



# Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE  
In German (1GN0) Paper 4H  
Writing In German

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## General observations

The general impression confirmed that candidates had clearly been well-prepared at centre level and many candidates were well aware of what was required to access the higher mark bands. Candidates were often able to communicate their ideas to convincing and imaginative standards, even if their grammatical knowledge was less good. It was clear that candidates have been taught the importance of linking, using words such as “weil”, “denn”, “obwohl” and “um ... zu” which were frequently encountered in candidate responses, although other linking words were rarely seen. The ability to use the perfect tense varied hugely among candidate responses. The perfect tense with “sein” was particularly challenging for a great number of otherwise very successful candidates. Future tense formulations were handled better, although there was a noticeable number of scripts that confused it with the conditional tense. The ability to use case endings correctly was very variable and remains a point that can be addressed during teaching at centre level, although pleasingly in the scripts that were marked, errors in case endings did not always prevent communication taking place.

## Question 1(a) – Ambitions

Candidates were required to produce a short informal email of between 80 and 90 words in German to a fictitious German-speaking friend about their personal ambitions. The four bullet points prompted candidates to write about their interests, school subjects studied in the previous year, the importance of work, and their plans in the future. Most candidates were able to address the bullet points effectively and to include some degree of development. Bullet point (a) was almost always effectively developed; some candidates wrote far too much in response to this bullet points, occasionally to the detriment of the subsequent bullet points. For (b) most candidates were at the very least able to come up with “ich habe ... gelernt” and a list of subjects, although other past tenses were often incorrect. Very few candidates realised that the singular form of the noun is “Fach. Many candidates offered fairly simplistic opinions on subjects, although these often involved very common vocabulary such as “langweilig” and “streng”. Bullet point (c) proved the most challenging on this question. Less successful candidates often listed what work they had done or were planning to do without giving their opinions on why work is important or not. However, there were a number of good answers talking about gaining experience, meeting new people and widening experience. A few candidates had run out of steam by the time they got to bullet point (d) and simply omitted it. Others merged (c) and (d), often effectively. Careers featured in common text books, such as “Ärztin” and “Pilotin”, appeared frequently, sometimes accompanied by bekommen, used incorrectly to mean “to become”.

## Question 1(b) Sport

Candidates were required to produce a short informal email of between 80 and 90 words in German to a fictitious German-speaking friend about the role of sport in their lives. The four bullet points required candidates to address their favourite sport, what they had done recently towards their own fitness, why school sport is important, and their activities the following week. This question was a more popular choice at Higher Level than option (1a). Many candidates wrote well above the suggested word count; at times, excess length resulted in a lack of accuracy. The first two bullet points were on the whole addressed well, although not all candidates were able to provide a correctly formed past tense construction as required by the second bullet point and not all candidates realised that in order to address “fitness”, diet or lifestyle options could have been addressed. For the third bullet point relating to the importance of school sport, a minority of candidates simply listed what sports they do at school, although many candidates were successful in justifying the importance of school sport with regard to fitness, forming friendships, camaraderie, or providing a balance to academic work in the classroom.

With regard to the final bullet point on this question, it was noted that many candidates appeared to have suitable answers prepared that they could successfully adapt. Overall, where candidates did not score in the two highest mark bands for Communication and Content, this was mainly due to confusions with time frames or an over-reliance on the mother tongue. All candidates were aware of the need to include more complex structures to secure marks in the higher mark band for the Knowledge and Accuracy criterion.

### **Question 2(a) Daily routine**

Candidates were required to write a newspaper article of between 130 and 150 words in German about their daily routine. The four bullet points prompted them to consider and write about things they had to do every day, an interesting day in the preceding week, their opinion on their school time table, and their plans for the time after the school examinations. Candidates were also required to justify their ideas and opinions. This question was a much more popular choice than 2(b) and there was a pleasingly high number of responses that accessed the top mark bands. For the majority of scripts it was a matter of deciding between the second and third mark bands. The first two bullet points were dealt with well by most candidates, although the effective and accurate use of the perfect tense remains taxing and remains a point that could be addressed in effective teaching at centre level. With regard to the third bullet point, some candidates were unsure what "Stundenplan" meant and interpreted it as some kind of personal revision plan. Others merely gave details of what lessons they have without including their opinion. The most successful candidates wrote fluently and in extended sentence form, usually about the shortcomings of their school's timetable. The majority of responses included some individual and often very imaginative comments on "nach den Prüfungen" such as study and travel plans.

The vast majority of candidates showed a secure command of linguistic structures, including a range of tenses and varied syntax including infinitive clauses with "um ... zu". Vocabulary used was generally sound, although there were some instances of confusion between "*bekommen*" and "*werden*".

### **Question 2(b) – Information for German tourists**

Candidates who chose this task were required to provide 130 – 150 words of information in German that would be useful for visiting tourists. The four bullet points prompted candidates to write about activities that could be done in the candidates' own local areas, their opinion on local transport, the weather in the preceding week, and what events/activities the candidates would organise for the tourists. Despite the creative potential of this task, it was a much less popular question than 2(a). There were some very good responses to this question, but many candidates struggled with bullet points 2, 3 and 4. For the 2<sup>nd</sup> point, many candidates linked public transport to the environment and provided material that was not entirely relevant to the bullet point. Bullet point 3 was often problematic as many candidates did not take the opportunity to link what they had done last week to the weather. Many responses featured just a short paragraph with lots of "war" without much linkage of the content. For the 4<sup>th</sup> bullet point, not all candidates expressly wrote about things that they would organise for the visiting tourist group, rather than a list of possible activities that could be done. It was therefore observed that there were both fluent, sophisticated responses scoring highly for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy that failed to reach the top bands for Communication and Content, as bullet points had not been addressed, but also responses that attained the top band for Communication and Content but encountered too many challenges with time frames and case formulations to reach the top bands for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy.

### Question 3 – Homework

In the translation task about homework, candidates had to translate four sentences into German. Most candidates were able to translate most of the passage and a clear majority of marks awarded fell between 7 and 9 this year. Lexical issues arose with “muss” in the first line, “ungefähr”, “Stunde” and surprisingly, with the lexical item “Bibliothek” in the second sentence to be translated. Some candidates found the correct conjugation “hilft” challenging, and either made the verb plural with “helfen” or incorrectly stated “helft”, although this sentence was translated reasonably well on the whole. “Aufsatz” appeared to be a term not many candidates were familiar with; it was usually paraphrased with “Essay”, “Arbeit” or “Schreiben”. Surprisingly, there was also a sizeable number of candidates who used “geschreiben”, “geschrieben” or “geschriebt” instead of the correctly used “geschrieben”.

### Paper Summary

Based on their performance in this examination, candidates are offered the following advice:

- To achieve marks in the top bands for Communication and Content, it is necessary to address all four bullet points in Questions 1 and 2.
- The word count is only a guide. It is not necessary to write beyond the word limit, although the entire response is considered when examiners award marks.
- Candidates should aim to write the best level of syntactical and lexical German of which they are capable. They should avoid over-complexity, writing beyond their capabilities or adding unnecessary detail from other topic areas to their responses. It is also not necessary to provide long lists of lexical items, i.e. sports or food items.
- English words written within German sentences when a German word is unknown can present a barrier to communication. It is therefore better to think carefully before writing each sentence and to use alternative nouns that can be used securely in German by the candidate.
- In their essays, candidates should avoid lists of nouns and repetition of structures whenever possible. They should also remain aware of the text type they are writing e.g. emails, articles, letters, and attempt to convey the appropriate register.
- It is best to attempt all four sentences in the translation task, perhaps by identifying alternative ways of expressing an idea in German if a literal translation proves difficult.
- Past tense, future tense, and conditional tense formation of verbs that are likely to come up in many written responses, e.g. “to be”, “to become”, “to write”, could be practised more frequently to ensure greater recognition and greater accuracy in the candidates’ own writing.



