



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In German (1GN0)
Paper 2H: Speaking

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Principal Examiner Report for 1GN02 Higher Tier 2506

Introduction

The speaking examination for Higher level consists of three parts: 1) a roleplay with 5 prompts and a maximum of 10 marks, 2) a picture-based task again with five prompts and a maximum of 24 marks and 3) a conversation of two topic areas and a maximum of 36 marks. The overall mark is 70.

There are 10 Higher role plays and 10 Higher picture-based cards. There is also a Sequencing grid which centres should follow when deciding which candidate receives which role play and which picture-based card. Candidates are allowed to nominate their first topic of the conversation and must inform their teacher of this two weeks prior to the examination.

Candidates have 12 minutes combined preparation time for the role play and picture-based card.

In the Higher role play the third prompt is an unknown question marked with ! on the card. The last two prompts require the candidate to ask a question. The first task for each picture-based card is a description of the photo, the third task requires a response with a past time frame and the fourth task requires a future time frame. The fifth task is unknown to candidates beforehand and is also marked with !.

For Higher role plays and picture-based tasks teacher are not allowed to rephrase questions. They are allowed to repeat the question three times in both scenarios and in the picture-based tasks to add 'Warum (nicht)?' or 'Noch etwas?'. If candidates give an initial incorrect response and teachers ask the question again any correct response from candidates will not be given credit.

The role plays and picture-based cards have no time limit but the conversations should last between 5-6 minutes for Higher. The two topics should have been given equal time. Candidates are allowed to present their first topic for one minute. Any response started after 6 min will not be given credit. If the first conversation is a monologue without questions and answers the mark for Interaction and Spontaneity is capped at 6.

Higher Role Plays

The fact that teachers cannot change the role play or photocard questions ensures clarity and fairness between centres. The most successful candidates responded with short, concise replies which conveyed all aspects of the prompt. They had obviously understood that this was a short part of the test and was worth 10 out of 70 marks, so short, concise answers were needed. A good number of candidates were clearly used to role plays and to making up answers but some struggled by wanting to tell the truth, especially if they had never been to Switzerland, Austria or Germany.

It is important for the teachers to set the scene for the role play and to include the preamble, and female teachers should use the female versions of the nouns, e.g Verkäuferin.

There were no issues on candidates not being able to access the role plays although some prompts on different roleplays proved more of a challenge than others. The unexpected past time frame questions across all the role plays were handled well by many candidates who were able to demonstrate their proficiency in the past time frame

Most candidates dealt with the role plays very well although a couple of prompts on different roleplays proved more of a challenge than others.

HR1	School activities	AO2	No particular issues.
HR2	Travel and tourist transactions	AO2	No particular issues.
HR3	Daily life	AO2	No particular issues.
HR4	Cultural life	AO2	Prompt 4 – asking for ‘opening times’ was difficult for some
HR5	Work	AO2	Prompt 5 – some candidates did not understand t of asking for days off
HR6	What school is like	AO2	No particular issues.
HR7	Using languages beyond the classroom	AO2	Some candidates had difficulties understanding the setting that they were working in a tourist information office.
HR8	Cultural life	AO2	No particular issues.
HR9	Travel and tourist transactions	AO2	Prompt 5 - the word ‘Ermäßigung’ was often not understood
HR10	What school is like	AO2	No particular issues.

Higher Picture-based Task

The most successful candidates were able to give a good description of the picture in this task. However, some candidates only provided a sentence or two when describing the picture and did not give fully developed answers for the other prompts either. Contrary to the role plays, where one sentence is sufficient to achieve the maximum two marks, the picture-based tasks require the most successful candidates to provide fuller answers in order to access the higher mark bands. A good guide is about five sentences for describing the picture and three sentences for each of the other prompts. Candidates should take the lead here and not wait for teachers to ask ‘Warum?’ or ‘Noch etwas?’.

Some candidates demonstrated their skill in building well developed responses to the picture-based card questions, with plenty of opinions and justification and, in many cases,

they needed no prompting at all to expand their answers. The justification in many cases was well developed with candidates explaining their opinions, particularly at higher level.

For the picture description, it would be helpful for candidates to be more familiar with the plurals of “Mann”, “Frau”, “Junge” and “Mädchen”. The correct pronunciation and gender of the latter and correct plural verbs would also help. Correct pronunciation of “Bäume”, “Gebäude” and “neu” would also be useful here and in the conversation. Many candidates take care using correct phrases when describing the picture: ‘Auf dem Photo sieht man/gibt es ...’ or ‘Im Vordergrund/ im Hintergrund sieht man/gibt es ...’ These make it much easier to follow what the candidate wants to say regarding the pictures.

HP1	What school is like	AO2	No particular issues.
HP2	Cultural life	AO2	No particular issues.
HP3	Daily life	AO2	No particular issues.
HP4	Travel and tourist transactions	AO2	No particular issues.
HP5	Work	AO2	No particular issues.
HP6	Ambitions	AO2	No particular issues.
HP7	Bringing the world together	AO2	No particular issues.
HP8	Holidays	AO2	No particular issues.
HP9	School activities	AO2	No particular issues.
HP10	Environmental issues	AO2	No particular issues.

Higher Conversation

Fewer candidates than in the past started their conversation with a prepared presentation. Candidates at times rushed their presentation which made it more difficult to understand and it seemed not to be part of a natural conversation. They tried to put too much information into the presentation when it might have been better to keep some of this material back in order to answer questions by teachers more fully. Candidates should also be aware that they are required to answer naturally rather than reel off prepared answers in order to access the higher marks for **Interaction and Spontaneity**.

The presentation element in a number of tests exceeded the maximum length of one minute, which is not in the spirit of the conversation part of the examination. The presentation is only meant to serve as a springboard for the ensuing conversation. During the conversation, examiners are looking for an element of genuine spontaneity. Candidates are advised to go beyond a minimum answer and freely include opinions and justifications to their responses.

In this series, as was the case in the last few years, there have been quite a number of centres who started with questions straightaway which often served their students better.

The level of questioning by the teacher should be appropriate to the needs of the candidate. Some weaker candidates were asked very difficult questions, to which they could not respond coherently, and had they had an easier line of questioning, they may have been more able to meet the criteria in the higher bands within the mark scheme. Many teachers were skilled in getting the best out of

their students and built up a line of questioning which was logical, allowed for some spontaneity and enabled candidates to build good responses. Teachers gave their students plenty of opportunities to develop their responses and asked questions which required responses using different tenses.

Administrative Matters:

Most schools dealt with the administration of the specification well and used the new Excel CS2 form although there were still some incorrect CS2 forms or CS2 forms in a PDF format used by a few centres. Recordings were of variable quality and at times it was difficult to hear the candidate as the microphone seemed too far away from them. Teachers must ensure that candidates can be heard loud and clearly in order for examiners to come up with a fair mark. Background noise was also a problem with some centres. Examinations should take place in a quiet location without background noise from other classes or during break times. It can be difficult for examiners to hear the recording and it is also very distracting for candidates if they have to deal with a lot of noise during their examination.

Timings:

The role plays and picture-based tasks do not have stipulated time limits, and many centres carried them out efficiently allowing candidates to give full answers and henceforth they received fair marks for their efforts. Candidates who have given a wrong answer to a role-play or picture-based task prompt must not be asked the question again. They will not score any points for repeated questions after initially getting it wrong. The length of the conversation was quite often too long as a considerable number went beyond the prescribed 6 min at Higher. As any answer started after 6 min is discounted, candidates were not always able to access the highest marks if relevant questions were not asked within 6 min (e.g. questions eliciting opinions and different time frames). An equal amount of time to both parts of the conversation was not always evident and often the first part took up most of the conversation (sometimes because the presentation was far too long). This has consequences for the awarding of marks for **Interaction and Spontaneity**. If the presentation is too long and not many genuine questions can be asked, candidates will not be rewarded for it.

There will be a new specification in 2026 but the following advice will still be relevant.

Do's and Don'ts for Candidates:

Based on their performance this year candidates should:

- Make sure that they are familiar with the vocabulary on prompts for the **role plays** (e.g. Grund, Meinung, Beispiel, was für)
- Look at what the prompts in **role plays** require them to do.
- Keep **role plays** short. One sentence answers are enough.

- Practise asking questions in **role plays**.
- Give a full description of the picture of the **picture task**. Describe people, activities, location, weather, give opinions.
- Try and take the initiative in the **conversation** by giving opinions and adding extra information without being explicitly asked by the teacher.
- Ask for a repeat of the teacher's question in **German**.

