly because they may make mistakes when copying unfamiliar words which then impede communication. In those questions requiring short answers in the target language, students must avoid copying more than is necessary to answer the question as this may introduce material that confuses the answer, but here there are no marks for AO3 so it is fine to copy relevant phrases from the stimulus material.

Section A

Question 1

This non-verbal task on the topic of immigration was generally well answered. A number of students did not recognise statement J (*Im Allgemeinen klappt die Integration ... gut*) as correct, perhaps because they had not understood the phrase *die Ausländerfeindlichkeit ... übertrieben wird* in the recording.

Question 2

Most students showed at least a reasonable understanding of the recorded discussion on young people's use of social networks. In some instances students confused their answers by including irrelevant material. In 2.1, many students scored at least one of the two available marks, but some incorrectly mentioned 'finding new friends', which was referred to negatively in the discussion: *nicht vor allem ... um neue Freunde zu finden*. In 2.3, many students did not score the mark because they omitted the essential information *zu denen man nur selten persönlichen Kontakt hat*. In 2.5, most students gave the correct answer, having correctly understood the negative reference to text messages: *werden zwar ... nicht verschwinden, aber ...*

Question 3

On the whole students performed less well in this question, which focused on the experiences of a French person living in Berlin, than in Question 2. In 3.1, not all students appreciated that Anne had made two visits to Berlin, with the second becoming a permanent move. In 3.2, the word *lebendig* caused difficulty, with many students writing *bändig* or similar. In 3.3, most students scored one of the available two marks; some were unable to convey the idea of 'not being judged for being different' clearly, perhaps because they were unfamiliar with the verb *beurteilen*.

Question 4

The listening summary task on the future of the European Union produced a wide range of attainment. As mentioned in the general comments above, students needed to be disciplined in their choice of relevant information and to avoid wasting words on general introductory remarks or on detailed examples. Many students wisely wrote notes, from which they then identified the key points to be written up as a neat version. A good number of students set out their response in three clear paragraphs – not essential but certainly a helpful approach in ensuring that all key areas were covered.

For the AO1 mark, most students identified a good number of relevant words and phrases from the recording, but they did not always place them in the correct context and sometimes betrayed a lack of comprehension by including wrongly transcribed material. For example, the second and third elements in the first bullet point required some idea of 'wanting' or 'planning' and it was incorrect merely to state *Die EU ist fit für die Zukunft*. A common example of wrong transcription was the phrase *nach sich ziehen*, which was sometimes written as *nachsichts sehen* or similar. A safer approach here would have been to re-express the idea in simpler terms, such as *Andere EU-Staaten werden die EU nicht verlassen*. In the second bullet point, most students successfully referred to *Frieden* or to the prevention of war, but a few wrongly wrote *Frei(heit)*. Only a small number of students showed good understanding of the reference to *Globalisierung*. The third bullet caused difficulty for many students: as noted above they often identified key words such as *Kompromisse*, *Schwierigkeiten* and *bedroht* but then were unable to place those words in the right context.

For the AO3 mark, some students answered the required points in natural, fluent German and thereby achieved a high score. The task allowed plenty of opportunity for the use of students' own words without resorting to convoluted German. In the third bullet point, for example, the idea of *sei ... in der Lage gewesen, Lösungen ... zu finden* could be expressed using the simple past tense of *können*: *Europa konnte Lösungen finden*. Weaker responses tended either to rely on word-for-word transcription or to include many major errors with verbs, cases and sentence structure.

Section B

Question 5

This non-verbal reading comprehension task on religious festivals produced a wide range of attainment. The most successfully answered items were parts 3, 5, 6 and 7. The least successfully answered item was part 1, perhaps because students wrongly equated *in der Überzahl* with *immer mehr*.

Question 6

In this reading comprehension item on German reunification, students needed to select specific information from the text and convey it as simply and concisely as possible. Many did this well, but some, as in the listening section, included irrelevant information or copied a combination of words which made their German incoherent. Parts 1, 3, 7 and 8 were generally well answered, with most students in part 8 expressing the idea of 'contacting a bowling club' successfully. Part 2 caused difficulty: some students appeared confused by the references to *DDR* and thought the East Germans were giving the hospitality. In part 6, students needed to read the question carefully and note the wording *zwischen den zwei Besuchen*; what happened between the visits was the purchasing or obtaining of the food items, not the handing over of those items. In part 9, the verb *sich sehnen* was often unfamiliar and some students confused it with *sehen*.

Question 7

This non-verbal gap fill task on youth culture in Germany discriminated well across the attainment range. Many students seemed to use the grammatical clues, such as the differing past participle and infinitive endings, as well as the meaning of the sentences and missing words, in order to fill the gaps correctly. Roughly a quarter of the entry scored full marks in this question.

Question 8

This reading comprehension test was based on an extract from a short story by Siegfried Lenz. The question as a whole produced a wide range of attainment. As in Question 6, the best answers were often concise, homing in on a key phrase from the text. Students always need to be careful when responding to a text written mainly in the first (or second) person: here a failure to change first person pronouns and possessive adjectives into the third person form sometimes impeded communication.

Parts 1, 2, 4 and 6 were generally well answered. Many students appeared to make the correct link between *Heiterkeit* and *glücklich*, although in part 1 some thought that *als* in the first sentence meant 'as a' and wrote *Er arbeitet als Heiterkeit*. In part 3 the use of *soll* in the question seemed to cause difficulty and many students referred back to *Heiterkeit* again instead of identifying the end goal, which was to further business. In part 5 some students misinterpreted the phrase *besuchen uns Kunden* as 'we visited customers'. In part 7 the verb *erschrak* seemed unfamiliar and some students miscopied it as *erschrank*. Similarly, in part 8 the verb *klang* seemed unfamiliar and some students misinterpreted it as an adjective, as in *Die Stimme war so klang*. The simple past tense is often used in literary German and students in future need to be more aware of its formation even if they do not use it in their own writing.

Question 9

This reading summary task on hostility towards foreigners in Germany produced a similar range of attainment to the listening summary. The temptation to copy whole phrases and sentences was perhaps greater, given that the stimulus text was printed on the page, but many students successfully focused on the key ideas and re-expressed them in their own words. In a few instances words were wasted on irrelevant material, such as the reference to *Rechtspopulisten* at the end of the second paragraph.

For the AO2 mark, most students conveyed the key idea that hostility towards foreigners has increased. Many referred to Muslims but did not always identify the correct idea of wanting to restrict their religious practices. Not all students appreciated the importance of the adjective *deutsche* in the phrase *das ganze deutsche Volk*; its omission altered the meaning completely. In the second bullet point, a good number of students scored both available marks, often using straightforward phrases of their own such as *in allen Teilen der Gesellschaft* and *besonders unter wenig gebildeten Menschen*. However some students appeared not to understand the phrase *in der Mitte der Gesellschaft*, while others listed all the examples given which then led to a potential problem with the word count. The third bullet point was a good discriminator at the upper end of the attainment range: students needed to understand that tolerance and openness towards foreigners were characteristics taught in schools but sometimes rejected.

For the AO3 mark, students had many opportunities to construct their own sentences, using subordinate and relative clauses where appropriate to express the key ideas in the text. In the third bullet point, for example, students could convey both required points in a single sentence such as *Manche Jugendliche rebellieren gegen die Botschaft von Toleranz, die ihnen in der Schule gelehrt wird*. Weaker performances were often characterised by an inability to manipulate verbs and case endings, as well as by the writing of incoherent sentences. Relatively few students resorted to word-for-word copying from the stimulus text.

Question 10

The translation into German produced a wide spread of marks. At the top end of the range students were able to convey the meaning of the English text accurately and display a sound grasp of German grammar. At the lower end of the range there were many basic errors of word order, verb formation and case endings. Students in future are reminded of the importance of correct spelling in this question and of the need to distinguish clearly between capital and lower case letters.

Box 1: A common error was *mag* instead of *mögen*. Versions with *gefallen* were also acceptable.

Box 2: The vocabulary was generally fine, but the genitive case caused problems.

Box 3: This section was generally well translated. Repeated errors with 'children' from the previous box were not penalised here.

Box 4: Most students produced either a correct perfect or imperfect tense verb.

Box 5: Many students came up with an appropriate translation here, although some of those who chose *zählen* wrote *zahlen* instead.

Box 6: This section was generally well translated.

Box 7: Relatively few students gave the correct preposition *auf*.

Box 8: This section was often well translated.

Box 9: This section was generally well translated.

Box 10: Some students used the wrong case here. It was acceptable to turn the sentence round and write, for example, *Joseph Beuys sagte...*

Box 11: Some students wrongly wrote *Deutschen* with a capital letter as if it were a noun.

Box 12: Most students got the word order right. Some gave *Recht* the wrong gender.

Box 13: Many students wrote *sich* instead of *uns*, and some wrote *zu* as a separate word before *ausdrücken*.

Box 14: This section was generally well translated.

Box 15: This section was often well translated, although some wrote *mahlen* instead of *malen*.

Box 16: This section was often well translated, although those students who used *Person* sometimes gave it the wrong gender.

Box 17: Most students found an appropriate word for 'different'.

Box 18: This was a relatively difficult section. Some students wrote *sein* instead of *geben* in the construction *es sollte ... geben*.

Box 19: Many students gave the wrong adjectival ending here, usually *-e* instead of *-en*.

Box 20: This section was generally well translated. Repeated errors with 'can' from box 15 were not penalised here.

Box 21: Although the word *Museen* was in the support text, it was often given a wrong plural here. A few students wrongly chose *einverstanden* from the support text to translate 'exhibit'.

Box 22: The phrase 'the most important thing' caused difficulty, although some students produced a good version including the adverb *am wichtigsten*.

Box 23: This was a relatively difficult section. Some students used *erfinden*, but this was not acceptable as a translation of 'to come up with'.

Box 24: Very few students managed a correct translation of the phrase 'that ... has thought of'. Some used *dass* instead of the relative pronoun *die*.

Box 25: Few students managed a correct translation of the phrase 'no one else'.

Box 26: This section was fairly well translated, but some students attempted a literal translation of the continuous present tense, such as *wir sind leben*.

Box 27: This section was fairly well translated. A few students did not spell *Mittelalter* correctly even though it was included in the support text.

Box 28: Confusion of *wenn* and *als* was common here. Many students knew *stolz*, but some misspelled it as *stoltz*.

Box 29: Confusion of *konnten* and *könnten* was common here. Many students appropriately used the verb *kopieren* from the support text, but other verbs such as *nachmachen* were also acceptable.

Box 30: This section was generally well translated, although some students inappropriately wrote *Arbeit* for ‘work (of art)’.

Question 11

The translation into English discriminated well across the attainment range. The best versions found the right compromise between conveying the sense of the German text faithfully and writing clear English. A few students strayed too much towards paraphrasing, while a small number were excessively literal, writing for example ‘with 16 years’ for *mit 16 Jahren*.

Box 1: This section was generally well translated.

Box 2: A number of different versions were accepted for *Grundstein*, including ‘cornerstone’ and ‘bedrock’. Students generally understood the idea well.

Box 3: This section was fairly well translated. Although ‘here’ was an acceptable translation of *hier*, some students gave the less obvious but equally correct version ‘in this respect’.

Box 4: Some students mistranslated *wurde* as if it were *würde*. The conjunction *als* also caused difficulty, with some students wrongly writing ‘as’.

Box 5: A one-word translation of this section, ‘voting’, was a neat option here. Most students understood the idea well.

Box 6: Very few students showed the correct understanding of *schließlich* in this context. Many opted wrongly for ‘finally’.

Box 7: This section was well translated.

Box 8: This section was generally well translated, although some students changed the tense unnecessarily.

Box 9: Most students found an acceptable version for *berufliche Zukunft*.

Box 10: Although the words *besonders* and *problematisch* were straightforward, some students did not manage to express the whole phrase correctly.

Box 11: This was a difficult section. Many students did not know *erschien* and some omitted to translate *jedoch*.

Box 12: There was a good number of correct versions here, but a few students resorted to their general knowledge and wrote inappropriate versions such as ‘(young people) were right wing extremists’.

Box 13: This was a difficult section. The word *ehemals* was often omitted or mistranslated.

Box 14: This section was fairly well translated, although a few wrote ‘popular’ instead of ‘populist’.

Box 15: This section was well translated. Just a few students wrongly wrote ‘can’ for *könnte*.

Box 16: This section was also well translated. Most students realised that ‘society’ was more appropriate than ‘the society’ in this context.

Box 17: This was a difficult section. Many missed the past tense of *behaupteten* or did not know its meaning.

Box 18: The verb *vertreten* was often not known.

Box 19: This section was fairly well translated, although some students did not take account of the comparative ending on *ernster*.

Box 20: Some students incorrectly translated *Wähler* as a singular noun.

Summary questions: Advice to students

Students should first read the task on the question paper carefully so they know what the item is about. They should listen to or read the stimulus material in its entirety, identifying which sections

of the stimulus material correspond to each of the three bullet points. They should then listen to or read the stimulus material a second time, pausing as necessary to make notes on each bullet point. Students should look at the number of marks available for each bullet point and ensure they identify sufficient pieces of information.

Once they have noted the key information, students should look again at the wording of the bullet points and write their answer on the question paper in such a way as to answer the bullet points directly. This will normally require some manipulation of linguistic structures, such as changing from direct to indirect speech or changing from a subordinate clause to a main clause. However it is not necessary to find synonyms for individual words or phrases.

Students should count their words and ensure that they stay within the word limit. Anything they write after the first natural break between 70 and 80 words (AS) or 90 and 100 words (A-level) will not be marked. Students should therefore avoid writing an introductory sentence or paragraph, as this would be likely to use up words without scoring marks. They should omit points of detail or examples unless these are specifically targeted by the bullet points.

The two marks available for the summary tasks - Content and Quality of Language - are awarded independently. For Content students will receive one mark for conveying each of the seven required pieces of information unambiguously. For Quality of Language students will receive a global mark out of five for the successful manipulation of the language. Anything that is lifted directly from the stimulus material cannot earn credit for Quality of Language. While students should try to use as wide a variety of structures as suits the task, they should also bear in mind the need to maintain accuracy.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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