



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

In German (4GN1)

Paper 02: Reading and Writing

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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 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 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 marked by computer, graduate markers and expert examiners respectively and were all multiple choice.

Question 1:

This question was on the topic of 'School Life'. It was accessible to all learners and most gained 5 or 6 marks. The word which some candidates appeared not to be familiar with was '*einige*' in Question 1b).

Question 2:

The topic for Question 2 was 'I am environmentally friendly' 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 challenging part was Q2b where some candidates did not make the connection between the word *notwendig* in the question and '*ich brauche*' in the text or were not familiar with this vocabulary.

Question 3:

This multiple-choice question was divided into three short paragraphs where three young people (Jan, Mia and Finn) describe who their role model is and why. 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 but quite a surprising number had crossed only 6 or 7 boxes.

The following questions were 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 *Der Schatz auf Pagensand* by Uwe Timm. 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 close to the maximum marks. Very few candidates left any blanks.

Q4(a) – (c) There were almost exclusively correct answers here, except for a handful of scripts.

Q4(d) This was very often correct, but a significant number of candidates confused *wer* with *wo* and therefore did not gain the mark as they indicated the place of cooking '*auf dem Boot*' rather than the identity of the cook (Georg) which the question '*wer*' required.

Q4(e) This was often correct and mostly answered with '*spazieren (gehen)*'. Incorrect answers included '*das Boot reparieren*' and '*einkaufen*'.

Q4(f) Many correct answers with '*brav/brave*' or '*hilfreich/hilfsbereit*' but some invented words intended to mean helpful could not be credited.

Q4(g) This question proved to be more challenging. Although many answered correctly with '*frisch*', it appeared that the expression '*es hat nach Regen ausgesehen*' was often not understood with incorrect answers which implied that it had rained already or that it was raining.

Q4(h) Many correct answers. However, some candidates did not appear to know the word '*Unterkunft*' and therefore answered '*zwei Nächte*'.

Question 5:

The topic for the last question in the **Reading Comprehension** was Holidays. 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 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 reason why candidates may not score a mark in this question is the fact that they do not always answer the precise question asked. It is vital that candidates read through the questions very carefully 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.

Question 5 is intended to be challenging and few candidates achieved full marks on this question. Many candidates scored at least half the available marks.

Q5(a) There were mostly correct answers here, with Meer and Küste being the most frequent. Incorrect answers included irrelevant phrases (often lifts) or 'ein freier Blick' without 'bis zum Horizont'.

Q5(b) Many correct responses such as 'sie haben einen anstrengenden Beruf' and also 'um Zeit zusammen zu verbringen'. Incorrect answers mentioned 'Familienurlaub' or 'ein ganz besonderes Erlebnis' which does not answer the question.

Q5(c) This was trickiest question as candidates tended to lift phrases or whole sentences without identifying the details required by the question accurately. Some candidates gained one mark for 'viele Freizeitmöglichkeiten/-aktivitäten' but then wrote 'sie haben das richtige Programm' which, on its own, was meaningless.

Q5(d) Although there were mostly correct answers here (Sauna and Kreativ-workshops), some candidates appear not to have understood außer Sport and erroneously included sport activities such as 'Windsurfen, Surfen, Stand-up Paddling'.

Q5(e) Most candidates gained both marks here as a direct lift was permitted: 'zum Angeln' and 'zu anderen Städten'.

Q5(f) There were mostly correct answers here but candidates seemed unfamiliar with Für wen and this led to many answers beginning with wenn. Some candidates confused Wetter with Wasser with answers including 'Wenn das Wetter nicht gut ist' or constructed phrases which did not convey a clear meaning: 'wenn das Wasser nicht will'.

Q5(g) Many gained the mark for '(sie haben) kinderfreundliche Unterkunft'. Incorrect answers were for example 'weil es leckeres Essen gibt' or 'Frühstück' and often omitted any mention of 'Kinder'.

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 Pocket Money and the four prompts were **Geld, gespart, Monat** and **teuer**. Candidates can use the prompts in any order but they should not change a noun to a verb or vice versa. Most candidates had no problems understanding the four prompts and could use all four appropriately in their response. Many used different time frames to convey meaning. Some candidates wrote lengthy answers when they are asked to write 60-75 words. At times, the accuracy deteriorated the longer the writing. Although candidates are not penalised for exceeding the word limit, they should write succinct responses addressing the four bullet points rather than producing a lengthy essay on the main topic.

The responses were mostly relevant and almost all candidates used all 4 key words although not always correctly. The word *'gespart'* was not always used in a correct context (it was sometimes wrongly interpreted to mean 'spent') and *'Monat'* was occasionally confused with 'money' or 'Monday'.

Answers that were very successful and scored full marks for Communication & Content often clearly described the rationale for pocket money, its advantages such as encouraging responsibility/hard work and enabling them to donate to charity, and its disadvantages, rather than narrating their own experiences only. Many candidates explained why they are saving (usually for a phone/computer) and a recurring sentiment seemed to be that they are not given enough money. In a few cases, candidates digressed and wrote about household chores, *'Teilzeitjobs'* or *'Sommerberuf'* with no mention of the set topic *'Taschengeld'*.

Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy was variable. Candidates compared how they spent money when they were younger with how they save it now to describe past and present experiences (past/present tense). There were also a number of subjunctives *'Wenn ich mehr Geld hätte, würde ich ...'*.

There were some excellent adjectives used: *großzügig, verantwortlich, unfassbar, unglaublich, dankbar*. Particularly pertinent was: *'man lernt mit Geld umzugehen'*. Structures such as *'Je ... desto'*, *'nicht nur ... sondern auch'* and *'entweder ... oder'* were normally correctly used.

Less and some more successful candidates seemed to confuse and therefore misuse the verbs *'ausgeben', 'spenden', 'sparen', 'verbringen', 'verdienen', 'bekommen' and 'bezahlen'*: *'ich bezahle zweimal pro Woche Taschengeld' – 'Meine Mutter hat mir 20 Euro verbracht'*. *'Spenden'* was sometimes misunderstood to mean 'to spend', and *'bekommen'* 'to become'. 'By my parents' was often incorrectly rendered with *'aus/bei meinen Eltern'*, for example.

More successful candidates used various tenses, inversion, subordinate clauses with *obwohl, wenn, weil* and often these structures were used correctly. Most candidates tried to use some of these but were sometimes less successful. Correct verb-subject agreement remains a challenge for some candidates and should be revised (this also goes for Q7). Past Tenses used included *'Meine Oma hat mir X gegeben/wir haben X bekommen/gekauft'* and *,ich war/ hatte'*.

There were a number of spelling errors in words with the *ei* diphthong: *wiel, Ziet, leibe, leiber, speile*. (This also applied to Q7). On occasion, the 4 key words (particularly *teuer*) were not spelt correctly despite being available at the top of the page. Particularly noticeable were candidates who clearly speak German well but have not yet mastered spelling.

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. Almost all responses tried to cover all bullet points although with varying degrees of success. Most successful answers were structured and covered bullet points in the same order as the question – 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.

Sometimes candidates digressed from the topic of their chosen essay in order to add well-learned sentences and vocabulary about other topics – they should try to remain on topic in order to maximise their marks for Content & Communication.

As always there was 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 demonstrated Linguistic Knowledge beyond simple structures such as modal verbs, subordinate clauses, infinitive phrases, relative clauses, past/future time frames/subjunctive etc. Subordinate clauses 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 nächsten Sommer Oktoberfest besuchen*). There were quite a few '*nicht nur ... sondern auch*', '*im Großen und Ganzen*', '*Je ... desto*' and '*entweder ... oder*' used correctly. There were many '*Meiner Meinung nach*' and '*meines Erachtens*' used correctly. '*Das ist meine Meinung*' also appeared regularly. Other good expressions used were '*um ehrlich zu sein*', '*im Vergleich zu*', '*das ist der Hammer*' and the words: '*abwechslungsreich*, *Zeitverschwendung*, *verantwortungsvoll*, *anspruchsvoll*, *wertvoll*, *ehrgeizig*, *glücklicherweise*, *beispielsweise*. There were a good number of '*das/es gefällt mir/das hat mir gefallen*' in the correct form too.

Word order with inversion was often correct but not always and '*denn*' was sometimes treated as a conjunction that introduces a subordinate clause. '*Nächstes*' (sometimes '*nachtes*' or '*netztes*') and '*letztes*' were often misspelt and were not always used with the correct tense which hindered clarity and the present tense was sometimes rendered wrongly using two verbs rather than one: '*Ich bin am liebsten Cricket spielen*'.

Some candidates copied phrases and vocabulary from questions 4 and 5 of the exam paper. There were a small number of short essays and also a very small number of irrelevant pieces (usually short).

Verb tenses/conjugations are an area for focus in future. Past tense forms often used were '*gefahren/gegangen*' usually (but not always) correctly with '*sein*' and '*gegessen, getrunken*,

organisiert, gespielt, getroffen, gekauft, gesehen, besucht were the most common past participles used – again not always successfully. There was an impressive use of the imperfect tense: *'es gab, ich fuhr/kam/fand/kaufte'*. Subject/verb agreement was a recurring issue: *'ich hat', 'Festivals ist toll'*. Candidates were not always successful, especially with the future tense: *'ich wird/ würde /wurden/er werde'*. This should be revisited as these verb forms seem to have become interchangeable for many candidates.

Common pitfalls included *'also'* being used instead of *'auch'*, some very poor spelling by native speakers which impeded clarity and the expression *'ich bin gespannt'* was not always correctly conveyed (*'spannend'* and *'entspannend'* used with *'ich'* instead). The confusion with *liebe* and *lieber* is problematic for example, *Ich lieber Fußball spielen/Ich spiele Liebe Fußball als Tennis*.

- a) The topic here was events. There were mentions of music festivals, food, sport and car festivals as well as *Oktoberfest, Spargelfest* and *Eid*. Where candidates made a distinction between *Festival, Event* and *Fest*, they had much more scope to write about broader subject matter than Glastonbury or Coachella and tended to be more successful in addressing each bullet point accurately.

The first point was sometimes dealt with in a single sentence *'Große Festivals sind wichtig für mich, denn ...'*. Some candidates did not write why they were or were not important to them, but more successful candidates developed this discussing *Kultur* and *neue Freunde kennenlernen* or included some negative points about festivals: too noisy/crowded or dangerous. On occasion, *'große Festivals'* was misinterpreted and a birthday party was referred to. The second point was usually handled well with the use of past tense and descriptions of the event attended, often a concert. The third point was sometimes linked to the second; elements *ein schönes Event* should have included going with friends, having good weather and good food and drink, but some candidates did not produce the word for drinks *Getränke* accurately. Similarly, *feiern* was often confused with *Ferien*. The fourth point was not always developed well. Candidates sometimes wrote about travelling to another country with no mention of which *Fest* they would attend. Almost all responses had the future tense in some form, often correct.

- b) This topic (school activities) was the most popular essay topic this year by some margin. The topic had obviously been well revised and again, most candidates covered all four points. However, responses to this question tended to be less successful as they were less developed.

For the first point, school activities were usually sports and their benefits were expressed simply (healthy and good for mental health, spending time with friends, fun). Some candidates did not address *am liebsten* from the prompt. The second point was, on occasion, merely a list of school clubs (*Theaterklub, Sportklub, Naturklub, Umweltklub*) but usually, there was more development and opinion - clubs help with homework and

with making new friends. The most successful candidates referred to learning about things beyond the curriculum and developing a '*Gemeinschaftsgefühl*' through clubs. A few candidates conflated the first and second points thinking they were asking the same thing. More successful candidates evaluated the offering of clubs at their school. The third point '*der beste Ausflug*' was not always addressed as the word 'Ausflug' was not understood. While some candidates referenced a '*Schulaustausch*', others wrote about events at the school which could not be credited. Responses to the fourth point often referred to a holiday or their own wishes for school improvement, rather than what the candidate's school is planning for the future. More successful answers wrote about future buildings '*Kletterhalle*', new clubs or an *Umweltwoche*.

Vocabulary and structures tended to be straightforward in the responses to this task, with the most successful candidates using *Verein*, *AGs*, *Erlebnisse*, *Klassenfahrt*. Occasionally, candidates experimented with language: '*Meine Schule plant einen Kunstklub. Ich kann es kaum erwarten, denn ich bin sehr künstlich!*'

Question 8:

This section tests the candidate's ability to use their grammatical knowledge in context. The text chosen this year was about Technology in Lessons. Ten words needed to be put into the correct form in a particular sentence. Most candidates managed to score well on this grammar test. Candidates should ensure that they write clearly for this Question. Umlauts especially should be clearly marked.

Q8(a) Quite a number of successful answers here. Incorrect answers comprised an incorrect adjective ending or misspellings.

Q8(b) Many candidates answered correctly. Incorrect answers were either an attempted adjective ending (when no noun followed this adjective) or '*mag*', '*mögen*'.

Q8(c) Many correct answers but also incorrect: '*gegeben*' or '*gab*' where candidates had not noticed the present tense time phrase '*jetzt*'.

Q8(d) Some correct responses of '*geholfen*' but this irregular past participle did not seem to have been widely learnt. Incorrect answers included '*gehelfen*' and '*gehilft*'.

Q8(e) Many correct answers with '*haben*' but also incorrect: '*hat*', '*gehabt*'.

Q8(f) Mostly correct with '*kann*'.

Q8(g) Many correct answers of '*erwartet*' but also incorrect: '*erwart*' or '*gewart*'.

Q8(h) Many correct responses, but also incorrect: '*war*' or '*sein*' or '*sind*'.

Q8(i) Many incorrect responses here: '*müsst*' or '*müssen*'.

Q8(j) Many incorrect responses here: mostly '*ihren*'. Even where all other responses were correct, this was often not.

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 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 very carefully in order to produce the correct answer.

