

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Paper 2: Reading and Writing

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International GCSE/Edexcel Certificate German

Paper 2 Reading and Writing

Examiners' Report

General Comments

Examiners felt the paper tested different abilities well. The topics were all relevant to young people wherever they may live and had a connection to the main country where the target language is spoken, particularly with the reading comprehension on the 'Bochum Total Festival'. The writing tasks were varied and accessible at different levels of performance. In general candidates had been well prepared by centres and they were able to meet the requirements of both the Reading and Writing tasks.

Question 1 (Problems)

This topic presented some difficulties to weaker candidates, with *Magen* and *Halsweh* being the lexical items which were least well known. Nonetheless, most candidates were able to score four or five marks.

Question 2 (At Home)

Most candidates were able to score three marks and above on the question, with *bügeln* and *staubsaugen* being the lexical item which presented most problems. Nearly all candidates were able to achieve marks for (ii) and (v), as *Tisch* and *Auto* are such common place items of vocabulary.

Question 3 (Food)

(a) (What are these young people saying?)

This question is targeted at candidates in the C/D grade bands. Where these level candidates lost marks it was, rather surprisingly, sometimes on (i) *Backen* as *gebacken* was in the text relating to Finn, which was the correct response.

(b) (What do you like/not like to eat and why?)

Candidates are expected to write approximately 50 words in German on the topic given.

The accessibility of the topic area "Food" gave most candidates the opportunity to achieve high marks. It was evident that they had been well prepared by centres. This could be seen in the variety of relevant and appropriate lexis that was used to describe food and

eating habits (*Ernährung, Portionen, Ballaststoffe, Pilze, Zwiebeln, Lachs, salzig, fettig, lecker, ekelhaft, schmackhaft, köstlich, es enthält, ist reich an, selbstgebacken, igitt etc*). Candidates also referred to *gesundes /ungesundes Essen, Fast Food etc*.

Some stronger candidates wrote much longer answers than the required 50 words. There is no need for this.

The stimuli for Q3b were used extensively. Many candidates wrote about their *Schulkantine* or even *Mensa*, usually stating how bad the food was there. A *Lieblingsrestaurant* was almost always mentioned, most often a fast food chain but others wrote about Italian or Asian or Indian restaurants. The candidates were not always able to give the correct adjectives. (*Italian/Italisch/Indianisch/Indian Restaurant*). Mentioning a favourite restaurant also gave candidates the opportunity to add a subordinate clause (*weil die Hamburger da so gut sind/da ich spanisches Essen liebe*). *Hähnchen mit Pommes* were a favourite although the spelling of *Hähnchen* was frequently incorrect.

A number of candidates stated that they were *Vegetarier* with various spellings and some examples of what they could and could not eat and why, one stating *Ich esse Vegetarier wenn ich kann*.

The weakest candidates tended to use repetitive structures and vocabulary and had difficulties with verb endings. All, however, were able to offer the correct form of *ich esse*.

Q4 (Environment)

This question targets higher grades (C and B). There were many correct answers for five marks and most candidates were able to achieve three marks. Where candidates lost marks it was on F *Sie haben ein Spielzeug gefunden* with candidates being unable to make the link with *Puppe*.

Q5 (Bochum Total Festival)

It is acceptable for candidates to give short answers, as comprehension only is tested and candidates' language is not assessed provided it communicates without ambiguity. It is also acceptable for candidates to use language from the text, provided it is a 'targeted lift', i.e. the exact response to a question. Copying an entire sentence, however, is usually not successful, as it does not demonstrate that the candidate has understood the question.

Centres are advised to ensure candidates can use personal pronouns and possessive adjectives correctly. Many candidates lost

marks due to an incorrect personal pronoun which led to ambiguity and so could not be awarded marks.

a) Quite a number of responses lost the mark here because of an incorrect possessive adjective - *seine(e) Bruder*. Some candidates saw the well-known words *Zelt* and *Freunde* and did not know *statt*. Very weak students just wrote *Bochum total* or *Musikfest* or *Bochum*.

b) This also presented some challenges. A common incorrect answer was *weil alle Hotels ausgebucht waren*. Many chose *Florian hatte Uniarbeit* as a correct answer, fewer *sie musste allein aufs Festival gehen*. Many managed to convey the meaning of *Florian hatte Uniarbeit* or *Florian musste studieren*. Only very few offered *Florian hatte seine Zeit nicht gut geplant*.

c) There were many correct answers here although weaker candidates wrote *das größte kostenlose Festival Deutschlands*, which did not answer the question.

d) Many candidates were able to gain two marks on this question. Where candidates lost marks it was because of ambiguity caused by answers such as *über das Fest ausgetauscht*. There was incorrect pronoun usage, usually the use of *wir*. Many candidates were able to mention Jutta Manser or the festival linked with the idea of a conversation in order to gain one mark. *Kaffee trinken* was given correctly for the second mark by very many. Unfortunately, some of the more able candidates who wrote very fluent and accurate answers, failed to add the detail of *Kaffee trinken* so lost an unnecessary mark.

e) Surprisingly, *bis wann* in the question was taken as *warum* by a large number of candidates and therefore incorrect answers such as *weil die Musik laut ist* or *wegen der lauten Musik* were offered. Even strong candidates gave these or the incorrect *ab 22 Uhr* or *ab 22 Uhr bis 23 Uhr* or *um 22 Uhr*. Correct answers were often just *22 Uhr* without *bis*. *Bis 1989* was also mentioned.

f) About half of the candidates were able to gain at least one mark on this question, usually getting the concept that the town was *überfüllt* right. Quite a number of candidates managed to achieve two marks, identifying correctly that the town also paid for everything. Some candidates had perhaps not understood the question correctly and answered what the problem for the neighbours was rather than for Jutta Manser. At times, there was quite a lot of indiscriminate lifting of the whole paragraph which denied candidates a mark.

g) *Theater unterstützen/gehen* were popular answers and many gained this mark. Some candidates copied out *Stadtmitte Läden besitzen* or gave the extra unnecessary detail that the theatre was expensive.

h) Many candidates lost the mark here as they referred to the festival and not the visitors, e.g. *er findet es gut/er findet das Festival gut* or just *er verdient gut*. Some offered an incorrect direct lift: *Es wird manchmal gesagt ...* Quite a number of candidates mentioned *laut*. Correct answers included *gut/toll/höflich and nicht unhöflich*. Some responses had the acceptable lift *es ist eine Freude sie als Kunden zu haben*.

This year there was an increase in responses which scored no marks at all on Question 5. This question targets the A/B grades.

Question 6

Almost all candidates found the questions accessible. Compared with previous years, all three of the topics gave a lot of scope for candidates' own experiences. As always, the most successful answers were well structured and covered bullet points in the same order as the rubric. Very strong candidates often wrote more than the required 150 words.

Overall many candidates were able to express the notions and concepts they were writing about by using language which went beyond simple structures using, for example, modal verbs, subordinate clauses and the Past and Future tense. Subordinate sentences were usually introduced by *weil, da, obwohl, als* and *wenn*, although the word order was not always successful. Many responses included the subjunctive after *wenn* for the appropriate bullet points. Confident candidates used the Imperfect for some verbs: *aß, trank, ging, gab* but also less able candidates had learned *es gab*.

Many candidates still lack the ability to express preference: *Ich gern alle Fächer. Ich gern alle Filme. Ich lieber eine Party ...* and the concept of enjoying oneself: *man hat eine tolle Zeit. Das war Spaß. Die Party/der Film/Ausflug war Spaß*. "The last time" was often translated as *die letzte Seit/Zeit* and a number of 'false friends' occurred: *bekommen (um Arzt/besser/fitter zu bekommen), überall* for overall and *also* for also. There are still some issues with verb endings, adjective endings and word order. *Modisch* and *modernisch* were encountered fairly frequently. The phrases for expressing opinions were also not always correctly used: *In meiner Meinung nach*, but many candidates used expressions such as *sowohl ... als*

auch, auf der einen ... anderen Seite, wie schon gesagt, im Großen und Ganzen.. correctly.

Q6a) This question was the most popular and worked for students of all abilities. Weaker candidates were able to describe their schools and give details about size, age, location, pupil number, facilities, daily routine and rules. These candidates sometimes produced pre-learnt information about their school without much reference to the bullet points giving descriptions of school uniform, daily routine, favourite teachers and subjects.

Points 1 and 2 were sometimes in one paragraph but students usually expressed their opinion clearly with *ich denke or ich meine*. Stronger students were able to give more developed responses and their opinion on rules, teachers or facilities and were able to explain their opinion. *Schulkantine* and *Schuluniform* were popular features. For point 3 most candidates described some school outing, sports day, non-uniform day, examinations or just interesting subjects. On one occasion David Cameron visited the school, on another Angela Merkel! Very capable candidates linked 2 and 3: *Normalerweise ... aber gestern or ich finde ... aber gestern...* . Equally point 2 and 4 were sometimes linked were candidates were not happy about facilities but things could be improved with €1000. On point 4 new laboratories, buildings, sports facilities, books and libraries were mentioned. Many chose *eine neue Kantine and besseres Essen*. Some students had overly ambitious plans for the money and suggested new buildings, planting a forest, huge sport complexes – this gave them the opportunity to introduce vocabulary on *Umwelt, Gesundheit, Essen and Bildung*. A few students had not read the question carefully and referred to the money that they had already won. A number of students described a day in the past rather than yesterday and a few did not refer to *in der Schule* but wrote about some activities after school. Where less able candidates choose this question, the answers were usually more pedestrian in development and language.

Q6b) Linguistically speaking, this question was perhaps more challenging, but a number of weaker candidates attempted it, attracted by the topic 'Film', but not always giving enough detail to each of the four bullet points. The linguistic ability varied considerably and at times, candidates tried to write complex German but were unable to communicate fully what they were trying to say.

Some candidates did not quite answer the question in bullet point 1 but wrote about their favourite film rather than a genre. Many started with *Ich mag Filme/Ich sehe gern Filme* and some even tried to write a blog with an appropriate register: *Hallo Leute/Hallo*

Freunde. The appropriate lexis was usually confidently used: *romantische/historische Filme, Zeichentrickfilme, Liebesfilme and Komödien* – the latter in a variety of spellings like *Comodie's* or *Komodies*. For point 2 there were many arguments for and against a film at the cinema: more atmosphere, special effects, the food, bigger screen (often given as *der Fernseher ist größer* rather than *Bildschirm* or *Leinwand*) or at home (cheaper, quieter, more comfortable and even the ability to have a *Pinkelpause*). Point 3 usually described the film, company, food. For point 4 candidates mentioned the excitement of meeting famous people and earning lots of money but others found it too stressful, tiring and said that they had no talent. This point gave them the opportunity to use the subjunctive.

Q6c) There were a few short responses and also a number of weak responses to this question. Candidates felt maybe that this was the easiest option in terms of vocabulary and grammar. A few referred to a birthday party in the future or referred to somebody else's birthday party. Some started out with the stimulus ... *hatte eine Party am Wochenende* and then continued ... *wir wollen Fussball spielen auf meiner Party*. Some misunderstood the prompt in bullet point 2 for "What did you do for your birthday?" or "What did you get for your birthday?" and gave more details about the party or presents. Many did not mention point 2 at all. Those who did often referred to preparation (shopping, decorating, baking) or some activities before the actual party (swimming, meal with family). Quite a number of responses took inspiration from Q3 and mentioned food extensively, including a *Schokoladentorte*. Almost all responses were in the form of an email and addressed to Paul.

Although the majority were able to attempt bullet point 4 relatively successfully, there was some tense confusion at times, using *nächstes Jahr* with the Perfect tense. Some candidates used their pre-learnt phrases about holidays to describe where they would go for their next birthday. This was often successful, but in some cases it did not link sufficiently well enough to the birthday theme but appeared to be added in and appeared incongruous to the essay as a whole.

Grade Boundaries

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