

IGCSE

Edexcel IGCSE

German (4375)

Summer 2006

Examiners' Report

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4735 IGCSE German Listening

Summer 2006

Unit/Paper 4735/01

The overall standard of candidate performance was very high. Most candidates were able to identify the main points of each extract and to listen for detail.

Question 1-5 IN DER STADT

This was well done. Even questions 4 and 5 which required slight inference posed no problems.

Questions 6 - 10 WETTER

Weather vocabulary was generally well known. Occasionally, *Gewitter* and *neblig* were unknown.

Question 11 EINKAUFEN

This was well done, with the majority of candidates scoring 5 points.

Question 12 GEBURTSTAG Teil 1

Most candidates were able to identify *Dienstag*, but surprisingly numbers in (b) and (c) caused some problems. Candidates should be reminded to revise numbers, days of the week and months for this paper.

Question 12 GEBURTSTAG Teil 2

This was generally well done. Question (d) was almost universally correctly answered, but the first three questions sometimes posed problems.

Question 13 SCHULE Teil 1

This question discriminated well. The best candidates had no difficulty in linking *im Klassenzimmer* with *drinnen*, or *Verkäuferin* with *Geschäft*. However, weaker candidates were less able to cope with this level of inference. Most, however, managed to pick the correct kind of word to complete the sentences.

Question 13 SCHULE Teil 2

This was the most demanding section of the paper. Candidates were required to note the correct detail from a longer passage of spoken German. Those who struggled at this level often heard discrete words, but failed to make sense of them in their answers.

- (a) Confusion was caused by use of the wrong possessive pronoun, e.g. *seine Mutter* or *deine Mutter* instead of *ihre Mutter*. Some candidates wrongly assumed that Steffi's mother was her teacher.
- (b) This was generally successful.
- (c) Some candidates did not gain the mark because they did not refer to the *Klassenarbeit*, suggesting instead that Steffi arrived late to class. The other possible answer, i.e. that she managed to answer only one question, was rarely given.

- (d) Although spelling was poor, most candidates were able to communicate the central idea that Steffi had had three different teachers in the past year. However, when *Lehre* or *Lehren* was used instead of *Lehrer*, this was not accepted.

4735 IGCSE German Reading & Writing

Summer 2006

Unit/Paper 4735/02

In this first examination of the new Specification candidates coped well with the demands of the paper in both Reading and Writing tasks.

Examiners felt the paper reflected the interests and concerns of young people and all questions worked well. Whilst some candidates appeared unfamiliar with the format of certain questions it did not affect their performance. Centres are reminded of the need to prepare candidates specifically for the demands of the questions so that they are confident with the format.

Section A

Part One

Q1 Einkaufen

This question provided a gentle entry into the paper and the vast majority of candidates scored full marks here. A small minority mistook the ham depicted in E for the beef in (iv). However, the *dünne Scheiben* mentioned in (iii) provided a vital clue and candidates should be encouraged to read everything on the page before making their final decision.

Q2 Ruth Moschner

Most candidates fared very well with this question. A significant number, however, gave *München* as Ruth's *Wohnort* (a) rather than *Berlin* and a more careful scrutiny of the text would be advised. Similarly, a few candidates gave *Banklehre* as Ruth's *Beruf* (e) and the same comment would apply. Some candidates did not realise that short, often just one word, answers were sufficient and wrote instead extended replies. Centres should be aware that this note-taking exercise is a popular test type and there is an example in the Specimen Papers booklet.

Q3 Handy?...oder nicht?

On the whole candidates scored well here. This question targets Grades C/D and at this level candidates would be expected to appreciate opinions and be able to differentiate between positive and negative. Not all candidates were able to do this however and Centres would be advised to spend some time developing this skill in their candidates. Some candidates wrote over lengthy responses here, which did not disadvantage their performance. Examiners were pleased to see that some candidates were confident enough in German to paraphrase the relevant section from the text.

Part 2

Q4 Handys in der Schule?

Candidates were clearly interested in this topic and most candidates had plenty to say about mobile phones. Many were able to draw cleverly on the information in the linked Reading text, without merely lifting. On the other hand, a significant number of candidates failed to gain high marks because they either lifted too much material verbatim from the text or wrote about the pros & cons of Handys in general rather than placing that argument in the context of school. Good performances were characterised by a confident, fluent use of the language. Such responses were fully relevant to the task and wholly comprehensible. They were not necessarily 100% accurate but full communication was achieved. Centres are advised to share with candidates the assessment grids on p16 of the Specification so that they are fully aware of the demands of this question.

Section B

Part One

Q5 Umwelt

Candidates fared well on this question and seemed very familiar with the test type.

Part Two

Q6 Jobben im Ausland

Question 6 targeted grades B, A and A* and was therefore more demanding. It discriminated well. Individual questions tested a mix of factual understanding, inference and the drawing of conclusions and whilst the majority of candidates coped with the factual knowledge, fewer enjoyed success in those questions requiring some level of inference. This ability to demonstrate understanding at a more complex level is a vital skill at grades A and A* and centres would be advised to practise and reinforce this with their more able candidates to ensure greater confidence and proficiency. In addition, close and careful reading was required and some scripts showed evidence of superficial skimming only. On the whole candidates were able to communicate their answers effectively, if not grammatically accurately. Answers were assessed first of all for communication of correct information, then a global mark was awarded for the quality of the candidate's German.

- (a) In the main, candidates coped well with this part. The most common misconception was *Ich wollte etwas Nützliches machen*.
- (b) Again, the majority of candidates were successful here. Weaker candidates focused on the *Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr*, which does not answer the question.
- (c) This part proved accessible to most candidates. Wrong answers most commonly referred to the *niedriges Taschengeld* which was irrelevant in the context of this question.
- (d) Again, The vast majority of candidates could isolate the relevant section in the reading text to provide the correct answer to this part.

- (e) This was the first inference question and proved a very good discriminator. Some candidates left this sub question blank (not recommended as an examination technique), others responded with irrelevance. In preparation for this question candidates should be trained to read and understand beyond the immediate confines of the text. Examiners were instructed to accept any answers which communicated activities which might reasonably be conducted in a classroom situation.
- (f) Again, inference or the drawing of conclusions were called for here and weaker candidates struggled to achieve this. At this level it will never be enough merely to transcribe individual words e.g. *Theater* or *Ballett* and candidates should be made fully aware that this question is testing their ability to comprehend at a more complex level. Examiners were instructed to accept any response which contained an appropriate verb and conveyed a relevant activity linked with the theatre, the ballet, an ice stadium or an art gallery. In fact, this gave candidates an immense scope to score 2 marks.
- (g) This final sub question tested candidate's ability to demonstrate global understanding of the text, that is to say, infer Antje's overall opinion/attitude to the experience. Examiners were looking for answers which managed to convey the idea of a positive experience in Russia, an experience which had been great fun. More able candidates were able to deal with this question proficiently, but others merely transcribed a chunk from the final paragraph of the text which did not come anywhere near conveying the correct idea e.g. *durch diese Arbeit besonders klar geworden*.

The standard of German used in the responses was very encouraging on the whole. Only in rare cases was communication hindered by poor and inaccurate language.

Section C

Examiners were pleased to note that candidates were inspired by all three titles in this writing section and numbers were fairly evenly divided across the options. Candidates who like some guidance in the structuring of their writing would be advised to opt for those titles which contain bullet points (here (a) and (c)), but they must then ensure that they convey all the specified information. Candidates should fully understand the assessment criteria for this part of the Paper so that they can attempt to fulfil the requirements and so access the whole range of marks. For example, it is important that candidates use a range of tenses and verb forms, show evidence of a confident use of a variety of more complex structures and lexis. High scoring responses were typified by this. Candidates should also be able to link the concepts within their essay so that it forms a coherent whole rather a sequence of disparate episodes. Candidates should also observe the word count for the essay: those who submit shorter responses will not be able to access the full range of marks since the mark grids are assessing responses of 150 words. Essays which exceeded 150 words were not penalised but some were, in fact, self-penalising as the quality of language tended to deteriorate after the 150 words.

- (a) Examiners read some detailed essays here, in which candidates demonstrated their ability to narrate events and express opinions using a

wide range of structures and lexis. There were some more original essays and candidates were clearly very confident writing about this familiar topic.

- (b) There were different interpretations here, but as long as the essay demonstrated a connection with the title, then it was admissible. Thus, Examiners read about the evils of the big city, pollution and congestion. There were idyllic depictions of the countryside, wistful longings to return to the old house, environment and most importantly, friends. There were also some narratives about the awful move. This title gave rise to more imaginative and inventive essays and in their preparation for this section, Centres might consider whether this type of essay best suits their own candidates.
- (c) Once again, many candidates were able to expound the values of a healthy lifestyle and write confidently about how they keep fit and spend their free time. In this option, several candidates failed to address all the prescribed bullet points and this will have a negative impact on the Communication and Content mark. Candidates must ensure they have made reference to each point, however briefly.

General

Examiners were pleased to see candidates performing at a very sound level. Many had an excellent grasp of a wide range of structures and could successfully employ an impressive variety of lexis.

4735 IGCSE German Speaking

Summer 2006

Unit/Paper 4735/03

A large proportion of candidates entered for this Specification took the optional speaking component. Examiners were pleased to listen to some very proficient speaking tests sympathetically conducted which evidenced a pleasing standard of candidate performance.

Section A: Presentation and discussion based on a single picture.

For this part of the Speaking test candidates must select a picture. It is very important that candidates make this choice wisely since the chosen picture must trigger a responsive and varied conversation and allow candidates to demonstrate their speaking proficiency. Whilst there were some excellent pictures which provided for interesting and varied discussion, there were, sadly, some less inspiring samples which offered only limited scope for conversation.

Centres are reminded that candidates may not select one of the pictures from the Specimen Papers booklet as these are for illustrative purposes only (see p10 of the Specification).

Candidates should give a presentation for up to a maximum of one minute on their picture and it is important that this limit is respected to allow adequate time in the ensuing discussion for candidates to demonstrate their ability to respond. The discussion of the picture should not take longer than 3 minutes. This total of 4 minutes represents an adequate length of time for candidates to give a personal interpretation of the picture, express opinions and discuss issues arising from the picture. In general, conversations which exceeded 4 minutes were self-penalising and Examiners were instructed to listen to 4 minutes only.

On occasions information was asked for in the discussion which had already been given in the presentation. This should be avoided wherever possible since candidates cannot be credited twice for the same information and language. In the discussion, Interviewers should ensure candidates have the opportunity to fulfil the requirements of the assessment criteria, namely express and justify opinions, give extended responses to a wide range of question types, and use an appropriately wide variety of structures and lexis, including a full range of tenses. Such performances would give candidates access to the full range of marks.

Section B: Two conversations

In this section candidates are required to take part in conversations with the Interviewer on two separate conversation topics chosen by the Interviewer.

Interviewers should ensure that they initiate discussion on two separate conversation topics: there were instances of rubric infringement here with a few candidates being examined on only one conversation topic in this section. This will certainly have a negative impact on the candidate's attainment since Examiners can award marks for only those conversations they hear.

Again, Interviewers should try to ensure they adhere to the timings laid down in the Specification, namely a maximum of 3 minutes for each conversation topic to make a total of 6 minutes for this section. In section B Examiners were instructed to listen to only 3 minutes per topic. In general longer conversations were self-penalising as candidates began to struggle to find things to say and incidence of error increased.

Whilst Interviewers are free to develop any area within the chosen conversation topics, care should be taken to avoid any overlap with the material covered in Section A and with the other topic in section B of the test.

Centres' attention is drawn to p12 of the Specification where it is stated that 'in order to achieve grade C and above, candidates will be expected to express opinions and use past, present and future tenses.' This should be demonstrated in each of the two conversations of section B. Interviewers did not always give candidates the opportunity to use a wide range of verb forms, use past, present and future tenses or express opinions. Candidates will not have access to the full range of marks if they do not fulfil these criteria. Centres' attention is drawn equally to the Grade Descriptions on page 14 of the Specification. These detail typical performances at the key grade boundaries.

General

Interviewers are to be commended on their sympathetic and encouraging conduct of the speaking tests. However, it should be noted that closed questions rarely encourage candidate participation. Those candidates wishing to access the higher bands in the assessment grids must show evidence of the ability to expand and take the initiative in the conversation and open-ended questions are therefore more relevant.

Centre administration for the Speaking Tests was good. The quality of the recordings was, however, very variable. In some instances candidates were virtually inaudible due either to extraneous noise or poor quality recording hardware. Reference should be made to p37 and p39 of the Specification which outline the requirement for a quiet environment and audible recording.

Examiners much enjoyed the variety of pictures which reflected the interests of the candidates and gave rise to some very interesting discussions.

4375 GERMAN, GRADE BOUNDARIES JUNE 2006

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Lowest mark for award of Subject Grade (all candidates) (max 100)	81	73	65	57	47	37	28	19
Lowest mark for award of Grade for Spoken German (optional) (max 60)	51	45	39	33	26	19	13	7

Note: Grade boundaries may vary from series to series and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question papers.