



General Certificate of Education

German 1661 *Specification*

GERM1 Listening, Reading and Writing

Report on the Examination *2010 examination - January series*

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2010 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

Unit 1

General comments

Most candidates seemed to have adequate time to complete the paper. There were relatively few instances of questions or sub-questions being left unanswered. Indeed, a large number of candidates wrote at much greater length in Section B than was required, not necessarily resulting in a better performance.

On-screen marking was introduced for this unit for the first time and candidates should be reminded that they must answer the questions in the spaces provided, as instructed on the front cover of the question paper. It is also very important that the instruction to candidates to write in black ink or ballpoint pen is adhered to, as answers written in blue ink or pen are very difficult to mark on screen.

Unfortunately a number of candidates answered Question 1 in German, for which no marks could be given. Candidates should also avoid giving two possible answers when only one is required, e.g. 'sugary and fatty food' in Question 1(b) where the inclusion of 'fatty' would invalidate the correct mention of 'sugary'. In Question 4, it was disappointing to find answers such as T and V when the rubric quite clearly stated that the only possible answers were R, F and NA. In Question 9, poor handwriting may have cost some candidates marks, especially in cases where they went back to alter an answer but failed to make the alteration clear.

Section A

Question 1

Most candidates grasped the gist of the recording. A few candidates were let down by poor, or ambiguous, English.

- (a) Almost all candidates scored at least one mark here. Some did not convey the idea *hochprozentig* adequately.
- (b) Well answered.
- (c) Only the strongest candidates gave a correct answer in this sub-question. The word *sinnvoll* was unfamiliar to many.
- (d)(i) Many correct answers, but some candidates did not know *sich ... richtet*.
- (d)(ii) Well answered.
- (d)(iii) Candidates seemed less familiar with *Süßwaren* here than they were with *Süßigkeiten* in part (b).
- (d)(iv) Quite a challenging item. Candidates could gain credit either for a literal rendering of the German, e.g. 'a ban won't reduce the consumption of sweets', or for conveying the sense in a more general way, e.g. 'a ban won't work'.
- (e) An astonishingly large number of candidates wrote '50' or '14' instead of '40'.

Question 2

Well answered on the whole.

Question 3

Many candidates scored highly in this question. The requirement to write short answers in German was generally well handled.

- (a) Most candidates gave at least two out of the three possible points and therefore scored both marks. Common errors included the inappropriate use of the first person, e.g. *meine Großmutter* instead of *ihre Großmutter*, and the English spelling 'music' instead of *Musik*.
- (b) Often well answered, but the invented word *beworden* was surprisingly common in place of *beworben*.
- (c) Well answered, except that some candidates seemed unfamiliar with the German pronunciation of *TV* and spelt it out as *teefau* or similar.
- (d) This was the hardest sub-question in Question 3. Sometimes candidates mis-spelt words in such a way as to show that they had not understood the meaning, e.g. *Wende* instead of *Wände*, *Gäste(n)* instead of *Gesten*.
- (e) Some good answers here, although there was some confusion between *eigener* and *einige(r)*. Those candidates who tried to rely on a direct transcription of the recording often came unstuck with *dazu gehört*.

Question 4

Fairly well answered. The most accessible items proved to be parts (a) and (c). Very few candidates gave the correct answer NA in part (h), presumably because they were misled by the reference to *Pauschalangebote* in the recording.

Question 5

Again, fairly well answered. The most accessible item proved to be part (e), while the least accessible item was part (a), perhaps because *selbstsüchtig* was not known.

Question 6

This question proved to be marginally the hardest of the questions with non-verbal answers on this paper. The most accessible item was part (f), while the item causing the greatest difficulty was part (c), perhaps because candidates did not understand the sentence *Ein paar Stunden ... bestimmt aushalten* in the correct response.

Question 7

More able candidates coped well with this question, sometimes scoring full marks. Less able candidates tended to score very low marks.

- (a) Fairly well answered, but a number of candidates wrote *zwei*, perhaps because they could not work out the meaning of *Jahrzehnten*.
- (b) A good number of correct answers, but some candidates wrote *Freizeit* here instead of in part (c), suggesting that they had not read the text and question carefully enough.
- (c) Only a small proportion of the entry gave a correct answer here. The key to the correct answer was the word *sogar*.

-
- (d) Generally well answered, although some less able candidates gave a wrong answer such as *hohe* which showed no grammatical awareness. The word *Freundschaften* was not accepted here because it failed to bring out the contrast between the two types of relationship mentioned in the text.
 - (e) Fairly well answered. A few less able candidates wrote an adjective such as *persönlich(e)* which showed a lack of grammatical awareness.
 - (f) Well answered.
 - (g) The least accessible sub-question in Question 7. Many candidates gave answers such as *wichtig* which showed a lack of understanding of the text and/or question.
 - (h) The most accessible sub-question in Question 7.

Question 8

Overall, candidates tended to score more highly here than in the other reading comprehension questions. The most accessible items proved to be parts (d) and (g), while the least accessible item was part (b) where many candidates gave the wrong answer A.

Question 9

This question produced a wide range of attainment. In those items requiring a compound or separable verb, some candidates wrongly inserted a modal verb such as *soll* or *will*.

- (a) A relatively easy first item. Most candidates gave the correct answer.
 - (b) Well answered.
 - (c) Quite well answered, although the wrong ending *-en* was not uncommon.
 - (d) A difficult item. Among the common wrong answers were *wird*, which took no account of the historical context, and *war*, which showed a lack of awareness of the passive voice.
 - (e) Fairly well answered, although some less able candidates seemed not to know that *herunterladen* was a separable verb.
 - (f) A surprisingly large number of wrong answers here, especially *natürliche* and *natürlicher*. Some candidates carelessly omitted the umlaut.
 - (g) Many candidates did not realise that a future tense was required.
 - (h) The wrong ending *-en* was frequent.
 - (i) This was the hardest item in Question 9. Even those candidates who wrote the correct past participle *aufgewachsen* often wrote *hat* instead of *ist*.
 - (j) Another difficult item, although more able candidates tended to have greater success here than in item (i).
-

Section B: Extended writing questions

Most candidates chose a question to which they were able to write a relevant, sensible response. Instances of blatant repetition or irrelevance were, thankfully, rare, although some candidates used more words than was necessary to convey their ideas and opinions.

The work of better candidates tended to include:

- a well organised plan, ideally using the essay planning sheet
- a clear introduction and conclusion
- a smallish number of points, arranged in a logical sequence and fully developed with examples.
-

Less able candidates tended to:

- re-use most or all of the ideas from the stimulus, without adding their own interpretation
- start with a very specific point, rather than 'setting the scene' first
- stop in midair, with no attempt at a conclusion.

Most candidates include a satisfactory range of grammatical constructions and topic-specific vocabulary. Better candidates were able to handle basic grammar confidently, such as subordinate word order, inversion after adverbs, infinitives with and without *zu*, and common verb and case endings. Many also used subjunctive forms correctly, especially the imperfect and pluperfect subjunctives to convey hypothetical situations. A few candidates relied excessively on set essay phrases such as *es liegt auf der Hand* and *es lässt sich nicht leugnen*.

The language of less able candidates often displayed an astonishingly poor grasp of basic grammar, especially word order and common case endings. They sometimes produced German which read as if it had been translated word for word from English. Many were unable to use *meiner Meinung nach* correctly. Common lexical errors included:

- *Kriminale* for 'criminals'
- *Krimi* instead of *Kriminalität*
- **putzen** for 'to put'
- *jemand* for 'everyone' (a very frequent error)
- *bekommen* for 'to become'
- *frei* instead of *kostenlos*
- *hilfsbereit* as an adjective describing the internet
- spurious Denglish such as *improvieren*
- inappropriate use of *unglaublich*

Question 10

A relatively small number of candidates chose Question 10. The overall standard of responses was slightly lower than in Questions 11 and 12, although some candidates did achieve full, or nearly full, marks for content. Better candidates addressed both parts of the question – why fashion is important and whether we can ignore it – and avoided lengthy descriptions of particular styles or over-personal views on what is and isn't fashionable. Useful points which lent themselves to development included:

- the positive and negative effects of peer pressure
- finding the right balance between expressing individuality and fitting in with a group
- higher disposable income available to some teenagers and young adults
- the influence of the media, especially the power of advertising
- the role of the fashion industry in the country's economy

Question 11

The few candidates who chose Question 11 tended to fall into one of two categories: very good or poor. The very good responses dealt with both aspects of the task thoughtfully and coherently. They often explained how sport encourages teamwork and a desire for success, and sometimes used examples of sports(wo)men who are well respected for their attitude. They also explained some of the negative aspects, such as the illegal use of drugs to enhance performance, instances of cheating by top performers, and the disproportionate salaries of some well-known sports(wo)men. Some less able candidates barely addressed the task and just wrote general comments about the health benefits of sport.

Question 12

Question 12 was by far the most popular choice in Section B. The spread of attainment was less broad than in Question 11, with most candidates managing to score reasonable credit for content but relatively few candidates achieving maximum marks. Many candidates began with some appropriate general comments about the increasing importance of the internet in people's everyday lives. They then referred to specific good and bad points, before rounding off with a personal opinion based on the points previously made. In addition to the points listed in the stimulus, some candidates mentioned:

- internet shopping, both for low prices and for people with limited mobility
- booking holidays, travel tickets, hotels and theatre tickets
- on-line banking – both advantageous and problematic
- internet as a vehicle for free speech in certain countries
- cyber-bullying
- lack of human contact
- downloading of music and films – can be harmful to the industry
- quantity of advertising – influencing young people
- employers finding out the history – bad and good – of potential employees

Less able candidates relied far too heavily on quoting verbatim the points listed in the stimulus, sometimes misunderstanding key words such as *Zeitverschwendung*.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Listening Section

From the January 2010 series onwards all centres have been supplied with two types of CD. One is a single CD which is not tracked and which is suitable for downloading onto mp3 players, language laboratories etc. One CD of this type is supplied per centre. The other CD has individual tracks recorded so that candidates using individual CD players are able to rewind and fast forward, using these tracks. Sufficient numbers of this CD are supplied for all candidates entered at the centre. Centres can then choose which type of CD best meets their needs.

For each question in the Listening section, both the duration of the heard material and the track numbers from the tracked CD which correspond to that material are printed in the Question and Answer booklet and on the transcript, eg

Length of passage: 55 seconds

Tracks: 10-18

Listening/Reading Sections

It should be pointed out that there is no longer a requirement for candidates to manipulate language in the Listening/Reading sections of this paper as the marks are awarded for comprehension only.

Writing Section

Question Paper and Answer Booklet

Candidates must write using single line spacing when writing their answer for this section. Double line spacing (i.e. writing on alternate lines) must not be used. Those candidates who cannot complete their answer in the answer booklet must use additional answer sheets; they must not use the essay planning sheet for this purpose as it is not sent for marking.

Essay Planning Sheet

The Essay Planning Sheet must be used for the plan only and will not be assessed. Essay Planning Sheets, together with any questions on inserts, must not be enclosed with the question paper and answer booklets when they are despatched for marking.

Annotation of Scripts

The following conventions are used by examiners on scripts when assessing Content.

✓	Point made
Irr	Irrelevant material
Rep	Repeated point
?	Lack of clarity

Additional Guidance for Responding to the Writing Section

Are candidates expected to include an introduction and conclusion in their essay? If so, how many words approximately?

Candidates are not expected to include an introduction or conclusion, but it enhances the structure if there is a brief introduction and a concluding short paragraph, possibly including a personal response. One of the criteria is for a logical structure and this would enhance the overall structure of the essay.

Is a personal opinion valid as a point in the argument?

Yes, we give ticks for personal opinions as we consider them valid as developments.

Should each point/opinion be backed up with an example?

Generally, yes. There must be plenty of justification of points/opinions in order to gain marks in the higher bands.

Are the examiners looking for a certain number of points/opinions plus examples, eg 3 arguments for one point of view with evidence and 3 against with evidence?

This would be sensible but we have no hard and fast rule on this since a limited number of points very well illustrated and developed would also be considered for the higher mark bands.

How does the marking scheme work in practice? Is there a list of relevant points, some of which the examiners are expecting to be included? If so, how many represents poor versus sufficient/very good?

There is a list of relevant points for the guidance of examiners but these are by no means prescriptive and candidates will get credit for well-argued points not in the list. Examiners tick every relevant, clearly expressed point and give further ticks for development/examples/opinions etc. Thus a list of bullet point type arguments with no development cannot access the highest mark band. In order to access the highest mark band, candidates must also ensure that they meet all the other criteria, eg their ideas are clearly expressed, there is logical structure and they have answered fully the question set.

Is it just an instinctive overall rating of logical sequence and therefore individual points are not counted up?

There is no mathematical guide to Content marks - examiners have to make a decision based on the descriptors in the assessment criteria.

Are there any other questions which teachers should be asking to get a better understanding of how candidates are to be assessed in the essay question?

Yes, there are sets of exemplar materials for the Writing section of Unit 1 as part of the Teacher Resource Bank. The Teacher Resource Bank materials are available on the AQA website.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.
