



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In German (4GN1) Paper 02

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Principal Examiner's Report

Outline: Paper 2 is the Reading and Writing component of the new International GCSE with the first assessment in 2019. The paper constitutes 50% of the total marks for the International GCSE whilst the total number of marks for the paper is 80, with 40 marks for reading and 40 marks for writing. The assessment is through a 1-hour and 45-minute examination with the paper set by Pearson and externally marked by examiners.

The paper assesses reading and writing skills in separate sections across five topic areas:

- Home and abroad
- Education and employment
- Personal life and relationships
- The world around us
- Social activities, fitness and health

The **reading section** comprises the first five tasks where candidates are required to convey their understanding of written German through a series of five reading tasks, each based around a collection of short texts or a longer single text.

The first task is assessed through multiple choice answers (6 marks), the second task is a multiple-choice gap-filling exercise (6 marks) and the third task is a multiple-choice question (8 marks).

The fourth task is based on a literary text which consists of a short, adapted extract from an authentic source appropriate to this level. Candidates have to give short answers to prompts in German. (10 marks)

The fifth task is based on an authentic German text with questions in German which require the candidates to answer in German. (10 marks)

The overall level of difficulty increases from the first task to the fifth task.

The **writing section** comprises three tasks, two writing tasks and a third grammar-based task.

The first writing task is short, and the candidate are asked to write 60-75 words, including four prescribed words or short phrases. Candidates are being assessed in two sections: 1) Communication and content; 2) Linguistic knowledge and accuracy. (10 marks)

The second writing task is longer than the first and contains an element of choice. The candidates are able to choose from three questions that are drawn from different topics, and need to write between 130 and 150 words in response to the question, addressing four bullet points. Candidates are being assessed in two sections: 1) Communication and content; 2) Linguistic knowledge and accuracy. (20 marks)

In the third grammar-based task candidates are asked to change the words in brackets so that they correctly fit the sentences. This involves the need to manipulate, for example, verbs and adjectives, into their correct verb form. (10 marks)

Grammatical accuracy, punctuation and spelling is being assessed in this section of the paper.

Report on Individual Questions

Q1, Q2 and Q3 were either marked by computer or the graduate marker and were all multiple choice.

Question 1:

This question was on the topic of Janina Hartwig, a German actress. It was accessible to all learners and most gained 5 or 6 marks.

Question 2:

The topic for **Q2** was 'Young people and media' and divided into three short paragraphs. To make the task easier for the candidates, there were two statements connected to each person. The correct missing word had to be inserted into the statement. This question is aimed at grade 1 to 4 and most candidates did not find it difficult to score the maximum six marks. The most difficult part was Q2e where candidates had to establish that Bruno said that you can always watch television these days.

Question 3:

This multiple-choice question was divided into three short paragraphs where three young people (Johann, Malika and Georg) gave an account of how they like to spend their holiday. Candidates had to choose the correct statements which corresponded to what the young people had said. There were 8 correct statements and therefore 8 marks available. A good number of candidates managed to score the maximum mark. There were very few candidates who crossed more than 8 boxes and had therefore marks deducted but quite a surprising number had crossed only 6 or 7 boxes.

The following questions have been marked by expert examiners and there are detailed reasons on how candidates achieved in this series.

Question 4:

The literary text was an edited extract from **Olga** by **Bernhard Schlink**. Candidates had to complete the notes with information from the text. there were 10 marks available. Most candidates were able to deal well with the text and scored maximum marks.

- a) **Q4(a)** There were very many correct answers here, incorrect answers mostly referred to 'vierzehnjährige'.
- b) **Q4(b)** Almost exclusively correct answers here, incorrect answers were usually 'Großstadt'.
- c) **Q4(c)** This also proved very successful with either '7 Kilometer' or 'Sieben Kilometer', incorrect answers were 'drei Jahre lang' or 'lang'.
- d) **Q4(d)** Except for a handful of scripts, this question always scored two marks, often offering all three possible answers.
- e) **Q4(e)** This was very often correct, incorrect answers were always 'Deutsch und Biologie'.
- f) **Q4(f)** Many correct answers but some took 'Character' as character in the text and answered 'Herbert' or 'Freund Herbert', others 'klug', 'nicht doof' or 'schwierig'.
- g) **Q4(g)** Many correct answers, the incorrect ones were usually 'Abitur'.
- h) **Q4(h)** Many correct answers, often giving both answers 'frei sein und die Welt sehen'. The incorrect answers were usually 'Firma des Vaters', some were 'Abitur' or 'Arbeit'.

Question 5:

The topic for the last question in the **Reading Comprehension** was environment. This is the most difficult part of the reading section and candidates can score 10 marks. There are 7 questions in total but 3 questions are comprised of two distinct elements and therefore two marks are available.

Candidates have dealt quite well with this part of the examination. It is pleasing to see that there are fewer candidates who copy large chunks of texts than in previous years as untargeted lifts do not score marks.

Answers in German for this section need to be precise and sometimes candidates do not include all the necessary information when answering a question which means that they cannot be awarded a mark.

The main issue why candidates may not score a mark is the fact that they do not always answer the question asked. It is vital that candidates read very carefully through the questions in order to establish what they need to address in their answer. There is at times too much untargeted copying from the text without manipulation which will not gain a mark. Answers in general should be short.

- a) **Q5(a)** There were many correct answers with a variety of acceptable answers: 'heute, im Alltag, jetzt, nicht nur heute, heute und in der Zukunft', and also 'für Generationen in der Zukunft'. Incorrect responses were usually untargeted lifts 'Auf Generationen ...'.
- b) **Q5(b)** Many correct responses, most of them stating 'verbessert die Qualität'. Incorrect answers were usually 'Luft (die wir atmen)' or 'Der Einfluss in deinem Alltag ...' or just 'die Qualität'.
- c) **Q5(c)** Very many candidates gained at least one mark, many both, by responding with any two of the possible correct answers, sometimes more than two. The incorrect answers were 'sehr vielfältig' and/or 'es zeigt das Engagement der Schüler'.
- d) **Q5(d)** This question did more often than not scored 0 marks as the candidates struggled to give the detailed answer needed. Most often they stated 'Die 35 Mitglieder haben mit ... geplant' or simply 'Energiesparen'. The correct answers were 'Sie sparten (haben) die (meiste) Energie (gespart)' but also 'für Energiesparen'.
- e) **Q5(e)** Much more accessible than the previous question, many students gained the mark with 'Die 35 Mitglieder/Sie haben (mit den Lehrern und ...) ein ganzes Energiejahr (an ihrer Schule) geplant' but also with 'es gibt 35 Mitglieder' and 'Sie haben ein tolles Motto' followed by the slogan.
- f) **Q5(f)** Almost all candidates gained two marks, mostly with 'Recyclingtage' and Veggie Day', the unsuccessful responses usually stated 'organisieren weitere Events/Aktionen'.
- g) **Q5(g)** This was the trickiest question as many just lifted the phrase or whole sentence 'denn sie können sehen, wie unser Project ...' often without the 'wie' and for the second part 'Es wird unsere Schule ...'. A number of responses gained one mark for a correct first part with 'wie' apart from using 'unser' and were then not penalised for using 'unser(e)' in the otherwise correct second part.

Question 6:

This is the first written task and is aimed at grades 1-5. there are four prompts and candidates are required to use all prompts in order to access the highest mark for communication and content which is 5. There is also a mark for linguistic knowledge and accuracy where the maximum mark is also 5.

The topic in this examination series was Family life and the four prompts were **Eltern, gemacht, lustig** and **Wochenende**. Candidates can use the prompts in any order but they should not change a noun to a verb or vice versa. Almost all candidates had no problems understanding the four prompts and could use them appropriately in their response. Most candidates covered all four bullet points in their answers and many used different time frames to convey meaning.

Some candidates write lengthy answers when they are asked to write 60-75 words. At times, the accuracy became weaker the longer the writing. Candidates should write distinct responses covering the four bullet points rather than producing a lengthy essay on the main topic.

Almost all responses were relevant and almost all candidates used all four prompts although 'gemacht' was sometimes used incorrectly in phrases like 'wir haben trinken gemacht'. There were many 'Hausaufgaben' and 'Ausflug gemacht' but the most used phrase was 'es hat Spaß gemacht' and the less successful 'ich habe Spaß gemacht'.

Answers that were very successful and scored full marks were often describing concepts like 'family life is important/how family life should be' before narrating their own experiences. There were many instances of 'ich verstehe mich gut mit' or 'ich komme gut aus mit' but these were not always successful 'ich komme gut mit meinen Eltern' or 'ich verstehe mich gut mit meinem Vater'.

Often outings with family were used to describe past or future experiences (past/future tense), often to restaurants in order to use food and drink items. Activities with the family were often described, mostly 'ins Kino gehen/Sport machen/Brettspiele/fernsehen' but also household chores.

There were some nice adjectives: ehrlich, unterhaltsam, zuverlässig, liebevoll, geduldig, and expressions like 'sie geben mir Unterstützung' or 'sie unterstützen mich' but also 'sie sind unterstützungsvoll'!

As always, the stronger candidates used various tenses, inversion, subordinate clauses with obwohl, wenn, weil and often these structures were used correctly. Weaker candidates also tried to use some of these but were sometimes less successful. On the whole correct verb-subject agreement was a problem for weaker candidates (this also goes for Q7) 'mein Vater helfe', 'meine Eltern ist', 'ich hat' etc. Past Tenses used were normally 'ich bin gefahren/gegangen/habe gespielt/gesehen, gegessen/getrunken' and 'ich war/wir waren/hatten'.

Question 7:

This is the longer essay where we expect candidates to write between 130 and 150 words. The maximum mark for this written response is 20; 10 marks for **communication and content** and 10 marks for **linguistic knowledge and accuracy**. To achieve the highest marks, candidates need to write a response which shows an excellent ability to express ideas in a logical sequence and errors should not interfere with comprehension. The response needs to be entirely coherent and fluent. On the linguistic side, candidates need to display an excellent range of vocabulary and grammatical structures with a secure use of at least three tenses. Examiners are looking for very strong evidence of correct spelling, verb formation, gender and agreement.

As in previous years, in general, most candidates found the questions accessible. The topics had been revised and almost all responses tried to cover all bullet points although with varying success. Most successful answers were structured and covered bullet points in the same order as the rubric – good responses often linked paragraphs and ideas – this worked well for all questions. There were many good to very good essays which were able to express abstract concepts.

As always there were a number of native/bilingual speakers who on the whole produced very good essays with clear and detailed responses and a good range of structures and a high level of accuracy although spelling was sometimes a problem.

Many responses featured language beyond the most simple structures (modal verbs, some subordinate clauses, infinitive phrases, relative clauses, past/future time frames/subjunctive etc). Subordinate sentences were usually introduced by weil, da, obwohl, als, wenn, dass and sometimes the subjunctive with wenn was used - these were often pre-learned phrases that were adapted to the particular question (Wenn ich viel Geld hätte, würde ich nächstes Jahr ein großes Fest machen/ wenn ich der Schuldirektor wäre ...). There were a few 'nicht nur ... sondern auch,', 'ab und zu'. Word order after inversion was often correct but not always and 'denn' was sometimes treated as a conjunction that introduces a subordinate clause. A number of candidates wrote 'nächtes' instead of 'nächstes' and weaker responses still feature 'sie sind Rugby spielen' or 'sie sind ins Kino kommen'. Modal verbs plus infinitive was also still a problem at times 'ein toller Shoppingtrip muss hat viel Geld'.

'Damit, darum, deshalb' were not always used correctly as their meanings were confused and the word order after any of them not always clear. The words 'neulich' and 'früher' were not always used correctly which hindered clarity, quite a number wrote 'order' instead of 'oder' (also in Q6). There were a small number of short essays and also a very small number of irrelevant pieces (usually short) that mentioned some words from the bullet points and also copied texts from the other questions of the exam paper.

Past tense forms 'gefahren/gegangen' were often correctly used with 'sein' and 'gegessen, getrunken, aufgeräumt, gespielt, gekocht, getroffen, gekauft, gesehen, besucht' with 'haben'. There were also quite a few 'es gab'.

There were still errors with the conjugation of the future tense: 'ich wird/er werde'.

'Meiner Meinung nach' seems to have been learned better for this examination, also 'meines Erachtens'. There were also a good number of 'das/es gefällt mir/das hat mir gefallen' in correct forms.

There are still errors when using the rubric 'Ich werde mit dein Geld nächsten Monat' or 'Schulregeln nicht magst sind ...'.

There were some good expressions: das ist ausdrucksstark/auf die Nerven gehen/Zeitverschwendung/Geldverschwendung/er geht mir auf den Wecker/das ist mir Wurst – some may be too colloquial 'ich verstehe nur Bahnhof' and 'Pinkelpause'!

- a) This question was the most popular one and there were quite a number of good or very good essays covering all four bullet points. For the first bullet point there was often the argument that money is important to buy things (Klamotten, Essen, Urlaub, Häuser). Some more sophisticated answers mentioned the idea that you need enough money to live but that too much money could be negative and/or that there are more important

things in life like friendship, family, happiness. The second bullet point was trickier for even stronger candidates who covered the topic of pocket money but explained why pocket money is good for children and how much they should get. This meant that these responses often did not have any past tense forms. Others wrote about how they earned pocket money when they were younger (sometimes too much digression on the topic household chores) but not how they spent it. When the point was covered successfully, money had often been spent on video games, sweets, toys etc and more able candidates managed to express some regret on how much money they had spent on silly things rather than saving it. The third point was often covered well with 'Einkaufszentrum' and the company of friends, usually there was some food involved, again more able candidates explained that you should only buy things that you really need and not spend too much money. The fourth bullet point was often quite fantastical with pocket money spent on houses, foreign luxury travel or expensive cars. Almost all responses had the future tense in some form, often correct.

Linguistically there was some confusion about 'bekommen' – 'gekommen' – 'Geld verdienen' etc, there were phrases like 'Als Kind hatte ich kein Taschengeld ausgeben' (as in was given no pocket money), 'Geld spenden' instead of 'ausgeben', 'Taschengeld verbringen' and 'ich habe Taschengeld gekommt'. On the other hand there were some very good expressions 'Geld ist allgegenwärtig', 'Die Kinokarten waren zu halsabschneiderisch'. There was some confusion about the phrases 'Als Kind' or 'wenn ich ein Kind war': 'Wenn als ich Kind war'.

b) This question was not always dealt with successfully although the first bullet point was often quite well covered with descriptions of their region or town, the landscape and amenities and the people (die Menschen sind warmherzig). For the second and third bullet points traditions and festivities mentioned were Guy Fawkes/bonfire night, Muttertag, Karneval, Zuckerfest, Halloween and Sportfeste and much Weihnachten, rarely real customs or traditions. The more able candidates could describe these and could also give an opinion on the traditions (traditions are important especially for small countries, identity, religion, you learn about history and culture). The fourth bullet point was often more about a festival/'Fest' that they were going to visit rather than a 'Fest' in their area.

c) There were a number of weak essays here listing some school rules but not explaining the advantage(s), some misunderstood (or did not understand) 'Regeln' and described the advantages of their school and school life and some just described their school without covering much of the bullet points.

The more successful essays mentioned for the first bullet point the arguments that rules teach children to be respectful, polite, punctual and disciplined, they encourage learning and prevent mobbing and make the school a safer and cleaner space. Many mentioned the school uniform both for the first and second bullet point, the advantages were that the uniform represents the school and makes the pupils proud, gives identity, is cheaper

and makes everyone equal. For the second bullet point the uniform was described as uncomfortable and ugly. Other rules not liked were the ban on mobiles and chewing gum. The third bullet point was misunderstood in a number of responses either for what they don't like about their school (Gestern musste ich viele Hausaufgaben machen) or what the school did wrong recently (Die Schule hat viele Regeln falsch gemacht) or more generally what the candidate did in the last couple of weeks (exams, sport matches etc) or what the school had done 'die Schule hat ein neues Schwimmbad gebaut'. When covered successfully, they usually had run in the corridor, used their mobile in class or had used chewing gum. A number mentioned punishment – usually 'Nachsitzen'. The fourth bullet point was usually understood and dealt with the use of the future tense and/or the subjunctive of 'müsste/würde'.

A number of candidates saw 'Schulregeln' as singular 'Schulregeln ist streng'. Quite a few struggled with the verb 'sich konzentrieren': 'die Schüler können konzetraserin/concentrieren' and there was also a 'communicieren'.

Question 8:

This section tests the candidate's ability to use their grammatical knowledge in context. The text chosen this year was about **Environmental organisations for young people**. Ten words needed to be put into the correct form in a particular sentence.

Most candidates managed to score well on this grammar test.

- a) **Q8(a)** Quite a number of successful answers here, but incorrect answers were 'lange' and quite a number of 'langem'.
- b) **Q8(b)** Many candidates wrote 'scheinen'.
- c) **Q8(c)** Many correct answers but also 'spielt' and 'spielen'.
- d) **Q8(d)** Many responses of 'ist', also 'seid', 'sein', 'sind'.
- e) **Q8(e)** Many correct answers but also 'ruhiger', 'ruhigen' and 'unruhig'.
- f) **Q8(f)** Many responses of 'tragt' but also quite a number of correct answers.
- g) **Q8(g)** Quite a number of candidates answered with 'liegen' or 'lieget'.
- h) **Q8(h)** Quite a few correct answers but also 'gebt, gegeben, gegeben, gab, es gibt'.
- i) **Q8(i)** Quite a few incorrect answers of 'ihre'.
- j) **Q8(f)** Quite a number of correct responses but also 'habt, hat, hatten'.

Advice for teachers

In general, teachers should emphasise to candidates to read the questions carefully and read through the whole section before answering questions. For task 4, the literary text, only very short answers are required (often one word) and non-targeted lifts from texts will not gain a mark.

For task 5, candidates should be discouraged to copy whole untargeted sections of the text as this will not be rewarded with a mark. A number of these responses can also be given as one- or two-word answers, certainly not more than a short sentence. Candidates have to be aware that they might need to manipulate the subject pronoun in order to answer the question. Answering a 'man' question with an imperative will not score a mark.

For task 6, candidates are required to use all four bullet points in their answer in order to be able to score the highest marks. They should also make sure that they use more than one time frame in order to score 5 marks out of 5.

For task 7, candidates also have to address all four sections in order to be eligible for the highest marks for communication and content. Examiners are looking for coherent and purposeful responses that show an excellent ability to express ideas in a logical sequence. Candidates are also encouraged to display an excellent range of vocabulary and grammatical structures with a secure use of at least three tenses.

In task 8, candidates are able to show their grammatical knowledge and need to read the sentences with the words in brackets carefully in order to produce the correct answer.

