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Examiners' Report June 2010

GCE German 6GN02

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6GN02 01

This unit requires candidates to understand and convey their understanding of German-language recordings and texts. In addition, candidates produce a piece of continuous writing in which they can demonstrate their ability to manipulate German. The content for the unit is drawn from the four general topic areas (and definitive list of linked subtopics) listed on page 30 of the specification. The overall time allocation for this unit is 2 hours 30 minutes.

Section A is out of 20 marks and assesses candidates' listening skills. There are four extracts which last around 5-6 minutes and which are recorded onto CD. Candidates have individual control of the listening material and must complete section A within the first 45 minutes of the examination.

Section B is also out of 20 marks and assesses candidates' reading skills. There are three authentic texts in German each followed by a different task type. Candidates are free to complete this section immediately after section A or they may choose to complete section C first and come back to this section later in the examination.

Section C is out of 30 marks and assesses candidates' writing skills. Candidates are required to write 200-220 words in the form of, for example, an email, a letter or an article in German based on a short German-language stimulus. A number of linked bullet points define the content. Candidates are free to answer this question after the listening and before the reading sections if that suits them better.

Section A: Listening

This section consists of four listening extracts and four questions:

Question 1 is a multiple-choice task in German requiring candidates to select the correct answer from a choice of three. There are four marks available for this question.

Question 2 requires candidates to select the four correct statements in German from a list of eight. Thus, there are also four marks available for this question. In cases where candidates crossed more than four statements, one mark was withheld for each cross offered in excess of four. Thus, six crosses, including four correct ones, would attract two marks in total.

Question 3 is a summary with gap fill in German. Candidates are provided with a pool of answers from which they select the correct word to complete the sentences of the summary. If the response selected was not transcribed entirely correctly, but could not be confused with another word in the pool, it earned the mark. This question is worth four marks.

Question 4 requires candidates to produce verbal responses in German to questions set in German. This question carries eight marks. Quality of language is not assessed here, but candidates must communicate their answers unequivocally. Lifting is allowed, although this can lead to transcription errors.

All questions are marked according to a specific mark scheme which is updated at the standardisation meeting to take account of the range of candidate responses.

Section B: Reading

This section consists of three passages for reading and three questions:

Question 5 is a matching task. Candidates match five sentences (or headlines) to a person (or city etc) in the text. There are five marks available. One mark was scored for each statement correctly attributed to a young person. If two or more crosses were proffered in response to a given statement, credit was withheld: thus, in Q5a, for instance, crosses for both Maja (correct) and Nele (incorrect) would not score.

Question 6 requires candidates to demonstrate their ability to transfer meaning accurately from German into English. The text is factual and candidates are not expected to infer meaning. There are five separate questions in English to which candidates respond in English. Full sentences are not required, but candidates must include sufficient detail to address the question appropriately.

Question 7 requires candidates to respond in German to questions set in German. Quality of language is not assessed here, but candidates must communicate their answers unequivocally. Full sentences are not required but, as in question six, sufficient detail must be included in the response to answer the question completely. Targeted lifting is allowed.

All questions are marked according to a specific mark scheme which is updated at the standardisation meeting to take account of the range of candidate responses.

Examiners assess responses in Q4, Q6 and Q7 in the order elements are given by candidates, and consider no more elements than the number of marks available. Thus, in a 2 mark question, only the first two elements can score. Repeating or re-working of the question or preambles to an acceptable response do not count as elements in the response. In addition, credit is not withheld for irrelevant additions to a correct answer, but incorrect additions which negate will result in candidates losing the mark for a correct answer. These assessment principles are in keeping with those from the legacy specification and with those at GCSE.

Section C: Writing

This section consists of 1 writing task.

In question 8 candidates first read a short (55-75 words) stimulus in German which serves to provoke and support a response in German of 200 -220 words. The rubric (in German) for this task includes a number of bullet points (between 4 and 6) which candidates must address in their response. The piece of writing is assessed positively according to assessment criteria grids. These grids reward students for content and response (15 marks) and quality of language (15 marks). Candidates need to gain at least 1 mark for content to access marks for quality of language. The word limit is observed and examiners read no further than to the end of the sense group after 220 words. Again, this is in keeping with practice in the legacy specification.

Comments on Individual Questions

This report will provide exemplification of candidates' work, together with tips and/or comments, for a selection of questions. The exemplification will come mainly from questions which required more complex responses from candidates.

Question 2

Candidates understood the requirements of this question type this session. Most found this question very accessible indeed, with only a few struggling to identify (h) as correct. These candidates tended to opt for (d) instead.

Question 3(a)

There were some mixed fortunes on this question. Whilst very many candidates were able to score full marks here, some struggled with (c) where they opted for either 'langweilig' or 'altmodisch' and (d) where they opted for 'langweilig'.

Although this task is not a test of language, it is undoubtedly the case that a sound knowledge of grammar helps to narrow the possibilities for each gap. Students should also be alert to the fact that each correct word has a distractor, so they should work out these pairs first as this will considerably narrow the choice.

Question 4

Overall, this part of the question paper was well handled, with many candidates demonstrating good understanding of the main body of the listening text. Some candidates gained credit evenly throughout this question, while others struggled at times. Others wrote down everything they could or attempted to transcribe the passage, often

incomprehensibly. Targeted lifts from the passage were allowed, of course. Candidates should expect this question to be the most challenging in the listening section. As already stated, communication only is assessed, not quality of language. On this note: 'Schüler' was often rendered as 'Schule' or 'Schuler' and since the spelling does affect communication here, a mark was withheld once only for incorrect spelling of this high frequency lexical item. Whilst full sentences are not required in this task, candidates should be aware that full and detailed information is.

- a) This question required candidates to demonstrate that they understood the intention or motivation of the 'Schulbehörde' in introducing this project rather than the putative result of the project. This proved to be an excellent discriminator and candidates would be advised to make sure they have read the question very closely and further ensure that their answer corresponds exactly to what the question is asking. Thus 'Belohnung für Fleiß' is not a relevant answer here.

(a) Warum verteilt die Schulbehörde Handys und Klingeltöne an die Schüler?

So, dass die Schüler besserer Note bekommen ^{(1) würden.} ~~und die~~ und ~~die~~ die Schüler fleißiger werden.



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Examiner Comments

Successful candidates tended to start their answers with 'damit' or 'um...zu'. This candidate chooses to use 'so dass' and can be credited with the mark. It is the first element of the candidate's response which is credited - the extra information does not negate.

- b) A significant number of candidates made reference just to 'fleißige Schüler', unfortunately without the qualifying 'die ihre Leistungen verbessern'. It is important that candidates give full details to demonstrate that they have understood the target concept. At AS level, candidates should not expect that questions will require them simply to pick out discrete lexical items - they must be prepared for more searching questions which demand more detailed answers.
- c) Those candidates who opted to use their own words e.g. 'die Lehrer finden den Plan gut' or 'sie halten die Idee für gut' enjoyed a greater degree of success here than those who attempted to transcribe 'den Lehrern geht es bei der Aktion darum...'. Some weaker candidates perhaps inferred the answer from their own experiences as they often gave the opposite 'sie finden es nicht gut'.

- d) Many candidates struggled to recognise 'ärmer' with many offering answers along the lines of 'Schüler, die aus ihrem Leben sowieso nichts machen können', 'Schüler finden Handys oder MP3s cooler als Noten' or 'Schüler, die denken, dass sie nicht lernen müssen'.
- e) This was accessible to the majority of candidates although the spelling of 'Böses' caused some difficulties at times and examiners saw transcriptions such as 'Börse' which could not be credited since it means something different, of course.
- f) This was probably the most challenging question. Most candidates offered something like 'von anderen Leuten' which is somewhat of a truism but is not detailed enough to qualify for the mark.

(f) Von wem bekommen die Schüler auch SMS?

(1)

andere Leuten, die erfolgreicher sind.



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Examiner Comments

This response is on the right lines but unfortunately omits a salient detail.

(f) Von wem bekommen die Schüler auch SMS?

(1)

Leute, die erfolgreich sind, weil sie fleißiger lernen gemacht haben.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate succeeds in giving all the details required to answer this question and does so in his/her own words.



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Examiner Tip

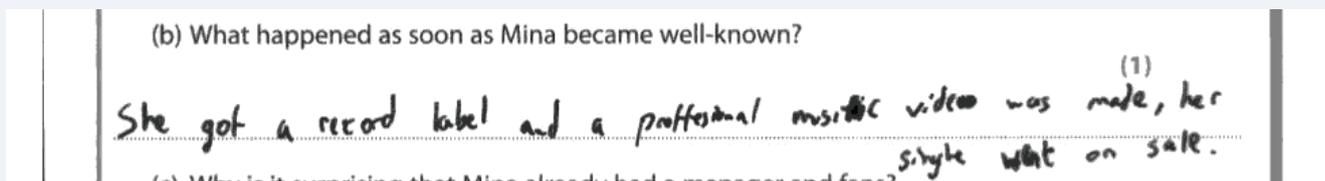
It is often more straightforward for candidates to use their own words to answer the question rather than trying to transcribe from what they hear.

- g) This part was well answered. Where candidates were unsuccessful this was down to a lack of precision e.g. 'in der Schule' and 'in der Klasse' neither of which conveys the same meaning as 'während des Unterrichts'.

Question 6

This proved to be an accessible text. Although many candidates struggled to transfer the meaning precisely and with sufficient detail, the majority of candidates scored 2 or 3 marks. This question requires a good deal of practice, as some candidates tend to give approximations which cannot be accepted. Greater attention to the detail of the German text would lead to a higher score in many instances. This question is looking forward and preparing for the translation task in Unit 4.

- This first part was the most successful. Where candidates did not succeed in scoring the point, this was usually because they gave answers such as ‘a number that changed a life’ without any amplification.
- Although most candidates seemed to understand the gist here, they often did not give answers which contained sufficient detail to gain a mark. For example, a ‘contract’ on its own does not represent an adequate rendering of ‘Plattenvertrag’; ‘a music video was produced’ does not convey the full meaning of the German and examiners were looking for the word ‘professional’ to be included. ‘Plattenvertrag’ was occasionally translated into ‘platinum disc’ or ‘plate contract’ and a surprising number of candidates were thrown by ‘bekam’ and answers here frequently started with ‘she became’.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate gives several answers here, but examiners will accept only the first element of any response given. In this case, the first element is incorrect and cannot be credited.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should focus on giving one correct answer rather than writing down everything that they can understand in that part of the text.

- Candidates found it tricky to convey the essential meaning here. Candidates would be well advised to read through what they have written in this section to ensure that it makes sense. ‘Aufgetreten’ was not always understood and answers such as ‘she never appeared in public’, ‘she had never been seen in public before’ were not uncommon. Notwithstanding the fact that the text does not support these answers it is highly unlikely that such statements could be true. It is important that the actual meaning is transferred accurately.

- d) Once again, felicitous transfer of the meaning was critical here. Examiners saw very many answers which were along the correct lines, but which lacked sufficient detail and the precision required to gain the mark for example 'They also wanted to become a web star'.

(d) Apart from her music, why did young people react favourably to Mina?

(1)

They believe that they too could become online stars.



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Examiner Comments

Unfortunately, the candidate has not paid enough attention to the message in German. The response in English makes no mention of the hope Mina gives the young that they too could become web-stars. This response states more than the original text, in fact and cannot be credited with a mark.

- e) This was the most challenging part of the question since by far the majority of candidates were not familiar with the word 'moderieren'. Most could access the fact that she was involved in TV in some capacity and answers such as 'she works in TV', 'she is in a TV show' or 'she judges in a TV show' were common. Less frequent were answers which focused on 'moderating' or 'modelling'.

Question 7

This text is followed by questions in German requiring answers in German. No question part is worth more than 2 marks. As in both previous series, targeted lifts were accepted. Weaker candidates copied either great chunks out of the text or just a few words but not the key words, and so forfeited the mark. Unfortunately, some candidates targeted wrong sections of the text completely, perhaps because they were unable to understand the text, or possibly, the questions.

Candidates should expect to find this the most challenging of the texts in the reading section. Unusually examiners saw a significant number of scripts where candidates had left the last few questions completely blank and candidates should be reminded of the wisdom of having a go.

Quality of language is not being assessed here, therefore under the terms of the mark scheme misspellings and grammatical errors are tolerated as long as the answer is comprehensible and unambiguous. However, examiners noted that the use of possessive adjectives is not widely secure: often a form of 'sein' was used to convey 'their', whereas 'ihr' was used to mean 'his'. It was obvious that very many candidates remain confused over the distinction between sie (she), sie (they) and Sie.

- a) This proved to be a good discriminator. It required candidates to read the text closely to access the relevant information. Many candidates focussed on the third sentence which does not address the question asked: it rather addresses the consequences of their poor school leaving qualifications and their difficulties in securing a job. It is important for candidates to read the question carefully to ensure that the information they have given really does answer the question. Many candidates gave answers which were along the right lines, but did not have quite the right detail, for example "weil sie schlechte Noten in der Schule bekommen haben".

(a) Warum brauchen viele Jugendliche praktische Arbeitserfahrung?

(2)

Viele Jugendliche brauchen praktische Arbeitserfahrung, weil es schwierig ist, einen Arbeitsplatz zu bekommen, wenn man eine schlechte Hauptschulzeugnis hat.



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Examiner Comments

This represents a model answer. The candidate shows very clearly that s/he has understood both the text and the question. The candidate quite skilfully uses his/her own words to give a detailed answer and scores the 2 marks available. The candidate could have started the answer at 'weil', but has lost nothing by giving a full sentence.

- b) Weaker candidates found it difficult to convey clearly the notion that the mentor is responsible for the behaviour of the young people. They generally understood the correct behaviour (e.g. Pünktlichkeit/Höflichkeit) but were not able to use the correct pronouns and/or structures to express who is responsible for whose behaviour. There were also some examples of incomprehensible language for example 'Er steht die Jugendlichen auf', 'Zu stehen ab die junge Leute', 'Er Bett wirft in der Morgen'. Those who referred to correct clothing did not link it in to the workplace.

- (i) *Sei ordentliche Kleidung am Arbeitsplatz zu tragen.*
- (ii) *Pünktlichkeit - immer zur Zeit und nicht zu spät zu sein.*



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Examiner Comments

The first part of the candidate's answer does not make it clear who is responsible for whose clothing. Although the candidate has clearly understood the gist of the situation, this understanding has not been communicated unambiguously and so no mark can be credited for this first part of the answer. However, the candidate does score the mark for the second part of the answer as this is a repeated error.



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Examiner Tip

It is essential that candidates write in sufficient detail to make the message absolutely clear. Thus, whilst full sentences are not required, full details are.

- c) Candidates found this question more accessible and the idea of Ellerbeck's motivation was generally well-expressed.
- d) This part again was well answered, mainly by quoting from the text, which is fine.
- e) Stronger candidates found this part accessible and often tried to use their own words for example 'sein Vater kam in den Knast'. Unfortunately, a significant number of candidates mentioned that he, Ellerbeck, was ill and 'Lehre' was frequently misunderstood as 'Lehrer' and his failure to complete his apprenticeship was blamed on the ill health of his teacher.
- f) This was a more challenging question as quite a few candidates struggled with the construction of Konjunktiv II: 'er wäre heute nicht arbeitslos, wenn er die Lehre nicht abgebrochen hätte'. However, it was not necessary to use such complex language and the majority of successful answers were expressed more straightforwardly for example 'Es war ein Fehler'.

- g) Many candidates seemed not to understand the penultimate paragraph in its entirety. 'Einstellung' in the last 2 questions was clearly not understood by many who took it to mean 'taking on/hiring an employee'. A number of candidates thought 'zu den Bewerbern' referred specifically to Ellerbeck and gave answers such as 'er hatte keinen Erfolg' or 'sie ignorierten seine Bewerbung'. Alternatively, there were some very good answers along the lines of 'sie achten nur auf das Zeugnis' and 'sie bewerten die Bewerber nicht als Menschen'.

(g) Laut Ellerbeck, welche Einstellung haben Arbeitgeber zu den Bewerbern?

(1)

Sie überlegen nur die Zeugnisse.



This candidate demonstrates that s/he understands both the question and the text. Although the verb used is perhaps unusual in the context, the message is very clearly and concisely conveyed.

- h) Many candidates wrote down just the hourly rate or monthly wages that companies are prepared to pay or went with the idea of 'man findet einen Kompromiss'. Weaker candidates seeming to think that 'Stundenlohn' meant student loan.

Question 8

Examiners were pleased to note a great improvement in candidates' examination technique in this section. The task seemed generally to be accessible to candidates of all abilities, with only a few getting hold completely of the wrong end of the stick.

Disappointingly, however, relatively few candidates used the stimulus in an imaginative way and many just ignored it - sometimes referring to an advert in a newspaper instead. There were a few who seemed to think they were writing solely for information or ideas on projects to make their own school 'umweltfreundlich'. The concept of an 'Arbeitspraktikum' was frequently misinterpreted as a permanent position and those who had practised writing job application letters, failed to spot any difference between this Arbeitspraktikum and a proper job and therefore offered to work for several years or more. On the other hand, there were those who thought they could fit the work experience into a week at odd hours around their other plans. This often led to irrelevant detail about holiday plans or exam/study commitments.

There were pleasingly few answers which were short but sadly a substantial number of answers were too long. In this latter case, candidates were unable to include the final bullet point within the word count and candidates should be aware that any information which comes after the 220 words will not be assessed. The omission of one complete bullet point automatically reduces the content mark to a maximum of 9. Centres are advised to read the marking principles which come at the end of the mark scheme. These principles detail exactly what will happen when a candidate completes a bullet point only partially, or indeed fails to address a bullet point at all.

- Many candidates tended to write minimally and predictably about who they are. Others came out with long pre-learned paragraphs about their GCE subjects and similar detail. More creative candidates invented an alter ego, and teachers should encourage their candidates to enter into the spirit of the task wherever possible. The second half of the bullet point is straightforward if candidates have read the stimulus. The most obvious reason for writing was that, having seen the advert, they wanted to know more or they wanted to be considered for the work experience placement. On the other hand, very many omitted to give an explanation for their email. Others included irrelevant questions about the costs, accommodation and flight to Germany.

Ich heiße [REDACTED] und ich komme aus England. Ich
schreibe weil ich ~~das~~ ihre Anzeige im Internet gefunden
habe, und jetzt möchte ich gern mit ihrem Team
arbeiten!



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Examiner Comments

This is a safe but secure response to bullet point 1. The candidate states very clearly who s/he is and why s/he is writing.



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Examiner Tip

It is not necessary to expand all bullet points in equal measure. It is possible to offer a relevant but succinct and focused response.

- The majority were keen to stress how much they cared for the environment as a reason for wanting the work placement. Some expressed an interest in visiting Munich, a desire to practise and improve their knowledge of the German language, an interest in working with children now and/or in the future or a desire to meet like-minded environmentally friendly people. Some more interesting answers discussed Germany's status as a more environmentally friendly country and a desire to experience and learn from this. Again, very many included irrelevant material focussing on a list of personal qualities and details why they would be good for the job.

Ich möchte diesen ~~Praktikumsplatz~~ ^{Praktikumsplatz,} ~~Praxis/Praktikum~~
 weil ich der Meinung bin, ~~das~~ dass zu
 viele Kinder kein Umweltbewusstsein
 haben. Ich ~~denke~~ ^{denke} möchte diesen Kinder die
 Umwelt zu Schützen helfen. ~~Ich~~ ^{ich} Auch
~~in Zukunft~~ ^{im Zukunft} will ich, mit Kindern arbeiten
 und diesen Praktikumsplatz könnte gut für
 meine Karriere werden.



The candidate gives a more than adequate response to bullet point 2 in the first half of this paragraph. The reason given links back to the stimulus and shows that the candidate has read and understood it and is able to make use of the stimulus in the answer. The response is then further developed with some personal detail. This represents a well developed and convincing response to the bullet.

- Many candidates did not understand the significance of 'im Bereich Umweltaktionen', and simply concentrated on detailing their own personal contribution to protecting the environment, for example turning off lights, recycling and using public transport. Quite often candidates stated that they had no experience of 'Umweltaktionen' - this is not an appropriate response. As already stated, it is expected that candidates will take on the 'role' required to fulfil the task. Others chose to state their suitability for the job here (i.e. rather than in bullet 2) for example their experience in non related areas or their ability to engage as a good team player. Those who did understand the requirements of the bullet wrote about their work on local environmental projects such as founding or being involved in a school 'Umweltgruppe', introducing paper recycling in each classroom in their school, encouraging the school to use renewable sources of energy, introducing 'walk/cycle to school' days or weeks, or detailed their involvement with organisations such as Greenpeace to clean the streets and parks or protest against CO2 emissions nationally. Some managed to say they worked on a project, but gave no further details about what they did.

The bullet point requires reference to more than one 'Umweltaktion' and the strongest candidates were able to mention more than one action. Candidates who were able to address this bullet point only partially could score a maximum of 12 for Content & Response (as per the marking principles).

~~Ich~~ Ich bin sehr Umweltfreundlich. Jede Tag fahre ich mit dem Bus zur Schule. Ich recyceln viele Produkte zum Beispiel Plastik. ~~Ich~~ Ich fahre nie mit dem Flug, ~~in der Luft~~ da ich weiß, dass es sehr schlecht für die Umwelt ist. ~~Ich habe~~ In meiner Schule recycle ich viel Papier um die Bäume zu schützen.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has not fully grasped the implication of 'Umweltaktionen'. What she has written is not irrelevant as such, but it does not fully address the requirements of the bullet point. The information about the paper recycling at school represents perhaps the beginnings of an Umweltaktion, but this is not developed.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should be aware that they will not have access to the full mark range if they address a bullet point only partially (as in this example).

environmental theme, using the media, advertising and celebrities to promote protection of the environment, restricting cars to one per household or holding an annual national 'Umwelttag'. Others wanted to change Munich with more rigorous measures like introducing congestion charges or getting rid of nuclear power stations. Several emphasised the importance of instilling environmental values in children, insisting that they must be taught in a fun way, using games and exploring nature.

For points 2, 3, and 4 examiners read a lot of pre-learnt material about global warming and alternative energy sources where little attempt was made to relate this to the points in the email.

- Bullet point 5: Some candidates omitted to mention when and or for how long they wanted to work. However, a number of very good candidates went over the word count and thus failed to address this bullet point within the allowed number of words.

Die beste Zeit für mich wäre in die Sommerferien. Ich habe sechs Wochen Urlaub und wäre für alle frei diesen Praktikikum zu machen, für ein oder zwei Wochen.
 Sie ~~es~~ beginnen am 10. Juli bis ^{dem} 26. August.



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Examiner Comments

This represents a concise response to the bullet point. It shows also that the candidate has understood fully the implications of the 'Arbeitspraktikum'.



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Examiner Tip

It is possible to fulfil the requirements of certain bullet points with a succinct but apposite response. Candidates should not feel they have to write at length on each and every bullet. They should make sure though that they have addressed it appropriately.

Language

Only a handful of candidates was unable to write at a satisfactory level or beyond. Many candidates seemed proficient in their use of simple subordinate clauses but struggled with more complex structures such as modal verbs in the perfect tense, the conditional, relative clauses (wer or wie were often used as relative pronouns). Word order and present tense verb endings still pose a problem for many. Most were familiar with the vocabulary relating to 'Umwelt' and 'Umweltschutz'.

Although this task is an email, it still requires the use of an appropriate register. Examiners saw many errors in this context for example 'dein Projekt' - as well as incorrect possessive adjectives 'seine Projekt, seine Team'. Correct use of Sie and Ihr is still patchy.

Candidates should take time to check they have copied items of vocabulary correctly from the stimulus: 'Anziege' was very frequently seen and the spelling of München proved to be a challenge.

General Examiner tips

- The question types which were used in both the SAMs and this question paper are the ones which will feature in all future papers (and in the same sequence). Practice of non-verbal and non-productive question types in both listening (Q1, Q2 and Q3) and reading (Q5) is important as such questions account for 17 marks.
- Basic grammatical knowledge remains essential. This is evident in section C: Writing, of course, but it also helps to ensure unambiguous communication of responses in German in both Q4 (in the listening section) and Q7 (in the reading section).
- Sufficient time must be accorded to Q8 since 30 of the total 70 marks are allocated to this question.

Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	70	53	47	42	37	32
Uniform boundary mark	140	112	98	84	70	56

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