

# Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

GCSE German (5GN03) Paper 3F

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## **Reading and Understanding (Foundation)**

These papers were offered for the second time as part of the suite of papers forming the GCSE 2009 specification.

### **Assessment Principles and Mark Scheme**

A maximum of 40 marks is awarded positively for correct information successfully retrieved and conveyed in each paper. All instructions are in English and no question involves target-language writing. The targeted vocabulary on the Foundation paper is drawn from the minimum core vocabulary list. Centres are reminded that questions appear in a sequence of peaks and troughs to encourage candidates to keep going to the end, and those individual 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.

### **Candidates' Responses**

The examiners were agreed that the papers this summer for both tiers as a whole represented a good test, they were user-friendly and fair to all candidates, with well thought-out and interesting questions. The papers as a whole differentiated well between the weaker candidates and the very able ones.

Centres entered their candidates on the whole appropriately at Foundation level. Consequently, the examiners felt that they were assessing the performance of genuine Foundation level candidates.

### **Question 1**

The topic of places of interest within a town offered candidates a familiar introduction and a chance to do well in their first task. Most candidates scored well although the lexical items 'Einkaufszentrum' and 'Eisstadion' caused problems for the weaker candidates around the F/G borderline. If candidates ticked or crossed more than the required four boxes, then one mark was deducted from their score for each superfluous box ticked or crossed. This rule was applied throughout the paper for appropriate questions.

### **Question 2**

On the topic of Holiday Accommodation most candidates around the C/D borderline were able to match the correct phrases with the various holidays, however, section 2d which was looking for a quiet holiday accommodation proved the most difficult item in this task. Weaker candidates found the task on the whole quite challenging.

### **Question 3**

This was the first crossover question which was common for both Foundation and Higher papers and was attempted successfully by most C/D candidates often scoring full marks. Weaker candidates managed an average of two marks on this topic of 'Ice-Cream Cafés'.

### **Question 4**

This was another crossover question and posed more of a challenge to weaker candidates who found it difficult to distinguish between the different tenses, a vital component in identifying the correct answers.

### **Question 5**

Within the Foundation paper this question was targeted at the weakest candidates and overall they scored well, correctly identifying the words needed for a healthy lifestyle. Some candidates found the word 'Obst' the most challenging in this section.

### **Question 6**

Although candidates on the whole did well on the topic of directions, a sizable number were unable to identify the German word for traffic lights and henceforth did not gain a mark for question 6c.

### **Question 7**

This third crossover question on Holidays proved quite a challenge to weaker candidates who found it difficult to identify the correct information from the text. Many candidates were misled by the first recognisable word they saw rather than reading the whole sentence.

### **Question 8**

The first item on this fourth crossover question posed a real challenge to candidates on the Foundation paper with the majority gaining no mark. They were unable to identify the correct meaning of 'noch nie' and went for the word 'Ausland' in Elena's answer which was incorrect. The rest of the question was generally handled well.

### **Question 9**

A small minority of candidates continue to answer the English questions in German and thus sadly debar themselves from scoring at all. Clearly candidates' use of English should be unambiguous. The question on the whole proved quite a challenge to most candidates although section 9c was usually answered correctly. Candidates had difficulty identifying simple time phrases like 'jeden Abend' or 'vier Stunden' which were needed to answer questions 9a and 9b successfully.

### **Question 10**

This section on a soap opera was handled quite successfully by most candidates with the first item being the most challenging one where candidates found it difficult to identify the correct type of restaurant.

### **Advice and Guidance**

Superfluous information, information not contained in the printed target-language material, and self-contradictory combinations of correct and incorrect information earn no credit. Similarly, non-synonymous alternatives can be given no credit. Candidates are encouraged to cross through any alternative answer rather than leaving examiners with a choice, though crossed-out work will be marked where the candidate has not replaced it with an alternative response.

Candidates should be aware that if just one mark is on offer, as throughout most questions, they should be giving only one item of information in the answer. However, if it is clear that more than one item of information is being solicited (e.g. Paper 3H questions 4c and e), then candidates must ensure that they produce the required number of items in their response.

Candidate scripts are marked on-screen for this paper and the examiners struggled to read a number of scripts. Some candidates used very faint ink and there were scripts where the quality of the handwriting was extremely poor. Candidates should be reminded to use black ink and to write as clearly as possible. Many responses indicate that candidates are not reading the texts carefully enough. For those candidates aiming at a higher grade it is imperative that they pay attention to the actual content of the texts and that they do not make assumptions. Especially for the task requiring answers in English, candidates should ensure that what they have written is relevant to the question and can be supported by the text. Candidates should also be encouraged to keep their answers as concise as possible. It is not advisable for candidates to put down everything they have understood, as this may lead to their losing the mark if they hedge their bets or negate their answer. The space given for the answer is deemed adequate for a full and complete response.

## **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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