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Examiners' Report January 2010

GCE German 6GN02/01

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Overview

This unit requires candidates to understand and convey their understanding of German-language recordings and texts. In addition, candidates produce a piece of continuous writing in which they can demonstrate their ability to manipulate German. The content for the unit is drawn from the four general topic areas (and definitive list of linked subtopics) listed on page 30 of the specification. The overall time allocation for this unit is 2 hours 30 minutes.

Section A is out of 20 marks and assesses candidates' listening skills. There are four extracts which last around 5 – 6 minutes and which are recorded onto CD (or are available for centres to download as an mp3 file up to one hour prior to the exam start time). Candidates have individual control of the listening material and must complete section A within the first 45 minutes of the examination.

Section B is also out of 20 marks and assesses candidates' reading skills. There are three authentic texts in German each followed by a different task type. Candidates are free to complete this section immediately after section A or they may choose to complete section C first and come back to this section later in the examination.

Section C is out of 30 marks and assesses candidates' writing skills. Candidates are required to write 200-220 words in the form of e.g. an email, a letter or an article in German based on a short German-language stimulus. A number of linked bullet points define the content. Candidates are free to answer this question after the listening and before the reading sections if that suits them better.

Section A: Listening

This section consists of four listening extracts and four questions:

Question 1 is a multiple-choice task in German requiring candidates to select the correct answer from a choice of three. There are four marks available for this question.

Question 2 requires candidates to select the four correct statements in German from a list of eight. Thus, there are also four marks available for this question. In cases where candidates crossed more than four statements, one mark was withheld for each cross offered in excess of four. Thus, six crosses, including four correct ones, would attract two marks in total.

Question 3 is a summary with gap fill in German. Candidates are provided with a pool of answers from which they select the correct word to complete the sentences of the summary. If the response selected was not transcribed entirely correctly, but could not be confused with another word in the pool, it earned the mark. This question is worth four marks.

Question 4 requires candidates to produce verbal responses in German to questions set in German. This question carries eight marks. Quality of language is not assessed here, but candidates must communicate their answers unequivocally. Lifting is allowed, although this can lead to transcription errors.

All questions are marked according to a specific mark scheme which is updated at the standardisation meeting to take account of the range of candidate responses.

Section B: Reading

This section consists of three passages for reading and three questions:

Question 5 is a matching task. Candidates match five sentences (or headlines etc) to a person (or city etc) in the text. There are five marks available. One mark was scored for each statement correctly attributed to a young person. If two or more crosses were proffered in response to a given statement, credit was withheld: thus, in Q5a, for instance, crosses for both Laura (correct) and Cäcilia (incorrect) would not score.

Question 6 requires candidates to demonstrate their ability to transfer meaning from German into English. The text is factual and candidates are not expected to infer meaning. There are five separate questions in English to which candidates respond in English. Full sentences are not required, but candidates must include sufficient detail to address the question appropriately.

Question 7 requires candidates to respond in German to questions set in German. Quality of language is not assessed here, but candidates must communicate their answers unequivocally. Full sentences are not required but, as in question six, sufficient detail must be included in the response to answer the question completely.

All questions are marked according to a specific mark scheme which is updated at the standardisation meeting to take account of the range of candidate responses.

Examiners assess responses in Q4, Q6 and Q7 in the order elements are given by candidates, and consider no more elements than the number of marks available. Thus, in a 2 mark question, only the first two elements can score. Repeating or re-working of the question or preambles to an acceptable response do not count as elements in the response. In addition, credit is not withheld for irrelevant additions to a correct answer, but incorrect additions which negate will result in candidates losing the mark for a correct answer. These assessment principles are in keeping with those from the legacy specification and with those at GCSE.

Section C: Writing

This section consists of 1 writing task.

In question 8 candidates first read a short (55-75 words) stimulus in German which serves to provoke and support a response in German of 200 -220 words. The rubric (in German) for this task includes a number of bullet points (between 4 and 6) which candidates must address in their response. The piece of writing is assessed positively according to assessment criteria grids. These grids reward students for content and response (15 marks) and quality of language (15 marks). Candidates need to gain at least 1 mark for content to access marks for quality of language. The word limit is observed and examiners read no further than to the end of the sense group after 220 words. Again, this is in keeping with practice in the legacy specification.

Comments on individual questions

The paper produced a full range of ability and marks.

Question 1

This question offered a positive start to the paper for the majority of candidates. However, a significant minority struggled with the very first sub question and a common incorrect answer for part (a) was (iii). This could be due to a number of things such as exam technique, exam nerves, candidates needing to 'tune their ear' before they get into the swing of the listening. Centres should consider how best to help their candidates settle into the exam, given that candidates have control of the listening material.

Question 2

The majority of candidates understood the requirements of this question type and only a few placed too many crosses. Most found this question very accessible indeed, with only a few unable to identify (f) as correct. These candidates tended to opt for either (g) or (h) instead.

Question 3

There were some mixed fortunes on this question. Whilst very many candidates were able to score full marks here, others found parts (b) and (d) challenging. These latter tended to give the following incorrect responses:

- (b) *geputzt* rather than *zerstört*
- (d) *passierten* instead of *schwänzten*

Although this task is not a test of language, it is undoubtedly the case that a sound knowledge of grammar helps to narrow the possibilities for each gap.

Question 4

Overall, this part of the question paper was well handled, with many candidates demonstrating good understanding of the main body of the listening text. Some candidates gained credit evenly throughout this question, while others struggled at times. Others adopted the 'carpet bombing' approach or attempted to transcribe the passage, often incomprehensibly. Targeted lifts from the passage were allowed, of course. Candidates should expect this question to be the most challenging in the listening section. As already stated, communication only is assessed, not quality of language.

- a) Most answered this correctly with *Konzentrationschwierigkeiten* (albeit with some interesting spellings). Fewer candidates chose to answer with *Depressionen* (or *Der Pression*) or *sie nehmen Drogen, um ihre Probleme zu vergessen*.
- b) Most candidates opted for *Gruppenzwang* here, and the correct spelling posed problems for only a few e.g. *Gruppenschwang*, *Gattenzwange*. *Neugier* did not appear to be a well-known item of vocabulary and some of the spellings made it difficult to award a point e.g. *Neu Gear*.
- c) A significant number of candidates gave the answer *etwas Neues ausprobieren* which was an acceptable answer for 4b but not for 4c. Of those candidates who identified the correct answer, a large proportion gave only one half of the information required e.g. *Alkohol ist ab 16 erlaubt* which was not enough to score the mark.

(c) Wie wird der Einstieg in den Drogenkonsum leicht gemacht?

(1) 1 Q04c

~~Alkohol~~ Jugendliche kann Alkohol trinken um 16 Jahre alt aber nicht rauchen bis 18 Jahre alt.



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Examiner Comments

This response is awarded the mark: although the candidate's German is not accurate, the information required is communicated fully and unequivocally.

d) This was probably the most challenging section and served as an excellent discriminator. It required candidates to listen carefully for detail and note that detail in their answer. Typically, answers focused on young people being able to drink lots at flatrate parties or the possibilities of alcohol poisoning without any reference to the notion of limitless drinking.

(d) Warum sind Flatrate Partys so gefährlich?

(1) 1 Q04d

Man kann ~~so~~ trinken wie viel Alkohol sie möchten



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has very clearly communicated the concept of drinking as much as one likes i.e. without limit, and again although the German is not without error, the message is perfectly unambiguous.

- e) This was dealt with very successfully by the full range of candidates. Weaker candidates lifted from what they heard (and transcribed fairly accurately on the whole) and stronger candidates tended to use their own words.
- f) The majority of candidates answered correctly here, although it was sometimes unclear who should explain the consequences of drinking too much and there was some confusion between *in der Schule* and *in der Schüler* which led to an ambiguous message.

(f) Wie sollte man der Expertin nach das unbegrenzte Trinken unter Jugendlichen verhindern? Geben Sie **zwei** Beispiele.

(2) 1 Q04f

Lehren sollten die volgung von Alkohol dotlich erklären.
Eltern sollten ihren Kinder von Flatrate Partys abschrecken.



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Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 1 mark for the second part of the answer. Sadly, the first part has too many spelling/transcription errors – *volgung* and *dotlich* in particular – and the message is not clear.

Question 5

The majority of candidates scored well on this question and seemed very confident with the lexis of this popular topic. However, a significant number did struggle to identify the correct response to part (d), but there was no particular trend discernible to account for their wrong answer choice. Very few candidates squandered marks by matching 2 people with one statement.

Question 6

This proved to be a very accessible text, although many candidates struggled to transfer the meaning precisely and with sufficient detail. This question requires a good deal of practice, as some candidates tend to give approximations which cannot be accepted. Greater attention to the detail of the German text would lead to a higher score in many instances. This question is looking forward to the translation task in Unit 4.

- a) There were mixed fortunes here: some candidates mentioned *warnings / a warning*, but did not specify what the warning was about. Such vague responses could not be credited as the key word *Suchtwarungen* had not been adequately transferred. Given the reference in the text to cigarette packets, the mark scheme allowed also for responses such as **health warnings** and examiners accepted equally the more general **warnings of the dangers of the games**. A small number of candidates incorrectly thought a clock on the screen would monitor playing time or a suggested time limit.

6 Read the passage above and answer the questions **in English**. Your answers must relate exclusively to the passage and convey **all** the relevant information provided.

- (a) What will soon be printed on the cases of computer games?

(1) 1 Q06a

An addiction warning.



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Examiner Comments

This response illustrates very clearly that it is not necessary for candidates to write long and involved answers to score the mark. As long as the full meaning of the appropriate detail has been transferred as an answer to the question, the mark can be awarded.

- b) Examiners were looking here for accurate renditions of *Jugendliche und junge Erwachsene*. Responses which referred to *students, people* or *adults* were not precise enough to be credited.
- c) There were several possible answers to this question. Some of those who opted for *self-help groups* debarred themselves from scoring by adding incorrect information such as stating that such groups were available online. The most popular answer focused on the clock appearing on the screen to tell you how long you had been playing.

(c) What other measures are to be put in place? Give **one** example.

perhaps there will be a timer on the computer screen (1) 0 Q06c
that shows how long the person has been playing for (1 hour timer)



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Examiner Comments

This response is fine until we get to the bit in brackets. The candidate has been misled by *eine Uhr* and negates an otherwise perfect answer by adding incorrect information. Sadly, *therefore*, the candidate scores 0 for this response.

d) An encouraging number of candidates mentioned that players live in two worlds but failed to add that they might not be able to differentiate between the two.

(d) Why are online role-play games particularly confusing?

The player lives in two worlds at the same (1) 0 Q06d
time and can't tell the difference between reality
and their 'play world'.



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Examiner Comments

The quality of candidates' English is important in this task: it must be accurate and precise. Examiners rejected play world for Spielwelt because this is not what people would say in English. Even putting it in inverted commas does not make it an acceptable phrase.



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Examiner Tip

Transferring meaning fully, accurately and felicitously into English requires steadfast practice. Enough time should be devoted to enhancing this skill.

e) The last section was undoubtedly the most accessible, especially as there were so many possibilities from which to choose.

Question 7

This text is followed by questions in German requiring answers in German. No question part is worth more than 2 marks and discrete marking in the 2 mark questions allowed candidates who had partially understood to gain some credit. Targeted lifts were accepted, but weaker candidates copied either great chunks out of the text or just a few words but not the key words, and so forfeited the mark.

- a) This proved to be a highly accessible first part to the question. Examiners read answers which used a variety of nice wordings, from longer sentences to quite simply Sport.
- b) This part produced some interesting answers. There were some general statements such as weil *Babys flexibel sind* and some truisms which sadly failed to answer the question *Babies haben kurze [oder kleine] Beine*. Some candidates who could identify the correct information lost the mark by using *putzen* inappropriately weil *ein baby den Fuss in den Mund putzen*.

(b) Woher weiß man, dass ein Baby fit auf die Welt gekommen ist?

(1) 0 Q07b

Weil ein Baby mit den Füßen den Mund geboren ist.



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Examiner Comments

Sadly, this example scored 0. Candidates need to consider what it is they have written and keep referring back to the text to check that what they are stating is substantiated by the text.

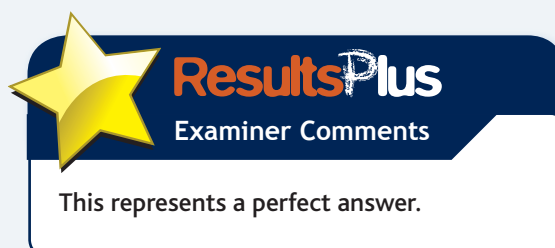
- c) This proved to be a good discriminator. Close and careful reading of the text is necessary to access the facts, and only the more able candidates attributed the problems to a lack of sport/exercise in years gone.

(c) Warum haben manche Leute Probleme im mittleren Lebensalter?

(1) 1 Q07c

wenn sie jünger waren, machten sie nicht genug Bewegung.

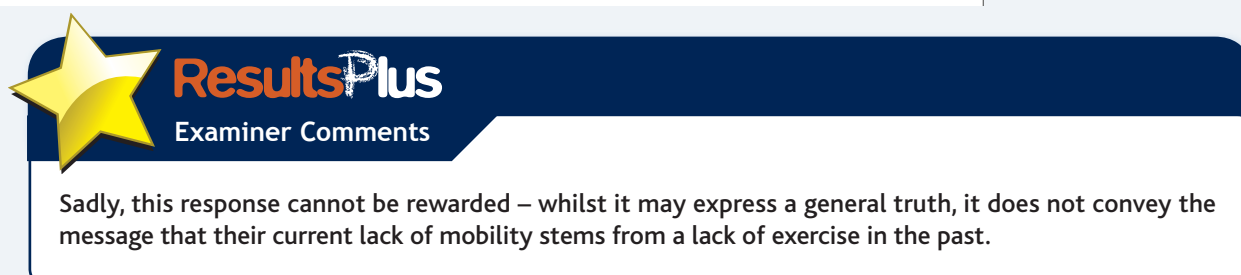
(d) Was ist oft die einzige Lösung für diese Probleme?



(c) Warum haben manche Leute Probleme im mittleren Lebensalter?

(1) 0 Q07c

Es ist schwieriger zu bewegen wenn man älter ist.



- d) Many candidates enjoyed success here. However, a significant number of responses suggested that the solution was to do more sport.

(d) Was ist oft die einzige Lösung für diese Probleme?

(1) 1 Q07d

Nur eine Operation.



- e) This proved to be very accessible to the overwhelming majority and candidates had plenty to choose from. Those few candidates who did not read the text closely enough misunderstood and answered with *Sportschuhe*.

- f) Overall candidates found this part to be most accessible. There were some instances of *schlimm* e.g. *durch Sport wird man schlimmer* and a few candidates lifted the entire final sentence from paragraph 5. Students should realise that whilst targeted lifts are acceptable, wholesale lifting of chunks is not – this amounts to hedging one's bets.
- g) Some otherwise strong candidates were misled by the *frische Luft* and *Sonne*, presumably because they did not read the text carefully enough. However, most candidates referred to *kleine und grosse Sorgen vergessen*.

(g) Wie bestimmt Sport unsere Laune?

(1) 0 Q07g

frische Luft ist gut für die Gesundheit. Es hilft ~~man~~
Sorgen zu vergessen

(h) Was sind die Vorteile von Sportvereinen? Geben Sie zwei Beispiele



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Examiner Comments

This response illustrates the order of elements marking principle. The candidate's first element *frische Luft ist gut für die Gesundheit* is incorrect as an answer to this question, but this is the response we must assess since it is the first element. Despite the fact that this candidate has then gone on to give the correct response, we cannot credit this, as it is the second element in a one mark question. Candidates must be aware of this marking principle and offer only as many elements as there are marks available.



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Examiner Tip

Familiarity with the various marking principles detailed in this report is essential – especially the order of elements rule. This will help to maximise performance.

- h) This was a more challenging question and candidates struggled with it in the main. Very many wrote that sports clubs are cheap, which is not what it says in the text. Stronger candidates understood the advantage of free taster courses, and some mentioned the excursions etc as activities additional to sport. Examiners also saw responses such as *weil es umweltfreundlich ist* or *es schadet der Erderwärmung nicht*, no doubt due to a misunderstanding of the phrase *es kostet nicht die Welt*.
- i) Question 7 ended on a high note here with most candidates scoring the point.

Question 8

Examiners were pleased to note a great improvement in candidates' examination technique in this section. Almost all seemed to have studied the stimulus carefully and understood the task well, and there were really very few instances where marks had to be withheld for task not fully grasped.

• Ich hatte viele Erfahrung mit junge Leute gehabt und ich habe Deutsch ~~für~~ ^{mehr} als fünf Jahren gelernt. Es ist mein Traum zu helfen und meiner Meinung nach, ~~es wäre~~ ^{wäre} ich eine guter Rollenmodelle. ~~sein~~ Es ist sehr wichtig zu wissen dass Jugendliche mehr als ~~haben ein Handy oder~~ ^{Kleidung} ~~haben müssen~~ ^{aber ein Lehrer} haben müssen. ~~aber es ist ein Lehrer haben~~ Ich wollte ein Einfluss für die Kinder sein weil ich treu und nett bin.



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Examiner Comments

Sadly, this candidate has not grasped the task fully, which has significant implications for the mark achieved for Content and Response.



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Examiner Tip

It is important for centres to stress to their candidates the need to read both the task and the stimulus carefully before putting pen to paper. Irrelevant content cannot be credited.

In addition, only a handful of candidates went beyond the permitted word length.

Examiners felt that in terms of content the task offered something for all candidates to get their teeth into. Whilst they read many predictable answers, there were plenty of examples of more imaginative emails, involving some very interesting life stories.

- Candidates tend to write minimally and predictably about who they are.
- More creative candidates invent an alter ego, and teachers should encourage their candidates to enter into the spirit of the task wherever possible. The most popular reason for writing was that having seen the advert, they wanted to know more.

Guten tag, ^{weil} Außerdem ^{neuen} Freunde gemacht werden, mit den ich mein Deutsch ^{es} üben kann.
 Ich heiße ~~und ich wohne in England~~ und ich bin siebzehn Jahre alt. Ich
 schreibe, weil ich Ihre Anzeige gelesen habe, ~~und also~~ und
 ich interessiere mich auf einwöchige Intensivkurse, um mein
 Deutsch zu verbessern.


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Examiner Comments

This response clearly addresses the first bullet point but in a rather pedestrian way and is typical of a mid range candidate.

Ich schreibe um Ihnen zu fragen über
 die Sommerferienprogramme sie bieten. Ich
 bin der ~~und ich bin~~ und ich bin Deutscher, aber
 vor vierzehn Jahren sind meine Familie und
~~meine~~ ^{wir} ins in die Vereinigten Staaten gekommen ~~um~~
 weiter um in ^{der} ~~die~~ Nähe von meinem Bruder zu
 wohnen. ~~hier~~ ~~wohnte~~ wir seit zwölf Jahre Jahren

DocID: 0248300018523 Q8

Examiner comment:


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Examiner Comments

This response also addresses the first bullet point but with more detail and more creatively. The command of German is very similar in both examples, but from a content point of view, this second example would score a higher mark.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to go beyond bare basics information, even for a bullet point as straightforward as *wer Sie sind und warum Sie schreiben*. Responses which demonstrate more initiative will fare better on Content and Response.

- **Bullet point 2:** Again, examiners read many good and detailed but somewhat predictable answers with fairly obvious reasons for doing the course. The majority focused on wanting to improve their German before going to university, starting a holiday job, taking a family holiday or achieving success in forthcoming exams but there was the occasional more creative reason such as wanting to speak fluently to a new German girlfriend!

Momentan ist es so, dass ich einer der schlechteren Schüler in meiner Klasse ^{bin} ~~ist~~, da ich immer noch probleme mit den Artikeln der Deutschsprache habe. „Der, die, das“ und ~~die~~ ~~alle~~ die ^{ganzen Endungsgeschichte,} ~~Endungen~~ ~~wegen~~ Dativ, Genetiv usw. kommen mir fremd vor, da wir im Englischen solche ~~Sachen nicht haben~~. Komplizierte Wortänderungen nicht haben.

Wenn ich bis dieses Problem gelöst habe (durch Ihre Hilfe) bin ich mir sicher, dass ich in den zukünftliche Prüfungen einer der besten in der ^{Klasse} ~~Prüfung~~ sein werde.



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Examiner Comments

This is a sterling response to the bullet point. The candidate has given a straightforward reason to explain why s/he would like to do this course but has exploited it in a more imaginative way. Examiners are not looking for hugely creative content, but we are looking for some level of development in a convincing and relevant response.

- Candidates had to address two things here: when exactly they would like to do the course and why they would like to do the course at the time specified. A lot of candidates were imprecise about the first part e.g. in the second week of the holidays - but this does not specify exactly when.

Ich habe eine Poare Fragen für Sie. Wann genau beginnt die Sommerferienprogramme und in welche Stadt ist es? Auch was ~~die~~ Unterkünfte genau es in der Stadt gibt?



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Examiner Comments

This candidate, in common with a significant number of others, tried to roll the response to bullet point 3 into bullet point 4 by asking *Deutsch als Fremdsprache GmbH* when it would be possible for them to do the course. Unfortunately, this does not represent an adequate response to bullet point 3.



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Examiner Tip

In order to access the full range of marks for content in Q8 each bullet point must be addressed directly and fully.

Ich möchte diesen Kurs machen am 15. ~~15.~~ Mai
für zwei Wochen bitte. In Juni werde ich nach
Österreich ~~fi~~ mit meinen Eltern für ein Urlaub fahren.



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Examiner Comments

Here the candidate has addressed the bullet point relevantly albeit somewhat succinctly. As far as attracting marks is concerned, this response compares more favourably with the one above and candidates would be well advised to do as the task requires.

- Again, examiners read very many good but predictable answers. Most candidates asked about price, of course, accommodation and location of school. More successful use of stimulus included questions about *Einzelunterricht oder Kleingruppe*, teaching materials, certificate (often leading to queries about a *Sprachnachweis für die Uni*) and also questions about job prospects. There were even a few 'wilder' ones about how many animals were likely to be there since the candidate had an extreme allergy to them. Nearly all asked more than one question – as required by the bullet point.

Wenn ich die Anzeige gelesen hätte, hätte ich
ein paar Fragen. Erstmals ~~ich~~ möchte ich fragen,
wenn dieser Kurs ein Internetkurs ist oder würde
ich ^{nach} zu ~~Aachen~~ Köln reisen ^{brauchen} ~~müssen~~? Ich habe für
mich gibt es kein Problem ^{weil} ich ^{einen} Onkel, den
im Köln wohnt habe. ^{wo ich wohnte ich ~~am~~ bevor} Auch, ^{die} wird würden ^{das}
Kurs Unterrichten ~~an~~ ^{jedes} ~~t~~ tägliche sein, oder
nur Montag bis Freitag?



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has asked two questions, one of which has been developed and expanded. This is the sort of answer examiners are looking for. Such development allows the candidate to demonstrate use of language as well as facilitating access to the higher mark bands for Content & Response.

Nicht nur denke ich, dass wird fantastisch sondern
 auch wird es hilfreich für meine Zukunft. Ich
 habe ~~zwei~~ drei Fragen für Sie. Wie viele Menschen
 haben diesen ~~Kurs~~ ^{Kurs} gemacht? Kann ich in einem
 Kleingruppe sein bitte? Es kostet wie viel?



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Examiner Comments

This candidate, on the other hand, has asked three questions very straightforwardly, with no development at all. By so doing, the candidate has self restricted access to the higher bands for both Content and Language.

Language

Many candidates had been well prepared to write formal letters or emails and used the appropriate register – albeit not always successfully. There were some interesting variations on the traditional salutation:

Liebe Damon oder Heron,

but equally some more varied valedictions:

Währendem ich auf Ihre sofortigen Antwort warte,
 biete ich Ihnen einem schönen Tag!

Examiners were pleased to see a variety of structures attempted such as subordinate clauses, conditionals (e.g. *Wäre es auch möglich, eine Broschüre mit den Preislisten zu bekommen*), relative clauses (*ich bin ein Deutscher, der nicht Deutsch sprechen kann*). Word order still represents a challenge for many, as does subject-verb agreement. Use of the incorrect auxiliary in the perfect tense, incorrect plural forms of nouns and use of an inappropriate case after prepositions were also flagged up by examiners. Examiners were surprised by the number of candidates (some highly competent among them) who wrote *Kurz* for *Kurs*.

Some answers were highly proficient linguistically: candidates tried to use some very good idiomatic phrases, varied expressions and vocabulary all of which made the difference between scoring a mark for *good communication* and *excellent communication*. Weaker candidates tended to rely more on *anglicisms* e.g. *Kopfanfang*, *ich bin schreiben*, *in die Nähe Zukunft*, *aber es ist mehr einfach zu sagen als zu machen*.

Subordinate clauses (using a pleasing range of subordinating conjunctions e.g. *nachdem, ob, wenn, damit*) were often correct but when candidates introduced a modal verb they struggled to find the right word order. Whilst many candidates tried to include more complex structures, their command of future tense and conditionals was not always successful e.g. *Ich wird für zwei Woche ihren Kurs machen*. There were also still many mistakes in the register e.g. *dein Programm, dein Kurs* and/or incorrect personal pronouns *seine Kurse, seine Unterrichtsprogramm* etc.

As previously stated, most responses fell within the word count.

General Examiner tips:

- a) The question types which were used in both the SAMs and this question paper are the ones which will feature in all future papers (and in the same sequence). Practice of non-verbal and non-productive question types in both listening (Q1, Q2 and Q3) and reading (Q5) is important as such questions account for 17 marks.
- b) Basic grammatical knowledge remains essential. This is evident in section C: Writing, of course, but it also helps to ensure unambiguous communication of responses in German in both Q4 (in the listening section) and Q7 (in the reading section).
- c) Sufficient time must be accorded to Q8 since 30 of the total 70 marks are allocated to this question.
- d) Consider the presentation of your work: illegible work is very difficult to credit.

Grade Boundaries

Unit 2 Understanding and Response

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	70	56	50	44	38	33
Uniform boundary mark	140	112	98	84	70	56

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