



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

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

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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 Angelique Kerber, a German tennis player. It was accessible to all learners and most gained 5 or 6 marks.

Question 2:

The topic for **Q2** was Holidays with family in Austria 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 Mario's family liked sleeping in a tent.

Question 3:

This multiple-choice question was divided into three short paragraphs where three young people (Nicole, Maria and Ahmed) gave an account of how they watch television. 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. **Q3(b)** had to be left blank and that was at times difficult to recognise for candidates. Quite a number of candidates crossed one of the names which meant they did not have 8 crosses available for the correct answers.

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.

For **Q4(a)** some candidates seemed to confused by the word 'wo' which they mistranslated as 'who' rather than 'where' and therefore gave a wrong answer.

Almost all answers to **Q4(b)** and **Q4(c)** were correct and did not pose a problem for the candidates.

Q4(d) was generally well handled and most candidates could identify that Herbert was sitting on the left in the photograph.

For **Q4(e)** the candidates had to identify the correct age of the children from the text which offered two different ages. Most candidates chose the correct one but there was a considerable number who did not read the text carefully or did not understand the text well enough and came up with the incorrect answer.

Q4(f) was answered correctly by many candidates. They could choose from three possible answers when describing Viktoria's hair and almost all did so successfully.

For **Q4(g)** there were 2 marks available on the future of the girls and candidates generally either gained both two marks.

Q4(g) was answered well by most candidates but there was a sizeable number who classified Herbert's helping in his father's shop as a feeling. This answer gained no marks.

Question 5:

The topic for the last question in the **Reading Comprehension** was sport. 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.

For **Q5(a)** a number of candidates copied from the text 'Emma und Anton machen alles richtig,' which is not an activity like playing or meeting other friends which is what the question asked for.

Few candidates seemed to have understood the word 'neben' and did not gain marks for **Q5(b)**. They cited various sporting activities but parental love or food were not mentioned. This proved to be the hardest part of this question.

For **Q5(c)** candidates needed to have an element of good influence or improvement in order to gain a mark.

There were two marks available for **Q5(d)** and a good number of candidates answered the question well but there were also some examples where candidates just copied words from the text without really understanding the question. Many candidates scored at least one mark here.

In order to gain a mark for **Q5(e)** candidates needed to include 'in der Schule' in their answer which was often missing. That meant that the offered response was ambiguous and did not gain a mark.

Most candidates scored well for **Q5(f)** and **Q5(g)** where they were able to manipulate the text well enough to answer the questions correctly.

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 School life and the four prompts were **Lieblingsfach, gelernt, schwierig** and **Mittagessen**. 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.

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.

All three tasks were chosen by a good number of candidates with task 7b being the most popular. None of the individual sections in any of the tasks posed a major difficulty in understanding for the candidates.

Question 7(a):

This is the first of three of the longer writing tasks candidates can choose. The topic this year was **Environment** and around 20% of candidates chose this task. It was accessible to almost all learners with good results. Most candidates covered all four points in their writing. It was pleasing to see that most candidates were able to use past time frames for the first bullet point and future time frames for the last bullet point.

The four subheadings asked candidates to write about what their class had done for the environment last week, why environmental protection is important, what their school friends think about the environment and how their school will be more environmentally friendly in the future.

Question 7(b):

The second longer writing task **Q7(b)** was on the topic of **Mobile phones and social networks** and more than a third of candidates had chosen to write about this. The four bullet points were as follows: what you did last week with your mobile phone, what problems there might be with mobile phones, your opinion to social networks and how you will be using social networks in future.

Candidates at times conflated different sections when answering these points. It was not always clear when they used their mobile phone and for what purpose. It is advisable to start a new paragraph for every section of the response.

Question 7(c):

The last option for the longer written task **Q7(c)** was on the topic of **Family life**. About a third of candidates chose this topic. They were generally able to cover the four bullet points with some detail.

Candidates were asked to refer to the following bullet points: what they liked doing as a child, the advantages of activities at home, whether brothers and sisters are important for them and what their family will be doing next year.

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. There were no items which caused a major problem but the correct past participle of 'geschrieben' for **Q8(a)** was a bit of a challenge.

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.

