



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel International A Level

In German (WGN02)

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## Examiner's Report: Paper 2, Understanding and Written Response

### Introduction

External assessment: written examination

Availability: January and June

First assessment: June 2017

Total marks: 90

Weighting: 69.2% of the total IAS raw marks

34.6% of the total IAL marks

Examination time: 2 hours 30 minutes

Assessment across Unit WGN02 01 relates to the following General Topic Areas:

<b>General Topic Area</b>	<b>Subtopics</b>
Youth matters	Family relationships and friendships Peer pressure and role models Music and fashion Technology and communication
Lifestyle, health and fitness	Food and diet Sport and exercise Health issues Urban and rural life
Environment and travel	Tourism, travel and transport Natural disasters and weather Climate change and its impact Energy, pollution and recycling
Education and employment	Education systems and types of schooling Pupil/student life Volunteering and internships Jobs and unemployment

## **Assessment**

The assessment for this unit has three sections.

### **Section A: Listening (20 marks)**

Candidates listen to a range of authentic recorded TL (Target Language) material and retrieve and convey information given in the recording by responding to a range of TL questions.

Candidates need to show understanding of both the general sense and specific details conveyed. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and short answers in the target language.

### **Section B: Reading and Grammar (30 marks)**

Candidates read authentic TL printed materials and retrieve and convey information by responding to a range of TL test types. The questions elicit both non-verbal responses and TL answers.

Questions are linked to a range of reading comprehension exercises.

Candidates also need to understand and manipulate grammatical structures in the TL by selecting the most appropriate word form to fit a gap.

### **Section C: Essay (40 marks)**

Candidates write a 240–280-word essay in the TL, in response to a TL stimulus and four related bullet points. The assessment rewards effective communication of information as well as quality of language.

## **General comments**

The examiners marking on the unit would like to thank centres for the effort they put in to ensure the assessments run smoothly for their candidates and to allow them to reach their full potential.

Questions 4, 6 and 7 require concise answers in German. Generally, the examinations are designed in such a way that simply lifting words from the texts will not satisfy the requirements of the question. At least some manipulation of the language in the text will normally be required and candidates should expect to have to do this. Although grammatical accuracy is not assessed in the comprehension questions, the response does need to communicate a full answer to the question, without ambiguity. Particular care should be taken when using pronouns, and candidates should consider using the actual nouns or names in their answers to aid clarity. Candidates may use their own words, and many are doing so increasingly effectively, although this is not always essential. Lifting very short, focussed phrases is sometimes enough, but here the skill is really shown in the precision with which information is selected. It is also rarely possible. Lifting full sentences will almost

never be a way to score a mark, and it is important that all candidates are aware of this. Most candidates did show an awareness of this. Sometimes only very limited manipulation of the text is required, so this is something which all candidates should be able to manage to some extent.

Candidates need to be aware that tasks 4, 6 and 7 contain questions of varying cognitive demand. For example, low demand questions require candidates to demonstrate comprehension of the text. However, some questions require judgement, processing of information or inference and these questions require candidates to reflect and evaluate on what they have read or heard, before answering. The timing of the examination reflects this.

An essential part of the comprehension test is also the ability of candidates to not only understand the text, but also to understand the questions and answer them directly. Some examples to inform future candidates will also be provided in later sections.

Question 9 requires a written response to a stimulus in German. Candidates should address all four bullet points in a coherent, well organised and purposeful fashion. Candidates generally performed well in this question and examples of what is meant by the terms coherent, organised and purposeful in the mark grids will be provided below.

## **Section A: Listening**

### **Q1 Multiple Choice**

This was a listening text about weather. Candidates had four options A, B, C, or D for each part (the correct response, and three distractors). Candidates generally responded well, but when they did not, it was most often 1a that was incorrectly answered. Weather vocabulary seemed to be well known, but careful consideration of adverbial phrases, as required by question 1, proved to be a challenge.

### **Q2 Multiple Choice**

This listening text was on the topic of School Holidays. This task is identical in design to question 1. There did not seem to be a specific pattern or trend in response to this question.

### **Q3 Summary completion**

This question requires candidates to listen to a short passage and then complete a summary text, selecting from a pool of eight items. The topic of the text was renewable energy.

This is a higher demand question than the previous two. Nearly all candidates seem to understand that there is an element of grammar involved in this question, due to its design. Therefore, incorrect answers were nearly always plausible, but just did not reflect the true

meaning of the text. As always, careful listening is required to score the marks and candidates who relied solely on grammar knowledge or guesswork were unlikely to be successful. The most frequently provided response that was incorrect was 3d – as the information in the text was presented in a different way to the summary text, even though the meaning was the same. The text referred to people under 25, the summary asked about people over 25, so some processing and inference was required to score this mark, but many candidates took a slightly too simplistic approach to this question.

#### **Q4 Short Answer Questions**

Question 4 requires a written response from candidates, although the quality of the language provided by candidates is not assessed discreetly. Examiners credit responses which communicate the answer to the question in understandable German. It is important that the answer is not ambiguous. Each part is worth 1 or 2 marks. Q4 was on the topic of Sport, specifically about the European Football Championships, which also happened to be hosted by Germany in 2024.

Candidates were nearly all able to gain some credit for this question, although some parts proved more challenging.

4b – Most candidates had understood that Stadia were accessible by public transport, but many candidates did not show that they had fully understood how match tickets could be used for free of charge public transport.

In 4c, there was a lot of evidence that candidates had not read the question carefully enough and so often provided an answer, which was effectively the opposite of the correct answer. They had to explain what was to be avoided, so any mention of “short travel distances” was therefore not correct.

4d was often partially answered. “In der Spielregion” was a frequently given incorrect answer. This was considered too vague, as the “Spielregion” could be the entire host country (i.e. Germany) in this context.

4e required the key word “Fehler” or a synonym to be awarded the mark.

Finally 4f was generally well answered, but in reference to rubbish, we required a word such as “Entsorgung” to award the mark. “Müll” alone was not sufficient.

### **Section B: Reading and Grammar**

#### **Q5 Multiple Choice Questions**

Candidates choose from four options: A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). This text was set on the topic of Phone Charges. Most candidates were able to find the information needed to score marks in this question.

### **Q6 Short Answer Questions**

This question required short written responses from the candidates,. The quality of language was not assessed here, and responses were considered in the same way as for question 4. The text handled the topic of Reality TV.

The text provided many reasons why the show is considered controversial and examiners were accepting of these, meaning that most candidates achieved a degree of success here.

6b required references to judging people by their appearance being something that is old fashioned, or something that people no longer do, in order to attain the mark. The alternative answer, that it can be bad for mental health was also accepted.

6c required candidates to process the information in the text and comment on the trend. Stating the viewing figures was not enough to gain the mark here.

### **Q7 Short Answer Questions**

This question also required brief written responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. The marking principles were exactly the same here as for questions 4 and 6. Each part was worth 1 or 2 marks. This question was about Online Shopping.

Candidates found 7c tricky at times. There were many answers that were too vague to score a mark.

7e required candidates to process the information in the text in order to arrive at the correct answer. Many candidates stated the times that were mentioned in the text, without considering carefully what the question was asking.

Question 7g was problematic for some, particularly with reference to refunding money. A number of answers used pronouns in a way that made the information ambiguous and so it could not be awarded a mark. Using the nouns from the text is often safer than using pronouns to answer questions, and is nearly always possible

### **Question 8**

This question continued on the theme of Online Shopping. There were 10 words selected, which were presented in the infinitive form for verbs, or the non-declined forms in the case of adjectives or determiners.

This question requires absolute precision, so it is not surprising that candidates find it very challenging. Nearly all candidates had some degree of success in this question, zero marks was very rare.

There was some confusion over tense in 8a. The present tense was the only correct answer here. Candidates should be advised to work at sentence level, as the clues to the tense were not immediately before the word to be transformed.

The infinitive with “zu” in combination with a separable proved itself to be a demanding task in 8d, although the present tense separable verb in 8g was well handled.

The “-en” ending on 8i was often missed. Candidates should be advised to check verb endings to help them distinguish between singular and plural, especially as here, with the word “die” which could be either.

8j was the most frequent incorrect answer. Many candidates did not appreciate the need for the Subjunctive II in the second part of the “wenn” clause.

## **Section C: Writing**

### **Q9 Essay**

This section requires candidates to write a response based on a short, written stimulus. The recommended length for this is 240-280 words, though examiners mark the full response, whatever its length; they do not count the words when marking the essay. It is perfectly possible for an essay of 240 to gain full marks and candidates should avoid writing essays which are excessively long, as they often start to lack organisation, coherence or purposefulness. There is no automatic penalty for responses shorter than the recommended length, the content is assessed on its own merits, but candidates should be aware that detail is a key consideration in this assessment. Short answers may not contain this in sufficient amounts for the top marks.

The topic of the essay was transport, “Semester Tickets” and all candidates were able to respond well.

The marks for content and communication are awarded based on how well candidates address each of the bullet points in the task and how well they structure and present their ideas.

The ideal answer covers all 4 bullet points in a logical order, making good use of paragraphs, which is one way to satisfy the “coherent” element of the mark grids. Candidates, whose responses seemed convincing as a blog were able to satisfy the “purposeful” element of the top mark band and reading the task carefully and showing an appropriate style is one of many good ways to show evidence of purposefulness. Linking paragraphs well and treating the piece as a whole, rather than four separate “mini-essays” is an easy way to show evidence of fluency. Those candidates who did not deviate from the topic and therefore did

not include additional information that was not required were also able to satisfy the “pertinent” element of the top mark band.

Nearly all candidates addressed all four bullet points successfully. Candidates who did not score the highest marks despite doing this often relied on information which is normally learned and communicated as part of level 1/2 qualifications, such as iGCSE and therefore did not show sufficient progress for the highest marks at AS. It should also be noted that examiners are as sympathetic as possible in their approach and will credit any material that communicates under this assessment objective. Sometimes, however, the language was so inaccurate that it was impossible to understand in parts, and so this, unfortunately, has to be considered when awarding the marks.

Quality of language was, on the whole, very good and often excellent. Teachers can help their candidates to improve their marks in this section by drawing their attention to key words in the mark scheme.

The highest mark band requires a wide range of structures and vocabulary. Ensuring that all of the task bullet points are thoroughly dealt with, and including different ideas when doing so, will also help the candidates to widen the range of vocabulary and structures that they use.

Finally, the marks for language take account of control and accuracy. It is important to make candidates aware of the following areas, if they wish to attain the highest marks for this assessment objective. Pay attention to verb agreements, particularly in longer sentences. Candidates should use an appropriate register for writing, rather than conversational German. Completing regular spelling practices would be helpful, particularly for those candidates who speak more German than they write. Many candidates produced German which seemed to be at the level of a native speaker. Such performances were considered to be above the requirements of the task. However, the expectation for full marks was not perfection. All candidates who demonstrated significant progress from level 2 were awarded full marks for language.

“Basic language” in the mark scheme refers to verbs endings, tense formation and word order. There needs to be evidence that these are very secure to access the higher mark bands.

## **Paper Summary**

Based on candidates' performance on this paper, we offer the following advice:

- A careful reading of each part, with attention to the specific question words is important. The angle of the question needs attention.
- Manipulation is often required and lifting from the passage is only successful if the correct information is directly given.
- All German offered needs to communicate unambiguously in the comprehension questions.
- Examiners assess the skills of deduction and inference in this specification, and candidates will not find all the required information presented explicitly in the passages.
- Candidates should offer succinct and direct responses.
- In Q9, candidates should address all four bullet points fully.
- Verb formation and word order need to be secure for the higher marks in QoL in Q9.

## **Grade Boundaries**

There has been much work on the comparability of the speaking units for French, German and Spanish. Senior examiners continue to work closely together to ensure that they apply the common marking guidelines consistently across the three languages. It is possible to find grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, on the website via this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

