



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In German (9GN0)
Paper 3: Speaking

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Summer 2025

Publications Code 9GN0_03_2506_ER

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Introduction

In the German A-Level Speaking examination, candidates are assessed on their ability to demonstrate:

- Knowledge and understanding of the cultural context by giving ideas, examples and information on one of the themes and on a chosen subject of interest they have researched, and which is linked to the social and cultural context of the language studied.
- Analysis of aspects of the cultural context by presenting and justifying valid arguments, viewpoints and conclusions, illustrated with relevant examples and evidence
- The ability to interact and hold a natural, spontaneous and fluent discourse
- Skill in manipulating and pronouncing language accurately
- Response to written language in speech.

These aspects are assessed via two distinct tasks conducted entirely in German, which are carried out in consecutive order in one session.

The Examination format

Task 1 (Discussion on a theme)

Content for this task is based on any one of the twelve sub-themes from one of the four overall themes listed on pages 8–9 of the specification. Candidates choose one out of two sub-themes to discuss. Stimulus cards are a springboard to the discussion, which the Teacher-Examiner broadens onto other sub-themes of the wider theme. Teachers and candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the themes and sub-themes listed on pages 8–9 of the specification.

Task 2 (Presentation and discussion of candidate's Independent Research Project)

This task is in two parts. Content for this task is based on a subject of interest that candidates have chosen for their independent research project. This may be based on any of the four themes of study listed on pages 8–9 of the specification or on a subject of interest of the candidate's choosing. However, it **must** relate to the cultural and social context of a German speaking country or community.

Key Factors for teachers and candidates to consider in order to attain the highest marks are:

- Maintaining focus on **Germany** for Task 1 discussions on Themes 1, 3 and 4, and on the **German-speaking world** for Task 1 discussions on Theme 2 and for the entire task 2. Credit for AO4 is only awarded when the conversation is focused on the correct geographical areas.
- **Demonstrating knowledge and understanding of Germany and the German-speaking world.** This is assessed in each of the two tasks section by the AO4 mark grid and is worth a total of 24 out of the total of 72 marks. Candidates need not take a definite standpoint on the issues discussed as it is more important to provide an informed and perceptive analysis as part of the discussion. However, it is often by disagreeing with a detail of the statement that candidates demonstrate their knowledge and understanding most effectively.
- In Task 1, Part 1, the Teacher-Examiner **must ask the prescribed questions** in relation to the chosen stimulus card at the start of this task and, after one or two follow-up questions, **move on to another sub-theme within the same overall theme in Task 1, Part 2** (see example Stimulus GN1 below, pages 8-9 and page 21 of the Specification).
- **Interaction**, including participating in a spontaneous, naturally developed discussion, is assessed discretely by the AO1 mark grid, twice in the examination.
- The ability to respond in speech to written German is assessed in Task 2, Part 1 by the AO2 grid. The **presentation** must **clearly reference two sources** named in the RP3 form and provide an **effective summary** of each and a **personal response to these**. These sources must have been originally produced in German. Further detailed guidance appears on pages 10, 12 and 13 below. Teacher-Examiners are encouraged to read this.
- IRP findings are best worded as mini-conclusions (rather than as sub-headings) to allow the Teacher-Examiner to craft suitable questions which elicit both knowledge and understanding (see pages 10, 16 and 17 below).

Task 1 - detail

The stimulus cards proved effective in stimulating discussion and candidates accessed Task 1 at a level appropriate to their ability. There was some confusion amongst Teacher-Examiners about which themes and sub-themes to ask questions on again this year. By way of example, if stimulus card 1 had been selected, the candidate would have 5 minutes to prepare to speak about the following on the sub-theme *Natur und Umwelt*:

STIMULUS GN 1: Task 1

Thema: Gesellschaftliche Entwicklung in Deutschland

Natur und Umwelt

Wählen Sie **EINE** der folgenden Behauptungen (A oder B) und bereiten Sie Ihre Ideen zu diesem Thema für eine Diskussion vor.

A Die deutsche Autoindustrie zeigt keinen Respekt vor der Umwelt.

Gehen Sie auf Folgendes ein:

- *Ihre Meinung zu dieser Aussage über die deutsche Autoindustrie.*
- *Eine andere Industrie in Deutschland, die besonders umweltbewusst ist.*

B Die meisten Bundesbürger werden im Haushalt immer umweltbewusster.

Gehen Sie auf Folgendes ein:

- *Ihre Meinung zu dieser Behauptung über Umweltbewusstsein in Deutschland.*
- *Das gefährlichste Umweltproblem für Deutschland.*

If the candidate selected statement A, the following compulsory questions would be asked:

- *Inwiefern stimmen Sie mit dieser Aussage über die deutsche Autoindustrie überein?*
- *Welche andere Industrie in Deutschland ist besonders umweltbewusst?*

After that discussion and one or two follow-up questions (see examples on page 3 of the Teacher-Examiner booklet) on the same topic, the Teacher-Examiner would then move on to ask questions about **another sub-theme of the overall theme** i.e. in this case, ***Bildung*** or ***Die Welt der Arbeit***.

The answers given to the two prescribed questions in Task 1 inform the overall mark for AO4 for Task 1 and are considered along with any subsequent knowledge and understanding offered by the candidate in the discussion which follows.

There are no discrete marks awarded for these two questions (example answers can be found in the Indicative Content in the Mark Scheme). Therefore, there is little to gain from talking at great length in response to the two compulsory questions. After they have been briefly addressed, the Teacher-Examiner is encouraged to skillfully find ways of moving on, particularly if the candidate is struggling with the first two questions. Examiners are also looking to credit knowledge and understanding of the sub-theme demonstrated in answer to

the follow-up questions, which the Teacher-Examiner may devise, as well as knowledge and understanding of a **different sub-theme from the same overall theme** in Task 1, Part 2. The Teacher-Examiner is free to choose which of the two remaining sub-themes to devise their own questions on here.

Candidates and teachers should be aware of how the **sub-themes are grouped on pages 8-9 of the specification**, so that they understand the implications of the choice of stimulus card for the ensuing topics that may be discussed in Task 1, Part 2.

Some candidates appeared not to be used to spontaneous questions and struggled to respond, whilst able to recite pre-learnt all-purpose answers. This not only affected their marks for AO1 (interaction – spontaneity) and AO3 (language – intonation) but also sometimes meant that a relevant answer to the question put was not given, limiting marks for AO4.

Feedback on the German A Level Speaking Examination 2025

(see also Key Factors on page 3)

Task 1 – Feedback on specific points relating to the stimulus cards

The first question seeks the candidate's opinion on what they have just read, the second asks for factual information about the sub-theme. This is relevant to the candidates' preparation. In answers to both, candidates must show detailed knowledge of socio-cultural matters substantiated by well-chosen examples. They are rewarded for developing their answer by analysing these and drawing convincing conclusions when evaluating whether the statement is reflective of Germany/the German-speaking world.

In most cases, candidates had sufficient knowledge to discuss the compulsory questions. Their range of relevant vocabulary was often impressive, although some offered little by way of analysis. On occasion, candidates did not refer to Germany or German-speaking countries or referred to Austria and Switzerland in themes other than Theme 2 ***Politische und künstlerische Kultur im deutschen Sprachraum***.

GN1 – *Natur und Umwelt*

Candidates had good knowledge of well-known environmental initiatives in Germany such as the *Pfandsystem* or *Mülltrennung* but did not always articulate/substantiate a view on whether Germans are becoming ever more environmentally aware *im Haushalt*. Whilst some candidates successfully commented on the relatively slow progress made by German car industry with electric vehicles, many had limited specific knowledge about the German car industry and very few offered examples of other sustainable businesses in Germany. There was a wide range of perceptive answers on the greatest environmental danger for Germany currently.

GN2 – Bildung

Candidates tended to give general answers on '*die Situation von Studenten*' (referred to on page 8 of the specification). Although most were able to articulate some of the costs which students in Germany face, there was very little detailed information on BAföG or other forms of financial support available. Knowledge of the different types of university in Germany was also limited. The questions on typical student experience at university were also answered mostly with generalities (in some cases referring to the chaos that students themselves cause). However, the most successful candidates reflected on some of the current challenges, including students being allowed to determine the length of their study, limited digitalisation and overcrowding.

GN3 – Welt der Arbeit

Successful candidates were able to analyse the *Mittelstand* in Germany and the impact that smaller, family-owned companies with long-serving employees will have on relationships between colleagues which may (or may not) differ from the more formal workplace etiquette encountered in many workplaces in Germany. Candidates also had a good understanding of the favourable employment conditions which exist in Germany and how these are increasingly allowing flexible ways of working. Other than this positive development, few candidates offered detailed information on what had changed recently in the workplace in Germany or on the protections which certain categories of workers are afforded – for example, by the 2006 *Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz*.

GN4 – Musik

Candidates were familiar the platforms through which music is accessed in the German-speaking world but tended not to analyse this – for example, surprisingly few argued that there is a burgeoning live *Musikindustrie* alongside. The open question about music trends was answered narrowly by most candidates: Deutschrap. Some were able to develop this and migration, citing the trend as evidence of successful integration. Music trends in the past and trends in music-learning in the region were rarely mentioned. Candidates enthusiastically shared views on successful German-speaking singers and rappers but rarely analysed the reasons behind this success effectively. The most informed candidates were able to explain the challenge for German-language music outside the region and to offer examples of artists who overcome it and why.

GN5 – Die Medien

In Statement A, candidates tended to give general answers on the pros and cons of social media and what they offer older people, in some cases without any reference to German-speaking countries. The most successful candidates focused on the wording of the question and provided pertinent examples of (and commentary on) the use of social media by different political parties in the recent *Bundestagswahl*.

Statement B was frequently interpreted by candidates as referring to *soziale Medien* exclusively which meant that they missed the opportunity to explain the enduring appeal of some traditional shows. Successful answers explained the shift from print/TV to online and what this means for the German-speaking world. Some candidates gave cogent examples to support their view that social media has a predominantly negative impact on German-speaking countries with examples drawn from the political arena in Germany and Austria, as well as of trolling and online hate.

GN6 – Die Rolle von Festen und Traditionen

Very few candidates selected Statement A.

In Statement B, candidates tended to focus on *Weihnachten* and *Oktoberfest* whilst recognising the challenges that these may represent for people who are not Christian or who do not drink alcohol. Some candidates were able to develop this, explaining measures which make these more inclusive. Some interesting regional and local festivals in Austria, Switzerland and Germany were discussed.

GN7 – Die positive Auswirkung von Immigration

Candidates clearly recognised the positive and enriching contributions to culture in Germany by migrants in a range of fields such as music, film and cuisine. They were also able to articulate and provide examples of the negative incidents which some migrants have experienced in recent years which indicate that not all German citizens appreciate this contribution. Candidates discussed the historic contribution of *Gastarbeiter* to the *Wirtschaftswunder* and that of more recently arrived migrants successfully. The best answers linked the economic benefits which migration brings to Germany (more, younger taxpayers taking up empty training and employment positions) to labour shortages in specific sectors, the ageing population and the declining birth rate. A few candidates misread the question and talked about problems which migrants could cause.

GN8 – Die Herausforderungen von Immigration und Integration

Very few candidates selected this stimulus card.

GN9 – Die staatliche und soziale Reaktion zur Immigration

Statement A was usually well answered. Candidates offered the view that right-wing extremism was not well managed in Germany with the result that attacks on refugee accommodation are regular and xenophobic slogans are becoming normalised on social media. The most successful answers gave compelling explanations of the increase in support for the *AfD* and of the geographic distribution of its voters, referencing the tensions within a democracy where freedom of speech is respected. They also demonstrated insight into the relatively recent legacy of communism in this context. Candidates had impressive knowledge of the integration courses offered by the *BAMF* and some recognised that integration may be experienced very differently by refugees depending on their country of origin.

GN10 – Die Gesellschaft in der DDR vor der Wiedervereinigung

Very few candidates selected Statement A.

For Statement B, many candidates lacked knowledge of the benefits of having contacts in the West for the purpose of obtaining ‘luxury’ goods and information. Instead, they provided general answers about life in the GDR. The most successful answers analysed the statement, arguing against it that those with *Westkontakte* could end up under greater scrutiny by the Stasi and that Stasi and other party members had the most comfortable life in the GDR. Candidates were sometimes unclear about who was permitted to travel to the West and for how long.

GN11 – Ereignisse vor der Wiedervereinigung

There were many good responses with candidates expressing interesting views on why and how the *Montagsdemonstrationen* remained peaceful despite the violence with which resistance to the regime had been met both in the GDR (e.g. at 40th anniversary parade) and beyond. Knowledge and understanding of events on the day of the fall of the Berlin Wall were also sound, with most candidates explaining the Schabowski press conference and what followed adequately.

However, some candidates considered only why GDR citizens wanted to escape (e.g. via the West German Embassy in Prague or during the Pan-European Picnic at Sopron), reasoning that they did not like living under the SED-Regime. More successful answers evaluated the main cause of the fall of the Wall, engaging with the wording of Statement B (*Hauptgrund*). They explained that what was wanted above all was reform, including the lifting of travel restrictions, supporting their argument with reference to the slogan: ‘*Wir bleiben hier*’.

GN12 – Deutschland seit der Wiedervereinigung

On Statement A, candidates displayed reasonable knowledge of current unemployment rates in the former GDR. Some included excellent information on the rate in different states. However, others focussed their answer on the GDR time period which did not allow them to access the full range of marks. Few were able to articulate compellingly the reasons for continued unemployment in the *neue Bundesländer* so long after the fall of the Wall.

On Statement B, the reasons for and consequences of migration from East to West tended to be discussed in general terms with few candidates reflecting on the success of *Aufbau Ost*, the demographics and the challenges of levelling up East and West Germany. Many candidates misinterpreted Statement B and gave answers explaining why GDR citizens wanted to flee the SED-Regime. Teachers should ensure that all candidates understand the meaning of ‘*die alten/neuen Bundesländer*’ and that these terms relate to the period after reunification.

Feedback on candidate performance on Task 1 under each Assessment Objective is provided below.

Task 2 – Feedback regarding the Independent Research Project

Candidates are free to choose the topic of their Individual Research Project, which forms the basis of Task 2. There were as usual, a wide range of excellent ideas for topics. Many candidates had given their project and research a great deal of thought and spoke passionately about their findings.

In choosing their topic, candidates often respond to key topical issues. This year, the *AfD* was the most frequent topic, with a range of historical and biographical topics remaining popular choices. Interesting titles included:

- How are women represented in German cinema?
- To what extent is *Erinnerungskultur* 'important in Germany today'?
- *Die Zukunft der Elektromobilität in Deutschland.*
- *Inwiefern ist Kraftwerk die einflussreichste deutsche Band aller Zeiten?*
- *Wie wichtig sind deutsche Märchen für die deutsche Kultur?*

Some titles were so closely connected to the sub-themes studied that they did not generally allow candidates to show deep knowledge and understanding of a specific area of independent research. Similarly, some titles chosen were purely descriptive e.g. biographies. This did not assist candidates in formulating personal, perceptive conclusions based on evidence.

Task 2, Part 1

Many candidates scored full marks for their IRP presentation.

Regrettably, many lost marks on their presentation unnecessarily by introducing the topic generally without reference to sources or by beginning to present their research findings.

By way of reminder, marks for the IRP presentation are awarded for:

- Naming two sources which were written in German
- Summarising each of these sources
- Giving a personal response to each/both of the written sources (e.g. their importance, helpfulness, reliability)
- Justifying that personal response.

Task 2, Part 2

There were many excellent performances on the IRP discussion, with two main areas emerging where this could be improved:

- **Analyse rather than describe:** some candidates spent much of their IRP discussion narrating events without analysing/evaluating them. This impacted the marks that they were able to score for AO4.
- **Avoid reciting pre-learnt material:** whilst it is understandable that candidates wish to prepare well, reciting long passages of pre-learnt text can limit their ability to score marks for interaction (AO1) and sometimes also impacted their intonation (AO3).

Feedback on candidate performance on Task 2 is provided below under each Assessment Objective.

Application of the Mark Grids to each Assessment Objective

Task 1 and Task 2, Part 2 assess AO1 (interaction), AO3 (accuracy and range of language) and AO4 (knowledge and understanding of German society and culture and, for Theme 2, of the German-speaking world). These three mark grids were applied in the same way in both tasks. Task 2, Part 1 (presentation) has its own specific mark grid: AO2.

Below is a summary of how candidates' performances were placed into the mark bands in this session.

AO1 – Interaction

Task 1 (6 marks) and Task 2, Part 2 (6 marks)

The interaction between the candidate and the Teacher-Examiner is assessed in both parts of the examination.

A mark of 0 was awarded in cases when there was a complete lack of spontaneity, but this was very rare.

1-2 marks were awarded for candidates who were heavily dependent on prompting by the Teacher-Examiner. Such candidates may have been unable to complete the points that they were trying to make or responded with pre-learnt answers.

3-4 marks were awarded to candidates who demonstrated some spontaneity. The development of the discussion and the introduction of new ideas, examples and opinions were likely to be elicited by the Teacher-Examiner, rather than offered by the candidate, when a mark in this band was awarded. A mark of 3 may indicate a lack of spontaneity at times, or the occasional need for encouragement to develop the answer with questions from the Teacher-Examiner such as: *“zum Beispiel?”*, *“und warum ist das wichtig?”*

Candidates were awarded marks in the 5-6 band if their responses demonstrated spontaneity whilst also leading the discussion by adding examples, opinions and justifications or introducing contrasting points of view, without needing to be prompted. As part of a natural discussion, the Teacher-Examiner may seek further information, but the development of the discussion will not be dependent on this. In this mark band, it is likely that fewer aspects of the sub-theme will be discussed, but in greater depth, with the candidate dominating the discussion.

Questions asked by the candidate are an aspect of interaction likely to be evident in all performances, regardless of the marks awarded. However, this does not automatically place the performance in any one of the three mark bands.

In the 0-2 mark range, questions may have been asked as part of an entirely unspontaneous performance or because the candidate was unable to respond in any other way.

In the 3-4 mark range, the candidate may have asked questions at times which sound unnatural. The candidate may have interrupted their own development, as they prioritised asking a question over giving a more developed answer. If the Teacher-Examiner then changed the subject after responding to the candidate, this may have curtailed the development of the discussion. In both this and the lower band, it was also often clear that the candidates felt uncomfortable with question formation, and it sounded somewhat ‘staged’.

At the 5-6 mark range, candidates asked questions naturally in order to clarify what the Teacher-Examiner had said. They were confident in reframing the question to check their understanding with the Teacher-Examiner. They sought the opinion or agreement of the Teacher-Examiner only after they had given a full and detailed answer of their own.

Candidates are more likely to raise performance under AO1 by practising ways to develop arguments, rather than asking pre-rehearsed questions. **Initiating communication** is what is rewarded, and asking a question in only one, very straightforward way of evidencing this.

How Teacher-Examiners can support candidates in AO1:

- Encourage candidates to take the initiative to develop points, using strategies such as ‘point, evidence, evaluation’ strategy.
- Encourage candidates to seek clarification, if needed, **before** answering.
- Practise phrases which allow the candidate time to change their mind or re-articulate their ideas.

- Ask follow-up questions on what the candidate has actually said, encouraging them to develop their thoughts, before changing the focus of the discussion.
- Explain to candidates that asking a question does not automatically raise their mark, especially if it sounds rehearsed
- Explain to candidates that reciting long passages of pre-learnt text will limit their marks for AO1.

AO2 – Responding to Written German in Speech

Task 2 part 1 only – Presentation of an Independent Research Project (12 marks)

This mark grid assesses the candidate's ability to give a spoken response to **written** German.

If the presentation exceeded the two-minute time limit, Examiners did not consider the content beyond that time when awarding marks.

If only one source was summarised before this time limit, the information on the second source was disregarded. At least two written sources must be summarised to be awarded a mark of 3 or higher, and a balance between sources is required to be awarded a mark higher than 6

Marks cannot be awarded to candidates who do not present evidence that they are responding to **written German** e.g. a presentation which is a general introduction to the topic chosen and which does not mention any of the sources. Candidates who speak only about sources not written in German or about a topic unrelated to German-speaking countries also cannot be awarded marks for AO2. A significant number of centres/candidates this year seemed unaware of the requirements of Task 2, Part 1. We have included a transcript of a sample presentation in this year's mark scheme to illustrate a possible structure. Please see also page 10 above.

1-3 marks were awarded to candidates who mentioned written sources but did not clearly summarise the author's points e.g. a passing reference to sources, followed by some general background information. Candidates who referred to one source only were awarded a mark in this band.

4-6 marks requires that the candidate refer to at least two written sources. The summary may have focused primarily on one source. Or, it may have been balanced evenly across two appropriate sources, but there may have been a lack of **personal response to the sources** or the **author's** ideas. Summaries which were unclear to the point that it was difficult to distinguish which information came from which source may have been awarded a mark in this band.

7-8 marks were awarded to presentations which mentioned two appropriate sources, summarising the points they make clearly. In this session, many candidates successfully

summarised the source articles well, but did not offer a personal response or justification relating to both of those source articles.

The remaining marks up to 12 were awarded to presentations that gave an effective summary of two appropriate sources, in which the source referred to was always clear to the Examiner, together with personal responses to both sources and justification of these personal responses. There were some impressive analyses of which written source was more convincing and why.

Many candidates were awarded full marks for AO2. Candidates of all abilities were able to access full marks for this assessment objective; quality of language is not assessed in Task 2, Part 1 and appropriate, understandable presentations which met the criteria were awarded.

How Teacher-Examiners can support candidates in AO2:

- Explain clearly what needs to be covered in the presentation: at least **two sources written in German** must be referred to, **points from each source must be clearly presented** with a **personal response** to each or both **source(s)** and a **justification** of that response. General points about the topic cannot be credited.
- Practise the summary presentation task as frequently as possible throughout the course. For example, if the topic of *Bildung* has recently been covered in class, candidates can take two of the texts used and create a presentation based on those.
- Encourage candidates to be sensible about the length of their written source summaries to comply with the time constraints. They should expand on these during the discussion which follows the presentation and it is helpful to refer to further sources at that point.

AO3 – Accuracy and Range of Language

Task 1 (12 marks) and Task 2, Part 2 (12 marks)

The mark grid used to assess the quality of language covers four main features:

- Accuracy – conjugation, agreements, word order, tense formation
- Range – lexis appropriate to the topic of discussion including use of idiom and grammatical structures, as listed in Appendix 3 at page 50 of the Specification (this includes complex tenses, variety of mood and voice)
- Pronunciation
- Intonation

Examiners consider all these points in the context of the primary goal of effective transmission of ideas. When the candidate's performance falls into different marks bands for each of the characteristics, they arrive at a best fit mark. For example, if the accuracy and range are worthy of the top mark band, but the pronunciation is weaker, the mark may be awarded at the bottom end of the top band, or the top of the band below.

A candidate who attempts to use a wide range of lexis and structures, with good pronunciation and intonation, but who also makes mistakes with adjective endings and word order, may be awarded a similar mark to an accurate candidate, who operates within a more limited range of structures and lexis, even though the two performances may sound very different. Non-native speakers must have access to the full marks available here, and Examiners complete standardisation with this fundamental principle in mind.

Candidates awarded a mark of 1-3 are likely to have been frequently unable to express ideas, due to limited range of lexis and structures at their disposal. Due to accuracy, pronunciation or intonation difficulties, the Examiner may not readily understand many of their ideas.

Candidates awarded marks in the 4-6 band are unlikely to have impeded communication, but there will have been occasions when communication broke down.

In the 7-9 band, the candidates will have used topic-specific lexis and will have been usually able to make themselves understood. Pronunciation and intonation will not be a barrier to communication in this band.

It is likely that there will be some errors in the performances of candidates in the 10-12 band, but they will not have hindered communication. Examples of such errors are incorrect genders, case endings, lapses in prepositions. Candidates will have nonetheless demonstrated use of appropriate lexis across a range of topics and made a clear attempt to avoid mother-tongue interference in pronunciation and intonation.

The full range of mark bands was used in assessing the candidates in this session. The requirement to show knowledge and understanding of the German-speaking world encouraged many candidates to utilise a broad vocabulary. Examiners frequently credited passives (although many seemed pre-learnt), relative clauses, conditional perfects, subjunctive II, varied discourse markers and idiom. The imperfect and subjunctive I were also credited but were heard rarely.

How Teacher-Examiners can support candidates in AO3:

- Encourage candidates to gather a range of topic-specific vocabulary for each aspect of each sub-theme, and to use synonyms to avoid repetition.
- Explore ways to make basic opinions more linguistically sophisticated, e.g: “it is good”, becomes “it is positive”, better still “it is extremely positive”, even better still “It is an extremely positive development”, or even “It is viewed as an extremely positive development by many Germans.” The idea is the same, but the linguistic range is instantly lifted.
- Ensure that candidates get the basics right: subject/verb agreement should be secure at this level and the substitution of English words should be avoided.

AO4 – Knowledge and Understanding of German-speaking Culture and Society
(Germany only except for Theme 2)

Task 1 (12 marks) and Task 2, Part 2 (12 marks)

The AO4 mark grid assesses:

- Relevance to the German-speaking world **and to the questions asked.**
- The ability to support an idea with examples.
- The ability to analyse the evidence presented and justify conclusions.

The best fit mark is awarded. A list of facts about the German-speaking world will be considered as examples, but if they are not relevant, or not used to draw a conclusion, this list alone will not achieve the highest band of the mark grid. Similarly, opinions and conclusions about the German-speaking world will not satisfy the full criteria unless supported by relevant examples.

In this session, Examiners awarded the full range of marks in this grid.

A mark awarded in the 1-3 band indicates a performance that made limited reference to specific examples, relying on general description – for example, an opinion limited to positives and negatives, such as ‘technology has many advantages, but social media may be dangerous because young people can become addicted to it’ is a general statement not focused on German-speaking society.

In the 4-6 band, there was evidence of some specific examples from the German-speaking world which were relevant to the topics being discussed.

However, sometimes irrelevant facts were given, or assertions made that were unsubstantiated. For example, a candidate may have explained that *Gastarbeiter* made a positive contribution to the German economy without an explanation as to how.

A performance in the 7-9 band typically used examples consistently rooted in German (-speaking) society and culture and provided some analysis of the significance of this information, demonstrating deeper knowledge, and may have gone beyond the standard, well-known response e.g. describing different waves of immigration to Germany with relevant personal reactions. In Task 2, Part 2, a mark in this band was often awarded for candidates who demonstrated excellent factual knowledge of their chosen topic but did not offer sufficient evaluation or analysis.

A mark in the 10-12 band was awarded where candidates frequently demonstrated an ability to provide perceptive insights - for example, ‘immigration to Germany over decades for both economic and humanitarian reasons has contributed to a *Willkommenskultur*’, together with an explanation of what this is and why it is important. This assertion may have been developed

by up-to-date examples of the social challenges that high immigration levels have given rise to e.g. in relation to housing. These challenges could then be weighed against the benefits of immigration in the context of the average age of workers in Germany and the lack of workers in specific sectors to offer a conclusion based on the balance of evidence.

How Teacher-Examiners can support candidates in AO4:

In Task 1 and Task 2, Part 2:

- Encourage candidates to gather up-to-date facts and examples from
- German language media, which demonstrate current thinking on the topics in the specification.
- Encourage candidates to take the initiative to develop points, using strategies such as ‘**point, evidence, evaluation**’ approach, to ensure that they maintain a balance between factual and analytical ideas.
- Make use of the indicative content provided on the Edexcel website for past Speaking Papers. This is not a “mark scheme” or a “correct answer” but provides a wealth of versatile examples.
- Teacher-Examiners **must** make a concerted effort to ask questions which lead the candidate to focus their answer on the relevant geographical area in both Tasks.
- Teacher-Examiners must focus their questions for Task 2, Part 2 on the **key findings** which the candidate has written on the RP3 form (see ‘Practical Reminders’ below and refer to the current GCE Modern Foreign Languages Conducting Speaking Assessment Administrative Support Guide) whilst probing for reasons and analysis so that the task does not become a ‘cue and response’ exercise with candidates producing only rehearsed material. The key findings should be used to structure the discussion and more than one question per finding should be asked so that the candidate can expand on their research.

How Teacher-Examiners can support candidates in AO4:

In Task 2, Part 2: guiding candidates on their IRP

- Encourage candidates to formulate their **IRP title** as a question or statement of opinion so that they can demonstrate the analytical aspect of AO4. There should be a variety of opinion on the topic from which conclusions can be drawn. For example: , *Der Palast der Republik*’: *was it a mistake to tear it down and replace it?*
- The 6-10 findings should be **brief findings** i.e. mini-conclusions from the candidate’s research. For example, they may begin with phrases such as:
 - “The role of ... was ...”
 - “The importance of...was ...”
 - “The advantages of...was ...”
 - “The reasons for... are ...”
 - “The different reactions to....”

The key findings should **not** be written as questions which the candidate wishes to be asked, nor as a lengthy script, nor as a single word such as '*Klimawandel*'; these do not demonstrate analysis by the candidate.

Please feel free to make use of our "*Ask the Expert*" service in the planning stages of the IRP, for help and guidance on the choice of suitable topics.

Important Practical Reminders for Teacher-Examiners on the Conduct and Administration of the Speaking Examination

A well-conducted examination can ensure the best experience for candidates. The hard work that goes into preparing candidates for their Speaking examination is appreciated and Examiners seek to reward good performances whenever possible. Please take the time to read the reminders below.

Before the examination:

- **RP3 forms** must be prepared in accordance with the specification. Care should be taken to ensure that at least two written sources in German are properly referenced on the RP3 form so that the Examiner can access them if necessary.
- Centres who are new to the specification or who do not regularly enter multiple candidates are encouraged to read **the Specification and the GCE Modern Foreign Languages Conducting Speaking Assessment Administrative Support Guide** to ensure that their candidates have the best chance of success. Several centres were not sufficiently familiar with the requirements in this session.
- The Speaking examination should be planned around the routines of the centre e.g: avoiding lesson changeover / bell-ringing time. The venue should be as quiet as possible with telephones unplugged in advance for the benefit of candidates.
- Teachers and language assistants must **not** practise any part of the IRP using the question/statement or the written sources which candidates wish to use in their A Level examination.

During the examination:

- The recording device should be placed **near to the candidate** rather than the examiner for optimal sound quality. Please do a sound check before starting.
- The Teacher-Examiner should interact naturally with the candidate but only briefly, leaving the maximum time available for the candidate.
- In Task 1, Part 2, Teacher-Examiners must remember to move on to a different sub-theme of the overall theme as explained in the Teacher-Examiner booklet and on page 21 of the Specification.

- The Teacher-Examiner must time Task 2, Part 1 and interrupt the candidate at 2 minutes, but not during the presentation.
- The examination should not exceed 18 minutes in total, starting from the candidate's first utterance in response to the first set question. The timing of section 1 is recommended to be 6-7 minutes.

After the examination:

- **Signed and properly completed RP3 forms must be uploaded** in LWT together with audio files and **signed CS4 forms**. Paper 3 Examiners greatly appreciate the efforts of centres in making the exams run smoothly to allow their candidates to reach their full potential. Prompt uploading avoids delays in marking.

We look forward to working with current Edexcel centres in the future and to welcoming new centres to the Edexcel A-Level in German.

