

# Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

GCSE German (5GN01) Paper 1F

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## Listening and Responding (Foundation)

Centres seemed to have entered the vast majority of candidates at the appropriate level despite the uncertainties inherent in a new examination format. The English language format of the questions proved accessible; on the previous specification some candidates had difficulty in understanding the German language questions. The Foundation paper differentiated well between candidates of varying abilities. Weaker candidates were able to identify key words and messages from topics with which they were familiar. At the higher end of the scale candidates were able to demonstrate more advanced listening skills, such as identifying main points, details and opinions.

Much of the advice given in reports on the previous specification still applies. Candidates should be prepared to listen for more than key words. They need to develop the skill of listening for gist and to understand simple sentence structure to help them improve their listening skills. As on the previous specification the English language questions at the end of the paper proved particularly taxing to many students. However, the reduced reliance on icons proved advantageous to those candidates who find pictures difficult to interpret.

It is important that candidates are advised on how to best use the five minute preparation time before the playing of the listening material. In many cases this time can be used to narrow down the choice of possible answers. Candidates should be encouraged to attempt all questions; the importance of having a go cannot be over-stressed. All targeted vocabulary on this paper is taken from the minimum core vocabulary listed in the specification.

### Question 1 (Transport)

Most candidates scored well on this question which tested familiar items. *Zu Fuß* and *mit dem Rad* were familiar to almost all candidates. *Zug* and *U-Bahn* proved more taxing for the weakest candidates.

### Question 2 (Shopping)

Clothing is a very familiar topic to candidates and this was reflected in the marks awarded. Many scored full marks. However, a surprising number did not know *Hose*. It was pleasing to see that *Handschuhe* was known by nearly all candidates.

### **Question 3 (School)**

Although this was a more demanding question for Foundation Tier, many candidates coped well with most parts of the question. However, somewhat surprisingly, the majority of candidates at this level did not recognise *zu spät in der Schule angekommen*. Most candidates proved able to distinguish between *Erdkunde* and *Geschichte*. In the final part of the question few candidates were misled by the distracter *während der Pause plaudere ich normalerweise*. Most recognised that he revised for a test.

### **Question 4 (Technology)**

Although this was quite a demanding question at Foundation Tier this is clearly a topic about which candidates are confident and this showed in the answers, the vast majority gaining at least 3 marks. Some candidates penalised themselves by crossing too many boxes. The maximum mark for this question was 4 and therefore only four boxes should be crossed. Most candidates attributed the possible answers correctly to either Eva or Ute. However, weaker candidates were not familiar with *Stelle* in the context of jobs.

### **Question 5 (Family and friends)**

This question discriminated well at this level, particularly Q5ii and Q5iii. The vast majority understood *am 15. März* correctly, which was encouraging as number recognition is often a problem at this level. Many candidates found the combination of *meistens* and *fleißig* difficult to cope with and opted for the distracter *nie launisch*. Characteristics and adverbs of frequency are an area that would merit careful attention as they will undoubtedly occur in future examinations. A majority of candidates did not recognise the past tense in Q5iii.

### **Question 6 (Future careers)**

This question discriminated well at this level, particularly Q6iii and Q6iv. The most straightforward answer was to Q6i, most candidates realising that *mit freundlichen Kollegen* implies a liking of teamwork. *Draußen* in Q6ii was known by most candidates. However, only a minority at this level knew *Gehalt* or *etwas Spannendes* and were able to associate them with the correct person.

### **Question 7 (Directions)**

This crossover question proved very taxing for many Foundation Level candidates. Directions is a frequently tested topic on the listening paper and would merit further practice. The link between *Viertelstunde* and 15 minutes was missed by many and as usual times such as *halb acht* proved problematic. Most candidates coped well with this new question type, realising that in most cases there were only two answers that were possible in the context. Some candidates sensibly wrote the 2 possible choices on the paper during the 5 minute reading time before making their final decision on hearing the listening material.

### **Question 8 (Tourist Office)**

Most candidates scored well on this question as it is a familiar and much tested topic and in a well known format. It was refreshing to see *Zoo* recognised by most candidates on a listening paper and *Stadion* was known to almost all candidates. *Dom* and *Hafen* proved marginally more problematic.

### **Question 9 (Leisure Activities)**

Very many candidates scored full marks on this question which targeted very familiar vocabulary across a range of topics. The only part that caused any difficulties at all was Q9iii; some candidates were not familiar with the days of the week and confused *Donnerstag* with *Dienstag*.

### **Question 10 (Holiday Accommodation)**

This question proved a good discriminator. A very small minority of candidates scored almost full marks, whereas many others only scored with *Wochenende*. *Fluß* was recognised by very few. Some wrote the German word, presumably thinking it was a place name. Other more imaginative answers included France and Florida. As usual prices proved difficult at this level, answers ranging from € 53 to € 5,30. Very few knew *bequem*, despite it being on the vocabulary list in the specification.

A small number of queries were received about the duration of the recording. Edexcel will be offering guidance for this on the front cover of the examination paper and on the recording to provide more clarity.

## **Grade Boundaries**

The modern foreign languages specifications share a common design, but the assessments in different languages are not identical. Grade boundaries at unit level reflect these differences in assessments, ensuring that candidate outcomes across these specifications are comparable at specification level.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link: <http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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