



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCE

In German (9GN0)

Paper 1: Listening, reading and translation

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Introduction

This unit is designed to assess candidates' reading and listening comprehension and translation skills, using a variety of authentic resources. Candidates are required to understand and convey their understanding accurately and have further opportunity to demonstrate their ability to translate accurately from German into English.

The content for the unit is drawn from four themes: *Gesellschaftliche Entwicklung in Deutschland*, *Politische und künstliche Kultur im deutschen Sprachraum*, *Immigration und die deutsche multikulturelle Gesellschaft* and *Die Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands*. Please refer to the specification for further information.

All questions on this paper are marked according to a points-based mark scheme, which is updated at the standardisation meeting to take account of the full range of candidate responses. Certain marking principles are applied by examiners, which teachers need to take into account when preparing candidates for this examination. The most important of these is **the order of elements rule**.

Examiners assess responses in the order of elements given by the candidate and consider no more elements than the number of marks available. Thus, in a 2-mark question, only the first two elements can be credited. However, repeating or paraphrasing the question or a preamble to an acceptable response do not count as elements in the response.

Section A assesses candidates' listening skills. Candidates listen to four extracts which last around 6 – 7 minutes and are recorded and are available for Centre download as an mp3 file. Tasks involve a multiple-choice test, answering questions in the target language on a variety of extracts of varied length, and summarising in German the main points of a passage. The total mark for this section is 30.

Section B is also out of 30 marks and assesses candidates' reading skills. There are five authentic texts in German, with various degrees of difficulty. One of them is a literary text. Task types include multiple-choice tasks, choosing four correct statements out of nine and answering questions in the target language.

Section C is out of 20 marks and comprises a translation from German into English.

The overall time allocation for this paper is 2 hours. Candidates are recommended to start with the listening material and to complete this within 50 minutes. 50 minutes is recommended for Section B and 20 minutes for Section C, although candidates are free to vary this, if they wish. However, it is important to leave sufficient time for the translation because this is worth 25% of the whole paper.

Overall, there were many examples of excellent performances, with candidates demonstrating strong vocabulary knowledge and the ability to manipulate language appropriately. Listening and Reading comprehension sections generally produced a broad range of marks, and candidates showed particular strength in tasks where answers could be drawn directly from the texts. The translation task continues to differentiate effectively, with some candidates producing excellent, idiomatic English, while others struggled to balance literal accuracy with natural expression.

Question 2

Q02 carries five marks and requires candidates to produce written responses in German to questions set in German.

'Lifting' is allowed, although this can lead to transcription errors. However, candidates need to remember that any such 'lifts' must be targeted – indiscriminate transcription of what they have heard is not a guarantee of a mark.

Quality of language is not assessed, and full sentences are not required, but candidates must communicate their answers unequivocally and should be aware that full and detailed information is needed. Some allowances are made with regards to spelling: however, marks are not awarded if a misspelt word becomes ambiguous or an English spelling is used.

The transcript was about the contributions migrants make to the German economy.

Overall, the task was accessible to many candidates, and a wide spread of marks was achieved. Some candidates coped well with a number achieving 4 marks. However, some marks were lost when specific information from the text was missing, and answers were too general.

Q02(a) This question wanted candidates to express that immigrants give more than they take financially to the state for one mark and most candidates achieved this mark. The second idea was that the study proved the German perception that immigrants are damaging the social system as wrong. This was expressed by a good number of candidates but equally many candidates lost out on the mark when simply stating the amount immigrants bring to the economy.

Q02(b) Candidates could obtain 1 mark and most gained this mark. A mark could not be awarded if '*deutsche*' was omitted or the spelling of *Staatsbürgerschaft* became too unrecognisable.

Q02(c) Most candidates gained one mark here and were able to state that the children can acquire language skills or more cultural knowledge.

Q02(d) The final question revealed mixed success. Some conveyed the intended meaning regarding the education of immigrant children (*Ausbildung der Einwanderkinder*), but phrasing

such as *Die Einwanderkinder machen eine Ausbildung* or incorrect word choices like *Forderung* led to marks not being awarded.

Question 3

Q03 required candidates to respond in German to questions set in German and carried 9 marks. The recording featured an interview about the *Montagsdemonstrationen* and the political and social climate in East Germany (DDR):

Q03(a) Almost all candidates scored this mark.

Q03(b) Two marks could be scored in this question, and many candidates did score them. However, some mostly only mentioned the police or the dogs but not both or didn't make it clear who would intervene.

Q03(c) Most candidates scored this mark.

Q03(d) In this question candidate had to mention that the fear subsided to score the mark. Some candidates struggled to transcribe '*wegfiel*' which led to ambiguity. A number of candidates referenced no one knowing where the Stasi was as their answer and did not score.

Q03(e) This was a two-mark question, and the question differentiated well. Relatively few candidates answered succinctly with lack of freedom and fear of the Stasi and either only mentioned economic problems or started their answer with the latter and missing out on the marks due to the order of element rule if they had already given 2 incorrect answers before the correct one.

Q03(f) Many candidates scored a mark for either stating giving hope and courage or allowing criticism of the state.

Q03(g) Most candidates scored this referring to Russia's passivity.

Question 4(a)

Q04(a) This question required candidates to respond in German to questions set in German and carried 6 marks. The recording featured a report about the educational reforms in Hamburg in regards to re-sitting a school year and in Q04(b) the advantages and disadvantages of *Sitzenbleiben* on students and schools were discussed. Candidates demonstrated that they were familiar with this topic and the tasks were approached well.

Q04(a)(i) Most candidates performed well and expressed the idea that Berlin had the lowest rate of pupils repeating a year, though a few candidates used comparatives incorrectly *weniger* and lost out on this mark.

Q04(a)(ii) Most students expressed the idea that it was abolished for classes 1 to 9 successfully.

Q04(a)(iii) Two marks could be gained by explaining the advantages of abolishing this system. However, many candidates did not base their answers on the advantages but on its disadvantages and the marks could not be awarded. Some candidates mentioned it being cheaper but followed that by saying it was *paedagogisch sinnlos* hence only scoring one mark.

Q04(a)(iv) This question required the candidate to respond that the teaching staff are often less qualified and that students already have little time as it is. Most candidates were able to express both ideas successfully and scored these marks.

Question 4(b)

This question required candidates to summarise three main points from the dialogue, making sure to address all of the bullet points.

Candidates who tried to transcribe the whole dialogue were penalising themselves because only the first point made for each bullet point would be credited using the order of elements rule. This is applied discretely. Candidates should ensure to pinpoint the bullet points.

This year, the summarising task discriminated effectively, and it is recommended to read the instructions carefully and ensure the bullet points are linked to *Sitzenbleiben*. Some candidates lost marks by not relating their answer clearly to the bullet point.

Q4(b)(i)

Many understood that repeating a year can disrupt social connections and scored a mark. Bullet point 2 proved trickier as some candidates thought only 2 subjects had to be repeated rather than the whole year and that this would be boring, rather than repeating subjects that you were successful. However, there was a good number of candidates expressing this idea successfully. For the third bullet point, some candidates failed to specify the link between *Sitzenbleiben* and *Schulangst* and only expressed the idea that a third of the students experience *Schulangst* and no mark was awarded.

Q4(b)(ii)

This part differentiated well, and some marks were not scored as vital details were omitted.

The first bullet point was generally summarised well, and most candidates were able to clearly express that pupils would be more motivated to work to be successful rather than having to repeat a year.

The second point was much trickier and even if they clearly expressed the idea of pupils being disruptive if they couldn't understand, many did not link that problem to there being no *Sitzenbleiben*. Similarly, there were some problems making it clear that the standard of the exam would have to fall if more pupils should pass, rather than just stating that it would fall without giving a reason.

Most candidates realised that they needed to be succinct in their answers because a summary requires this, but candidates need to ensure that their answers link to the bullet point sufficiently. On a positive, this year, many candidates pinpointed their bullet points clearly.

Question 6

Q06 required candidates to select four statements in German, from a list of nine. If candidates crossed more than four statements one mark was deducted for each cross in excess of four. Thus, six crosses, including four correct ones, gained a total mark of two.

This text was a text on the beginning of techno music in Berlin after the fall of the wall. This task proved very accessible to all candidates this year. Many candidates were able to cross at least three correct sentences, and some candidates received full marks.

Question 7

Q07 required candidates to respond in German to questions set in German and carried 6 marks.

Quality of language was not being assessed here, therefore under the terms of the mark scheme, misspellings and grammatical errors were tolerated as long as the answer was comprehensible and unambiguous. Full sentences were not required but sufficient detail must be included in the response to answer the question completely.

As in all previous series', targeted 'lifts' were accepted when possible. Targeted 'lifts' meant that candidates did not have to answer using their own language and may rely on the language in the text when this was appropriate. Candidates should also pay attention to the need for the lifted material to answer the question as set. They should be aware that it may not be possible to lift answers from the text for all questions and language manipulation is required.

However, candidates should avoid lifting whole sections out of the German text in the hope that the answer might somehow be found in the 4 or 5 lines copied. This, of course, no longer constituted a targeted lift and no marks could be gained in this instance.

Text 7 talked about the trend of 'influencers' used for online advertising and many candidates were able to access this text and most questions successfully.

Q07(a) This was a 1-mark question, and many candidates gained this mark by stating that she posts her glamorous all-day life on social media.

Q07(b) This question proved accessible to many candidates and many successfully expressed the idea of considering the target group. Some candidates lifted some parts of the text that was often irrelevant like using influencers to advertise goods instead.

Q07(c) Again this 2-mark question was generally well answered, and most candidates gained at least one mark from the possible answers, although a few used the idea of testing products.

Q07(d) This question differentiated well, and a few candidates expressed the idea of a positive reaction and gained the mark. But many candidates related their answer to the influencer instead of advertising stating *erstrebenswertes Lebensmodell* and the mark was not awarded.

Q07(e) Most candidate scored this mark and successfully expressed that data security and reliability are valued most by older people when it comes to media.

Question 8

Text 8 features the literature text and is a literary extract from the novel *Flüsternde Wälder* von Nicola Förg talking about environmental awareness of visitors from cities visiting the countryside. It carries 8 marks.

This type of text will feature again in future years and therefore merits careful attention. Candidates are encouraged to read a variety of authentic text types to prepare successfully for the reading section.

Q08(a) The first question proved tricky to candidates although a number of candidates expressed the idea of them walking in their parks in the city successfully and gained the mark. Some candidates failed to communicate the idea, often confusing possessive pronouns (*sein* vs. *ihr*) or just lifting from the text.

Q08(b) Most candidates achieved a mark as they answered that the increasing number of visitors and the destruction of her hometown causes Irmi to worry.

Q08(c) Two marks could be gained for describing the conflict, stating the urban life is not good for you in the long term but that they do not want to give up the advantages it offers. A range of answers was produced, at times revealing confusion between urban and rural life or just mentioning one aspect and one mark was awarded.

Q08(d) A high level of success was achieved here and almost all candidates expressed successfully that the city people expect *Ruhe* and/or *eine heilsame Atmosphäre* in the forest.

Q08(e) Candidates could obtain 2 marks with this question. Although a number of candidates gained the two marks, some candidates struggled to write the inverse of what was in the text simply quoting what they do wrong rather than what they need to do differently and scoring no

marks. Additionally, it was clear from some of the answers that 'Wege' was not widely understood and the omission of the preposition 'an' when using *halten* rendered the sentence ambiguous.

Q08(f) Most candidates stated that in the past the population was divided between *arm und reich* and gained the mark, although a few candidates wrote between *Stadt und Land* and the mark was not awarded.

Question 9

Text 9 features an article about the incidence in Hoyerswerda from 2011 and the impact on the city. It carried a total of 8 marks. Although some candidates found the text more difficult, there were also many examples of good responses. Some candidates achieved high marks, but the task produced a wide spread of marks overall.

Q09(a) This question was generally well answered with most candidates expressing the idea of an attack on an asylum-seeker home as the reason for evacuation successfully and the mark was awarded.

Q09(b) Two marks could be gained in the next question and most candidates gained at least one mark. Some candidates had problems saying what happened during the attack and only used the two examples of what happened later scoring only one mark. What happened after the attack was generally well conveyed.

Q09(c) This question proved more taxing for a number of candidates who simply lifted from the text more general lines of helping with accommodation, support, etc rather than giving the two specific examples of *Informationsabende* or *Kochkurse* and lost out on the mark.

Q09(d) This question was very accessible, and most candidates managed to express that they had a representative for asylum and integration in the municipal council and scored the mark.

Q09(e) A good number of candidates managed to express two of the three ideas and scored both marks.

Q09(f) This question provided more taxing to some candidates as they did not refer to the problem of a shrinking population but rather what effect the migrants would have on the image of the town or that the population would increase and the marks could not be awarded. *Abwanderung* was not awarded as it is the cause of the shrinking population as well as low birth rates.

Question 10

The translation forms an important part of the whole paper, being worth 20 marks out of a total of 80.

It is therefore crucial that candidates allow themselves sufficient time to complete the task properly. A minimum of 20 minutes is recommended.

The passage is sub-divided into 20 sections, each worth one mark. In order to gain the mark candidates must translate the main nouns, verbs and adjectives correctly, although minor omissions are tolerated if they do not affect the essential meaning of the section.

Translation is considered to be successful if an English speaker would understand the translation without having understood the text in the original language. Misspelling is tolerated as long as it does not lead to ambiguity.

This question produced the full range of marks. A minority appeared to have difficulty with the text as a whole but still accessing easy elements in it. Most candidates were able to translate many parts of the text and rendered it into acceptable English.

There were also some excellent renderings, with very good English. It was often the case that it was clear that the candidate had understood the German but had not been able to express it properly in English. This was either because they adhered too closely to the German or alternatively paraphrased instead of translating. There is a fine line between adapting the original to make it sound more English and completely rewriting the original text although it was reported by examiners that fewer candidates did so than in the past.

Sentence 1 (marks 1-3)

The first sentence was divided into three elements and with many candidates translating all correctly. The second mark was sometimes not awarded as *Mietwohnung* was translated as 'rented flat' and in 1 some candidates forgot to translate *DDR*.

Sentence 2 (marks 4-5)

The second sentence consisted of two parts with almost all candidates scoring the first element (4). (5) proved trickier for some candidates, who did not understand 'Anzeigen' and surprisingly 'Zeitung' was not always recognised and was translated as a time expression.

Sentence 3 (marks 6-7)

The third sentence compromised two marks and discriminated well. Many candidates struggled translating *Wohnhäuser* with 'houses' being the most frequent offering and *staatlich verteilen* which became 'state-owned' and did not score. For (7) the verb 'aussuchen' was often translated as 'look for' or 'search for' with 'by yourself' or 'by themselves' and the mark was lost.

Sentence 4 (marks 8-9)

The fourth sentence was divided into 2 parts. The translation of *fast freier* posed a challenge for some candidates using a comparative and the words *wie wir* was literally translated to 'how we' and the mark was could not be awarded. However, many candidates translated this sentence well scoring both marks.

Sentence 5 (10-12)

This sentence only compromised three elements and also discriminated well. (10) proved tricky with *immer existierenden* as immer was left out in some translations and *Wohnungsknappheit* posed a challenge for some as well. Some candidates struggled to render *verfügbar* and *vergeben* in good English (11), and it was unclear if they understood the German. It often led to a translation stating 'flats with strict rules'. A good number of candidates however scored 12 with an appropriate translation.

Sentence 6 (13)

The sixth sentence is one element only that proved tricky for some candidates. Examiners were instructed to show flexibility for the translation of 'dabei' and there were many successful translations of this element. However, a number of candidates were not able to express the idea of 'decisive' and expressed the idea that this decided the number of family members which did not score

Sentence 7 (14-15)

This sentence compromised two elements, and the first element (14) was very accessible to all candidates. The second element (15) proved trickier and *mit einer spezifischen Quadratmeterzahl* posed a problem to some candidates although a good number of candidates translated it in an acceptable manner and scored the mark.

Sentence 8 (16-20)

The eighth and final sentence comprised five elements and most candidate successfully translated this sentence. The first element (16) was accessible to many candidates only a few struggling to translate *einen Antrag stellen* and thus losing out on a mark and all candidates scored the mark for 17.

The third element (18) in this last sentence was also generally well translated and the majority of the candidates scored this mark only some losing out as *bearbeitet* was rendered to 'worked on' which did not score. Most candidates scored the mark for 19 although a few candidates translated it literally saying 'it was not often so'. The last sentence certainly helped candidates to score.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance in this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Candidates should check how many marks are available for each question and ensure they give the corresponding number of details.
- Candidates should read all questions carefully, paying particular attention to question words and key words in order to ensure comprehension.
- When lifting material from the texts, candidates should be aware of the need to manipulate language in order to answer the specific question asked. Lifting large sections of the text should be avoided.
- Candidates should be aware that Q04b is a summary exercise and that it is therefore unnecessary to transcribe the whole dialogue. Bullet points should be pinpointed clearly, and there must be a clear link between the bullet point and the summary stating the subject (avoid e.g. it).
- Candidates are reminded to plan time effectively, ensuring sufficient time is reserved for the 20-mark translation task.
- Candidates must ensure that their translation reads naturally in English. It is often not possible to translate word-for-word from the original German text.
- Candidates should ensure that they have translated every word and have picked the precise meaning of the word. Giving two options for translating a word should be avoided.
- Candidates should ensure that their handwriting is legible.

