

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2016

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
in German (5GN01/1F)
Paper 1F: Listening and Understanding
in German

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GCSE German

Unit 1F: Listening and Understanding in German

Examiners' Report

General Comments

Centres entered their candidates appropriately at Foundation level for the most part. This year continued the trend noted last year of a greater proportion of candidates being entered at Foundation Level. Centres are reminded that the targeted vocabulary on the Foundation paper is drawn from the minimum core vocabulary list and that questions appear in a sequence of peaks and troughs to encourage candidates to keep going to the end. It is also worth noting that questions follow the sequence of the text and thus appear in chronological order. Grade C/D questions are common to both Foundation and Higher Tiers.

As in previous years, the Foundation paper differentiated well between candidates of varying abilities. Candidates were well prepared for the different test types although questions with a greater choice of answers and open-ended questions requiring students to answer in English continue to be challenging for less able students. Weaker candidates were able to identify key words and messages from topics with which they were familiar. Most questions which require the recognition of single lexical items or short phrases were well done, although some individual items of vocabulary caused problems. Candidates need to develop the skill of listening for gist and to understand simple sentence structure to help them improve their listening skills. It is also important that candidates listen carefully for qualifying adjectives and adverbs, in particular for negatives *nicht* and *kein*. The performance of more able students was characterised by careful reading of the questions, listening to the whole rather than just individual words and a sound knowledge of core vocabulary

It is important that candidates use the five minute preparation time before the playing of the listening material appropriately. 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.

Question 1 (In town)

Although the town should be a very familiar topic for all candidates, some weaker ones found it quite taxing, despite the fact that it merely tested individual vocabulary items within a familiar context. *Schloss*, *Dom* and *Krankenhaus* were unknown to a significant minority of candidates. Thorough knowledge of core vocabulary is vital for success in these questions targeted at the lower grades. The visuals for this question had all been used in previous examinations.

Question 2 (My family)

This question featured a very common topic and was well answered by most candidates. It was pleasing to see that nearly all candidates were able to pick the correct ordinal number and understood *manchmal*. Weaker candidates struggled with *lockige* and failed to recognise the significance of the negative in *keine Ohrringe*.

Question 3 (In the restaurant)

This crossover question discriminated well. Whilst better candidates scored well, weaker candidates found it more challenging, tending to tick answers based on the recognition of individual words rather than listening carefully to the passage as a whole before deciding on the most appropriate answer. Although the vast majority of candidates found Q3i very accessible this was not the case with Q3iii. Only a minority of Foundation candidates were able to equate *Wir waren die Einzigen da* with the restaurant being quiet. Weaker candidates failed to realise that *Es gab zu viele Leute* meant that the restaurant was busy.

Question 4 (Technology)

This crossover question was well done by better candidates but caused problems for others, as one would expect at this level. Q4i and Q4ii were accessible to most candidates whereas Q4iii and Q4iv discriminated much better. Perhaps unsurprisingly, *Stellenangebote* was unknown to many although it does feature in the Minimum Core Vocabulary list. Many did not associate *ich habe ein Computerspiel bestellt* with shopping online. *Bestellen* also features in the minimum core vocabulary. It is important that candidates are familiar with all words on the list.

Question 5 (Free time)

This question, ostensibly targeted at grade E, proved successful in discriminating between better and weaker candidates. Most managed to link going to the stadium with watching sports events. A surprising number failed to spot the connection between *Frankreich* and *Belgien* and going to other countries. Most also recognised in Q4iv that ... *koche ich für meine Familie italienisch* was about food rather than visiting the country.

Question 6 (Maths lessons)

This Grade F question tested commonly used adjectives within the context of school. Predictably, *interessant* was almost universally known but knowledge of the other adjectives was more variable. Just over two thirds of candidates were able to cope with *wichtig*, *schwierig* and *faul*. Centres are advised that it is worthwhile practising adjectives as they will continue to feature in questions at this level.

Question 7 (Lifestyle)

This question, in common with many crossover questions, required candidates to process information and make the connection between the listening material and the statements on the question paper. In general the question differentiated very well. Some candidates identified the correct information but attributed it to the wrong person. In general the answers for Caroline proved more accessible; most were able to link *Schlagzeug in einer Band* with being musical and *Kleidung* with fashion. The other two answers were more deeply embedded; it was only better candidates who associated *hat begonnen, die Schularbeit ernst zu nehmen* with changing her attitude to work.

Question 8 (Staying in a hotel)

There was a huge difference between the performance on different parts of this crossover question. Most students realised that *weil mein Vater Geburtstag hatte* indicated that the family was in Vienna for a family celebration. Hardly any candidates appreciated the significance of *ohne* in Q8iii despite the fact that it is listed among the core vocabulary prepositions. About half of candidates at this level understood *zu weit* and were therefore able to answer Q8iv correctly.

Question 9 (Weather)

This is a very familiar topic which often features at Grades F/G. It was well answered by the vast majority of candidates, although a minority of candidates had difficulties with *es schneit*. The other parts of the question were answered correctly by almost all candidates.

Question 10 (Rail travel)

This Grade E question was a good discriminator with only the best candidates able to score more than 1 or 2 marks. Open-ended questions requiring candidates to answer in English continue to be challenging for weaker candidates. Times (Q10b) are always problematic for candidates at this level and were answered correctly by a very small minority of candidates. Surprisingly only just over half of candidates were able to understand *zwei Stunden*. Few realised that €29 was the cost of the ticket rather than the reservation; only the very best appreciated the significance of *kostenlos*. Imprecise and ambiguous use of English plays a significant role in this question, leading many candidates to drop marks unnecessarily. Candidates are advised to read the questions carefully, focusing in particular on the question words used.

Grade Boundaries

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>