



Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback
Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In German (4GN1)
Paper 02R: Reading and Writing

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Outline: Paper 2R is the Reading and Writing component of the new International GCSE R Paper 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 'Transport'. It was accessible to all learners and most gained 5 or 6 marks. Two words which candidates were less familiar with were '*in der Nähe von*' in Question 1b) which some candidates did not link with '*neben*' in the text, and '*Koffer*' in Question 1c).

Question 2:

The topic for Question 2 was 'Celebrations' 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 five or six marks. The most challenging part was Q2f) where some candidates either did not make the connection between the word *draußen* in the question and '*im Garten*' in the text or did not know the meaning of *draußen*.

Question 3:

This multiple-choice question was divided into three short paragraphs where three young people (Sophie, Leyla and Mirko) describe school trips and their opinions on them. 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 some crossed only 6 or 7 boxes.

The following questions were marked by expert examiners and detailed information on how candidates achieved in this series is set out below.

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 achieved high marks. Very few candidates left any blanks.

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

Q4(b) This was a slightly more challenging question as candidates had to convey the parents' opinion about the sailing tour, but most did so successfully.

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

Q4(h) This was often correct, but a significant number of candidates did not appear to be familiar with the word *Treffpunkt* and therefore did not answer with the place that the friends were meeting.

Q4(i) This question proved to be more challenging. Many answered correctly with 'alle'. Candidates were required to convey Jutta's opinion that all the friends should cook even though her friends were expecting her to cook. This required a deeper level of comprehension than some of the prior questions.

Question 5:

The topic for the last question in the **Reading Comprehension** was Role Models. 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. Most candidates scored close to half the available marks.

Q5(a) There were mostly correct answers here.

Q5(b) There were few correct responses here. The answers that should have been given in answer to the question what are the most important elements of language learning were '*Aussprache*' and '*Wörter*'. Incorrect answers tended to lift other words from the text – for example '*Kinder kopieren das Verhalten*' which did not answer the question.

Q5(c) Most candidates gained one mark here by explaining that the consequence of watching TV for too long is that children do not sleep (well). Some candidates were also able to explain that as a result of too much TV, children do not have to think or do not read much. An untargeted lift was not accepted here.

Q5(d) Although there were some correct answers here (*weniger Süßigkeiten essen*), many candidates appear not to have understood the concept *Zähne schützen* and answered with untargeted lifts such as '*zu viele Süßigkeiten*' which did not answer the question.

Q5(e) Most candidates gained the marks here with: '*Kinder rauchen später im Leben*'.

Q5(f) There were many correct answers here but some candidates were not awarded both marks, as they tended to reference '*Sport treiben*' generally, rather two of the three activities mentioned in the text as required by the mark scheme: '*zu Fuß gehen / mit dem Fahrrad fahren / Wanderung machen*.'

Q5(g) Many candidates gained the mark for '*Man hat schöne Erlebnisse*'.

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 the Internet and the four prompts were **Computer**, **gesurft**, **Zeit** and **nötig**. 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 '*nötig*' was not always used in a correct context and it was clear that some candidates were unfamiliar with this word despite it appearing in the instructions for questions 5 and 8.

Answers that were very successful and scored full marks for Communication & Content often clearly described the advantages and disadvantages of the internet such as enabling candidates to do research for their homework on the one hand and the problems of overuse of the internet on the other. Most candidates tended to narrate their own experience and provide their opinions rather than discussing the topic more broadly, and there was a general consensus that they cannot live without the internet. Either approach to the task is acceptable: the mark scheme rewards a detailed, coherent and fully relevant response to the task.

Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy was variable. Candidates compared how much time they spent on the internet when they were younger with their current use to describe past and present experiences (past/present tense). There were also a number of subjunctives *'Wenn ich mehr Geld hätte, würde ich ...'* and a particularly impressive use of *'gesurft'* in a passive construction: *'Es kann im Internet gesurft werden'*.

There were some excellent adjectives/adverbs used: *süchtig, nützlich, verantwortlich, unglaublich, äußerst*. Structures such as *'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 *'spenden', 'verbringen', 'bekommen' and 'benutzen'*. *'Spenden'* was sometimes misunderstood to mean 'to spend' in conjunction with *'Zeit'* instead of *'verbringen'* and *'bekommen'* 'to become'. Many candidates were not familiar with formulating **'im Internet surfen'** in German and the preposition was often omitted. Candidates often did not know the gender of Internet (neuter) and Computer (masculine).

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 *'ich habe viel Zeit auf dem [sic] Computer verbracht'* and *'ich war/ hatte'*.

There were some spelling errors in words with the *ei* diphthong: *wiel, Ziet, leibe, speile*. (This also applied to Q7). On occasion, the 4 key words (particularly *nötig*) were not spelt correctly despite being available at the top of the page. It was noticeable that some candidates 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 in XX wohnen*). There were quite a few *'nicht nur ... sondern auch'*, *'Je ... desto'* and *'entweder ... oder'* used correctly. There were many *'Meiner Meinung nach'* used correctly. Other good expressions used were *'es ist mir eher unwichtig'*, *'wegen des schlechten Wetters'*, *'im Vergleich zu'*, and *'das kann ich nachvollziehen'* and the words: *'vorteilhaft, erfolgreich, Zeitverschwendung, unfassbar, unvergesslich'*.

Word order with inversion was often correct. *'Nächstes'* and *'letztes'* were often misspelt and were not always used with the correct tense which hindered clarity.

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 largely 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, gespielt, bekommen, gemacht, gewohnt, erlebt'* were the most common past participles used – again not always successfully. The imperfect *'ich war/ich hatte/es gab'* were usually used successfully and some candidates were able to formulate *'als ich jünger war ...'* in a correct sentence to express what they used to do.

Subject/verb agreement in all tenses was a recurring issue. 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. Other

common pitfalls included 'also' being used instead of 'auch' and some very poor spelling by native speakers which impeded clarity.

- a) The topic here was future plans and the question was generally well-answered. There was a large variety of future plans with most candidates indicating that they thought that university would be important for their future. There was recognition of the importance of learning a language and German in particular.

Some candidates struggled with the first point as they were uncertain which tense to use: 'Traumberuf' suggested a future time frame but the question was rooted in the past (*als Kind*). A few candidates appear not to have been familiar with the word 'Traumberuf' and wrote about what they did/liked when they were younger which was not relevant. The second point about preferred school subjects was addressed well, as was the third on the importance of university (or not), although some answers could have been improved by explaining why it was important (or not) for the individual candidate. Almost all candidates were able to express what they will do in 10 years' time (the fourth point), although the degree of grammatical accuracy varied. Candidates were more career-focussed than thinking about having a family.

Two lexical points were particularly relevant to this question: candidates often confused 'bekommen' with 'werden' and used it when they wanted to convey 'to become'. This affected the clarity of their communication. Similarly, 'studieren' and 'lernen' were confused.

- b) This was the most popular essay topic this year by some margin as the topic was Sport. The topic had obviously been well revised and again, most candidates covered all four points. However, responses to this question which were less successful tended not to address the four points directly enough, instead writing about sport generally.

The first point in particular 'das beste Sportevent, das du erlebt hast' was less well-answered. Many less successful candidates did not respond to the relative clause which invited them to write about an event which they have already experienced; they wrote their opinion of what the best sport event is in the present tense. On occasion, candidates did not address *mit anderen* in the second point. The third and fourth points were generally well-answered, although some candidates did not form the future tense for the fourth point correctly.

Vocabulary and structures tended to be straightforward in the responses to this task, with the most successful candidates using relevant vocabulary such as *Verein*, *ausprobieren* and *um neue Leute kennenzulernen*.

- c) This was the least popular essay topic this year on the topic of living in the countryside. However, there were many confident responses to this question.

On the first point, the past tense was frequently formulated correctly but some candidates did not refer to their '*Gegend*'. The second point, *die Vorteile vom Leben auf dem Land* was well-answered with some candidates developing environment-related arguments successfully using excellent vocabulary such as *Luftverschmutzung* and considering the benefits of a quiet environment with a *Gemeinschaftsgefühl*. Less successful candidates limited themselves to one advantage only when the prompt was in the plural. For the third point on why some young people do not like living in the countryside, the consensus was that it is boring. There was a range of ideal places to live in future suggested in response to the fourth point with Dubai being the dream destination for some. Again, some candidates did not form the future tense for the fourth point correctly.

Question 8:

This section tests the candidate's ability to use their grammatical knowledge in context. The text chosen this year was about Holidays for Teenagers. Ten words needed to be put into the correct form in a particular sentence. Few 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) Few correct answers. Incorrect answers were usually: '*haben*'.

Q8(b) Few correct answers here. Incorrect answers were usually an incorrect adjective ending. In some cases, the word '*berühmt*' was misspelt or the umlaut was missing.

Q8(c) Some correct answers but also incorrect e.g. '*besuchen*'.

Q8(d) Some correct responses of '*getanzt*' but it was often misspelt.

Q8(e) Few correct answers. Incorrect answers were usually the wrong adjective ending.

Q8(f) Few correct answers. Incorrect answers were usually the wrong adjective ending.

Q8(g) Some correct answers of '*benutzen*' but also incorrect: '*benutzt*' or a misspelling.

Q8(h) Some correct responses with '*will*', but also many incorrect e.g. '*wolle/wollen*'.

Q8(i) Some correct responses with '*können*' but also many incorrect e.g. '*kann*'.

Q8(j) Many incorrect responses here: mostly '*werden*'. This was a challenging question which required candidates to recognise an impersonal verb structure followed by the dative plural.

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. Verb formation and adjective endings should be revisited.

