

Report on the Units

June 2006

3862/7862/MS/R/06

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All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

The reports on the Examinations provide information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

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Advanced Subsidiary GCE German (3862)

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2661 German Speaking

General Comments

As in previous sessions, markers and moderators reported that the full range of performance from the excellent to the very poor had been heard. Most candidates were aware of the requirements of the AS speaking examination and had prepared themselves at least adequately, although to some the speaking test is a trial. Many teacher/examiners were helpful, asking probing questions and interacting in a natural way with their candidates. It is to be applauded that many teacher/examiners use a beeper to time the oral examination correctly. The final beep should be a reminder to draw proceedings to a close, rather than continue for another three or four minutes.

Role-play

Almost all teacher/examiners correctly used the Randomisation Sheet sequence printed on page 2 of the Examiner's Booklet, making role-plays A and C the most frequently used. Most candidates used the *Hilfsvokabeln*, but hardly any used the photographs as a stimulus for imaginative details. Markers and moderators reported on even performances across the four role-plays. Some of the role-plays heard were very successful, some considerably less so. As mentioned in previous reports, the inability of candidates to word the initial two questions correctly still causes some concern, despite the numerous role-plays set for this specification since 2001. Centres should be aware that criterion 1A assesses response to the stimulus material. A mere summary is insufficient. Many candidates conveyed enough information to score 3/5, but the higher marks can only be awarded if all or virtually all details are provided. Similarly, those candidates offering a good range of structures and vocabulary gain access to the higher marks on 1C, as long as the basics are also sound. Unfortunately, serious errors involving basic verb forms and subject/verb agreement are still very much in evidence. Candidates should be strongly discouraged by centres from writing full sentence translations on the Candidate's Sheet during the preparation time, as this is often inadequate. For criterion 1B, relatively few candidates gave a really convincing, imaginative performance with initiative, many simply responding only adequately to the questions the examiners posed.

The teacher/examiner has a vital role to play in eliciting further information from candidates. The importance of good preparation by the teacher/examiner has been emphasised at countless Inset meetings and in previous 2661 Examiner Reports. The teacher/examiner's role is **not** just to read out questions from the Examiner's Booklet, ignoring what the candidate is saying. A good teacher/examiner listens attentively, reacts to the candidate and suggests further stimuli designed to extract further details if necessary, without providing the vocabulary. Teacher/examiners should **not** expect their candidates to deliver a monologue on the stimulus material, nor wait till the candidate finishes before intervening. A successful role-play is one where there is interaction, especially where the teacher/examiner recognises that details have been omitted. Good teacher/examiner knowledge of the stimulus material and the Candidate's Sheet is therefore vital. Where candidates fail to express satisfactorily what is in the stimulus material, the role of the teacher/examiner is to encourage them to supply further details without providing the answer.

Many teacher/examiners prepared very well this session. Many have learnt the art of eliciting information in a skilled way, giving candidates the opportunity to gain better marks, especially on criterion 1A. As in previous sessions, surprisingly few candidates made reference to the photographs and visuals supplied with each role-play. A minority of teacher/examiners failed to ask about the final bullet point, perhaps because it is now printed on the second page of the Examiner's Sheet. Timing of the role-play has improved and was good from many centres this session. A few role-plays go beyond the specified five minutes. Centres are reminded that this does not improve the chances of higher marks, as assessment of the role-play ceases after five minutes. In reality, it only annoys markers and moderators.

Sadly, the rephrasing of the initial two bold items into questions does not seem to improve, and centres should encourage candidates to think carefully. Often, a change of word order and verb ending are all that is required to make a successful question. Unusually, all four role-plays this session involved the teacher/examiner being the penfriend/exchange partner. This meant that all candidates should have used to *du* form. Not all were aware of this basic item.

Comments on Individual Questions

Role-play A: The Lowry

The first in the Randomisation sequence, this role-play was the most frequently used. Most candidates made a sound attempt at conveying the details contained in the stimulus material. The two initial questions were not done well by all. Candidates practising role-plays frequently should be aware that minor changes have to be made to make questions and to make sense. "Wann er/sie den Ausflug machen möchte?" does not make sense, but was all too frequently heard.

Most had a good overview of the text but details were often omitted or poorly expressed. In the opening sentence, dramatic and glass were not always known, and modern was sometimes *modernisch*. Sometimes the Lowry became *the* major Manchester attraction *mit künstlich Ideen*, where one could see *moderne Art* or *eine Ausstellung von moderne Künstler*. Quays was often pronounced Kways or Kays. Similarly, some candidates had difficulties with scenes of industrial life/ photography/ creative/ and even by bus. Ideas was also regularly mispronounced. Tram, largely unknown, was rendered variously as *U-Bahn/ S-Bahn/ Stadtzug*. Everybody was often *jemand*. Some could not distinguish between the various eating possibilities. Chips, hamburgers and pizza seemed to feature regularly at the Lowry Restaurant, and the Terrace Café Bar (often a *Kneipe*) was where *du kannst haben ein Trink*. Answers to how long one might spend in the Lowry ranged from *zwanzig Minuten* to *eine Woche*. Few seemed to have heard of Lowry as an artist. The most expensive entrance charge heard suggested was £50. Pronunciation of *Gemälde* and *Zeichnungen*, both given in the *Hilfsvokabeln*, was often poor.

The final bullet point asked the candidates to suggest a reasonable way of organising the day, in view of the many possibilities. Most coped, some by repeating the order in which they appeared in the stimulus material. Some answers, such as *man kann die Lowry anrufen/ man kann im Internet surfen*, were inadequate in addressing the problem without being amplified further.

There were, of course, many good responses and the majority of candidates were able to convey details with at least adequate success. However, as with all the role-plays, the many candidates scoring 3/5 on 1A might have been helped to score at least one more mark with better teacher/examiner help.

Role-play B: Snowdon Mountain Railway

The initial questions were done well by most. The candidates' task was to suggest going to the top of Snowdon using the *Bergbahn* and explaining the details in the text to a visiting German penfriend. Most coped at least adequately with the text, but considerable detail tended to be omitted, including the first sentence (Snowdon dominates the glorious landscape of North Wales) and parts of the second and third paragraphs. Numbers often caused problems. Whereas 1085 metres was done well, 1896 was not always correctly expressed (80,096/ 1869/ 1986/ *die Bergbahn ist 120 Jahre alt/ 20 Jahre alt*). 2½ hours was rarely done correctly (*zwei Stunden halb/ halbenzwei Stunde/ zwei und halbe Stunde/ zwei Uhr und halb/ zwei Uhr dreißig/ zwei und dreißig Uhr etc*). Centres are encouraged to continue practising numbers and the alphabet at all levels, as they appear so regularly in role-play situations.

Contrary to expectation, return ticket and single ticket were not done well by many. Few knew Ireland in German and some failed to grasp that there were cafés in Llanberis and at the summit, sometimes poorly pronounced as *Grippel* or *Gripfel*, despite being in the *Hilfsvokabeln*. The final bullet point produced everything from at one extreme full answers suggesting fitness, photography opportunities and the possibility of seeing rare animals to total silence at the other. Suggestions such as *essen und trinken/ Musik hören* are not adequate answers in this context. Some recognised that the walk down from the summit might be a lengthy affair, others suggested an hour would suffice.

Role-play C: Volunteers Wanted

This role-play, the only one this session situated in Germany, invited the candidates to consider an unpaid work-experience situation helping to introduce English to young German primary school children in August. The text itself proved accessible and most candidates managed to express about half of the points or more, although some achieved this with considerable teacher/examiner help. There was some confusion as to who wanted the job, several attempting to sell the idea to the penfriend.

The response to the second question should act as a cue to the introduction of the stimulus text. Some candidates failed to recognise this: when asked what they were considering as a possible summer job, they answered with variations on "I'll be working in a supermarket too" (followed by a pregnant pause) rather than "I'm thinking of applying to work in German primary school". Centres should recognise that the answer to the second question should introduce the stimulus material in some way. Those candidates practising role-plays regularly and frequently should have no difficulty in this respect.

A few candidates viewed the text as a translation, attempting to convey "we want you to help us introduce English..." as wir wollen Very few used the word Schüler at all, and older pupils or students was often altere/ ältere Studenten. Even young German primary pupils were Studenten. Of either sex also caused problems, usually with variations on Menschen oder Jungen. Other school tasks ranged from good answers to organisier und decke den Tisch. Most understood that the whole of August was involved, not just a couple of weeks, but the school day caused the expected number problems, especially 12.30 (halb dreißig/ ein Uhr ein halb/ halb dreizehn/ halb eins abends etc). Some candidates confused the languages, thinking that they were going out to Germany to teach German, or to teach englische Kinder in Jahr 2. Many teacher/examiners had to work quite hard to extract correct details from the final paragraph, and many candidates did not convey well what the text stated. Die Lehrer will Essen geben/ Lebensmittel ist frei/ mit Eltern wohnen oder mit der Frau von die Schule/ Essen und Unkunft do not really convey the text adequately. The School will pay for return flights from England was not always dealt with successfully. But at least the experience will be ein toller Urlaub für alte Leute.

Many teacher/examiners were good at asking what the advantages of such a situation were, when there was no remuneration involved. Many candidates recognised the value of work experience, particularly abroad, at that stage of their lives. A few with capitalistic tendencies simply rejected it as a stupid idea.

Role-play D: The Shrewsbury Quest

This role-play, a visitor attraction, was the least frequently used. A minority took the Q of the stimulus material title to be a G, talking of the Shrewsbury Guest, despite it appearing in normal script twice on the Candidate's Sheet. The second paragraph and the bullet points of paragraph 3 seemed to cause the greatest problems, with some candidates ignoring parts of these sections completely. Unknown words were detective, merchants, monarchs and peaceful. *Arzt* was sometimes pronounced *Erzt*, August was sometimes offered in French, and notebooks were *Briefbücher*, *Schreibbücher* and even *Notbücher*. Attempts to elicit further information sometimes foundered on basics (*Wer war Bruder Cadfael? In die Werkstatt*). Yet again, the word century was not known by all, despite its appearance virtually every session. Some attempts (*man kann die Kräuter sehen und essen/ man kann die Kräuter probieren/ ein Museum, wo Ellis Peters 20 Romane geschrieben hat*) show some understanding but do not successfully convey the text. Numbers again caused some problems, even twenty at times! The intrigue/ detective work section was generally not done well.

Most candidates did attempt to convey at least parts of the text adequately. Those scoring more than adequate marks had a good awareness of the detail and could express themselves clearly.

Conclusion

The role-play has always been and still is a good test. By offering the weaker candidate the chance to express some basics and challenging the stronger candidate to use initiative and imagination, it differentiates well. The variety in the level of language heard was as in previous sessions. Weak candidates restrict themselves to simple sentence patterns/ *es gibt/* forms of the verb *sein*, and they often have difficulties with basic verb forms and word order. At the other extreme, strong candidates have not only a sound grasp of the basics, but also impress with their use of ambitious language and complex structures such as relative clauses and subjunctives. This year's role-plays proved this yet again.

Topic

As in previous years, most candidates were well prepared for this part of the examination. Most presentations were well timed at between two and three minutes, and fewer this session lasted longer than the maximum three minutes. Teacher/examiners are reminded that in such cases they **must** intervene after three minutes, preferably not mid-sentence. The topic discussion should last 7-8 minutes and follow the headings on the Oral Topic Form, starting with the first heading. Most headings should be covered during the course of the discussion but not at the expense of good timing. Oral Topic Forms should be sent to markers and moderators with the Working Mark Sheets (WMS), cassettes and Attendance Register.

Discussions should encourage a good deal of spontaneity and an important role of the teacher/examiner should be to explore statements made by candidates. Generalisations should be challenged and examples asked for. The best discussions are those where much genuine interchange takes place. This occurs naturally when discussions have not been over-rehearsed. Unfortunately, a minority of centres still allowed pre-rehearsed mini-monologues to take place where there was anything but spontaneity. Such candidates penalised themselves on 1E, often severely. One of the functions of a good oral examiner is to prevent candidates from delivering

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themselves of pre-rehearsed statements and to encourage them to speak naturally. A series of prompts from teacher/examiners followed by a series of statements from candidates with no interaction means there cannot be spontaneity.

It is pleasing to report that almost all topics this session related to a German-speaking country. A few candidates restricted themselves to a maximum of 8/20 on 1D by choosing topics such as *Jiddisch/ die Todesstrafe/ Übervölkerung in China* etc where no reference to Germany/ Austria/ Switzerland took place. Teacher/examiners allowing candidates to offer such topics are advised to read the Specification. Headings on the Oral Topic Forms were often well presented. They should be headings, not sentences, and limited to a few words. Their only function is to remind both candidate and examiner of the outline structure of the discussion. Timing of the topic (presentation + discussion) was often good. Centres are reminded that overlong topics gain the candidates no further marks as assessment ceases after ten minutes.

Topics chosen by candidates ranged, as usual, from some overfamiliar ones, such as *das deutsche Schulsystem/ Essen und Trinken/ das Oktoberfest/ Bayern München/ Michael Schumacher* etc. to individual and unusual ones such as *die Schwebbahn/ die elektronische Gesundheitskarte/ Rechtschreibreform/ Industrialisierung im 2. Reich* etc. Such individual topic choices often reveal sound private research. Markers and Moderators are grateful to those centres where a range of topics is offered. Centres where all or most candidates offer the same topic are greeted with less than enthusiasm by the Marker/Moderator. Centres should be encouraging candidates to research in depth some aspect with a German perspective and for the purposes of the oral examination become an expert in that field. It is insufficient just to have a mild interest in a topic but to have done little research.

This session *the Weltmeisterschaft 2006* was understandably a favourite topic, with varying degrees of success. Some discussions were excellent and well informed. Others were random statements with little factual knowledge, often including *Fußballfannen/ Fußballfäne/ Fußballstützen* and the occasional *Todwart*. Pronunciation remains a problem for some and 3/5 is a common mark, where candidates have yet to conquer some or all of the ei/ie/st/sp/ch/r/z sounds. Accuracy relating to subject/verb agreement, cases and verb forms is still a major difficulty with weaker candidates, as are verb second idea and word order in subordinate clauses.

It is highly rewarding to hear successful interchanges of ideas and opinions and many topic discussions are exactly that. The best are always animated, enthusiastic, spontaneous, full of factual information on the chosen topic and accurate. Candidates can, and often do, research a particular topic well, either through reading or the internet. The internet and written sources often provide excellent information. However, this information is in a written format and sounds stilted and unnatural if simply learnt by heart and regurgitated. One of the candidates' main tasks is to manipulate this information into a form which sounds natural in an oral context. They should, for the purposes of this part of the examination, become an expert on some aspect of a German-speaking country which fascinates them and which they can explain in a lively way. Topic discussions this session ranged from very impressive at one extreme to very weak at the other.

2662 German Listening, Reading and Writing 1

General Comments

It is pleasing to note that the candidature of some 2,200 actually increased somewhat from the level of June 2005. Unlike the January exam where there is a considerable minority of native speakers, the candidature in June is composed mainly of students whose mother tongue is English. It is thus particularly satisfying to be able to report that there were many scripts of a really high standard. The marks obtained covered the whole range from the teens to almost the maximum, but very poor scripts were few and far between. Candidates have become quite sophisticated in organising their time round the varying demands of this paper, and it was rare to find a script incomplete because of lack of time. Candidates seemed to find the paper accessible, and tackled it with a degree of confidence. A general comment would be that their understanding of spoken and written German is at a high level: problems arise with their construction of written German, in particular with case, gender, prepositions and word order.

Specific Comments

1A: Die Wettervorhersage

This listening passage proved accessible to most candidates and a confidence-boosting beginning to the examination. Candidates have a good knowledge of weather forecast terminology and structures.

1B: Eine Nachricht

This question concerning a police incident in Hamburg again posed little difficulty. Answer (c) was the one which proved most taxing, whether because of the necessity of distinguishing between the two policemen, or perhaps because candidates did not recognize the meaning of *ist gestorben*.

2A/B: Claudia Bettinaglio

This question too proved very accessible with most candidates, except the very weak ones, scoring well. As with previous years there was no problem with candidates filling in excessive ticks. They and their teachers are to be congratulated on an efficient briefing in this respect.

3: Ein Japaner in Berlin

This question proved to be quite a severe challenge which differentiated well between candidates. Surprisingly some seemed to find difficulty with the comparative forms of very common adjectives such as *groß/klein/billig* and *teuer*.

4: Herr Vogel am Telefon

This question tackles both the listening skills of the candidates, and their ability to communicate the answers in German. The first part of the exercise they achieved with relatively little difficulty, whereas the second part proved more challenging. Examiners are mindful of the fact that this is a listening exercise, and are therefore prepared to accept versions that a sympathetic native speaker would be prepared to understand. The quality of German seemed mostly of a reasonable standard. *Kunden* (again!), *Personal*, *Geld* were the common words most often misspelled, while *gestohlen* (and the passive), *Zeugnisse*, and *Au-Pair-Mädchen* were not generally known. For question (e) it was necessary, by whatever means, to make it clear that Claire's handbag had been stolen, and that she was **not** doing the stealing. This defeated quite a number of candidates.

Candidates should be warned not to attempt to put all information in a question that seems vaguely relevant: they will only be given credit when the appropriate information is given for the relevant question. For question (h) phonetic spellings (within reason) of *Gesamtschule* were accepted and for (i) it was quite adequate to indicate that Claire's knowledge of German was (very) good, as the correct spelling of *fließend* proved too much for a number of candidates. Grammatically the most successful candidates are those who can manipulate persons and adjectives effectively as in question (f). Time spent practising such skills on such questions would be well spent. Nevertheless there were many pleasing answers, and generally speaking candidates seem to be getting to grips with this challenging type of exercise.

5. World of Work -Reading

The format of this type of question is now well-established. Candidates are always asked to write a memo for their employer. Although they will not be penalized for translating, it will allow the rendering to flow much better, and therefore be more cogent if the memo style is adopted. Some candidates did not make it clear that the journey was to be undertaken by pupils (not just 15 year olds). *Schmackhaft* proved a good differentiator, as was to be expected, but what was surprising was that many pupils seemed not to have a grasp of what must, to many, be a fairly common scenario -a German school visiting England for the eventual purpose of an exchange. Thus a substantial minority of candidates seemed not to know that Dover and Calais were separated by the Channel. Candidates are again reminded that they should put in all the relevant information, and should practise beginnings and endings of formal letters in English. Many candidates were able to combine the necessary accuracy from the foreign language with the high level of competence in English grammar, punctuation and spelling required for very high marks, and examiners commented that the standard of English generally seemed higher this year.

6. Letter to Herr Schmidt

This letter is invariably topped and tailed for the candidates, and they do themselves no favours by inserting their (sometimes incorrect) beginnings and endings. It cannot be stressed too much that this question is always part of the 'World of Work' section of the paper, and thus this letter **must** be written in the polite form. It is appreciated that pupils are taught 'du' and 'dein' from a very early age, but 6th. Form study requires the mastery of a more formal genre. As this is invariably a business-orientated letter, revision of the adjectives and pronouns associated with the polite form (Sie, Ihr, Ihnen etc.) will pay dividends. Small is beautiful, and the most successful candidates can answer the task very well by constructing the bare minimum of perfectly formed sentences. This is not primarily a vocabulary exercise: candidates will (and generally did) find most of the words they need in question 5. Common problems on this paper were the distinction between *kennen* and *wissen*; *Ausflug*; an adequate translation for price range (any sensible and German alternative was acceptable; *Freizeitpark*; and an adequate rendering of the idea of enclosed (surely something worth practising for this type of letter). It is worth reiterating that candidates disadvantage themselves by quoting pre-learnt sentences and formulaic constructions of doubtful relevance to the task in hand. There were quite a number of delightfully concise and accurate answers. Otherwise this question produced the usual range of German of varying competence, although examiners noted that overall the standard of German seems to be steadily improving.

2663 AS German: Reading & Writing

General Comments

This summer's paper produced a wide range of performance but the competent candidates were more in evidence than the weak ones. The comprehension tasks discriminated well, whilst the text and subsequent essay on shopping provoked a wide and heartfelt set of responses. There are always those candidates who overlook answers and misinterpret elements of a question but the format of this paper is by now well established and there was no evidence of any problems concerning rubrics or tasks. The time allowance for this paper is quite generous, so non-completion is very rare.

Comments on Individual Questions

- 1 The text was about the German soap *Gute Zeiten – schlechte Zeiten* and its commercial success. The task involved matching beginnings and ends of sentences and is one candidates clearly find challenging, as the two halves have to match grammatically as well as by content. One of the most frequently mis-chosen options for 7 (Unter Jugendlichen) was L (kaufen sie viele Produkte zur Serie): although it is true that young people go for the tie-in products, the sentence does not work. The correct combinations most often identified were 4K and 8D.
- 2 Many more candidates achieved higher marks on the second task where they had to identify who said what on the subject of speed restrictions on German motorways. It was often the case that candidates scored well even though they had a poor mark for Question 1 and sometimes vice versa. Sometimes it would appear that the personal interests of the candidates influence their performance. 2 and 7 both referred to environmental impact, as did C and F, so they were sometimes the wrong way round. E, which was the superfluous element, was often given in answer to 5 instead of J. 8D and 3G were the most frequently correctly identified.
- 3 This text about shopping in second hand shops for designer clothes seemed to be accessible to all but the weakest candidates. In answer to (i) candidates were required to identify 10 of a possible 16 points in their summary to gain full marks for Comprehension (Grid 3B). Most managed to make the obvious points about her liking for second hand shops and the *Prada* coat she managed to buy. Fewer were able successfully to express the dilemma she experienced that bargains do not always end up being cheaper. *Mit Ausnahme von Pullovern* also caused comprehension problems for some.

Part (ii) of the task involved discussing shopping as a hobby and produced a huge range of responses, often continuing in the light-hearted vein of the stimulus text. It seemed as though every candidate had a genuine opinion on the subject and although the topic seemed at first sight a bit "girly" some of the most interesting and lively essays came from male candidates. As always some missed the point and discussed the merits of second hand shops or designer clothes or went into the details of their own particular hobbies. There were also a few candidates who overlooked the capital letter and the verb ending in *Was halten Sie ...* and assumed that they were being asked for Jette Joop's opinion. Candidates must read the questions carefully and make sure that their response is relevant because otherwise they will not be credited for their ideas. It is always worth reminding candidates that there are equal marks available for parts (i) and (ii) of this question and that an excessively lengthy answer to (i) cannot compensate for a four line answer to part (ii) and vice versa.

The Language is assessed over both parts (i) and (ii) according to Grid 3A. Most candidates commanded sufficient appropriate vocabulary to express themselves on this subject but the grasp of grammar was very variable. Most Examiners comment on the lack of accuracy in basic grammar: incorrect subject/verb agreements, genders of common items of vocabulary, use of prepositions and capital letters. These sorts of errors and difficulties with basic word order often occur in work that contains sophisticated constructions. The level of language produced in the two parts of Q.3 is also often uneven: some candidates have learned to manipulate the language of the text well for the first part but then collapse when it comes to expressing their own ideas whilst others are clearly more at home with their own ideas and struggle to summarise the text. It is pleasing to note how few candidates tried to lift their answers from the text. However since this text was in the first person and the summary was required to be in the third person, it was less likely to occur anyway. Some, at the other end of the scale, need to be reminded that they are expected to manipulate what is there and not to struggle to find synonyms throughout.

Some of the more common problems in this examination session were:

- confusion between *kaufen* and *verkaufen*.
- ways of translating 'to spend' included *spenden*, *verbringen* and *verdienen*
- *Beute* was interpreted and further used as meaning 'bargain'
- *Kleidung* was very often given a plural verb and confused with *Kleider*
- *Spaß* is used in most essays but rarely correctly.
- Difficulties often occur in longer or more complex sentences with the use of *man*. Candidates find it hard to remain consistent and drift into *sie* or *du* and applying the appropriate possessive adjective always poses problems.

- 4 The Cloze Test remains a successful discriminator, although performance in this part of the paper does not always correlate as closely as one might expect with the Language mark in Q.3. The least frequently identified correct answer was *Alle* in 9 and probably the most frequently identified was the word order in 7 and the, by now familiar, infinitive after a modal verb in 2. In 10 *denn* was surprisingly rarely identified.

2664 German Speaking and Reading

General Comments

The team of Examiner/markers at OCR who have been together on this Specification over the five years of its life were on the whole impressed by a high standard of performance this year which made marking a (reasonably) pleasant experience. The texts were dealt with successfully for the most part, the most popular being Text B, followed by C and A. Candidates seemed to relate to the subject matter of the three texts and to find them accessible enough to stimulate opinions and interesting discussions, though it is fair to say that each of the three contained hidden pitfalls and that by no means all candidates had studied them in sufficient detail in the twenty minutes available to achieve a high mark on the first grid (understanding of and response to text). Frequently a higher mark was obtained for responsiveness to the examiner, but it is worth noting that even this mark can be reduced if the responses, although copious, are not appropriate or too vague to show true understanding. Two different strategies of Teacher Examiners were noted regarding the text discussions, one much more effective than the other: some examiners merely ask the 4 "possible questions" and move on smartly to the next one even if a vague, or wrong, answer is elicited, or even no answer at all in a very few cases; others, more effectively, probe for information, query vague or inappropriate responses, check comprehension with simple follow up questions and help candidates if they misunderstand or get stuck. Similarly in the topic discussions: many excellent examples of natural conversation are heard, from many different centres, with clever questioning that gives the candidates the chance to use the material that they have (of course) prepared, but in a natural way, with often quite simple questions to check that they really do know what they are saying and probing to challenge any dubious or controversial statements. This is in contrast to the (thankfully) less frequent and less effective technique of sitting back after reading out a "trigger" question, while the Candidate presents information in the form of a monologue or presentation, with few supplementary or probing questions. A presentation is not a conversation and as such will not attract many marks for spontaneity or responsiveness, which it should be noted has fifteen marks available, the most of any of the marking criteria.

"General Points to watch" (with apologies for repetition from previous Reports, though all these issues were in evidence again this year).

- please place the microphone nearer the candidate than the examiner
- please fill out a Working Mark Sheet for each candidate
- choose the text to suit the candidate (candidate doesn't choose!)
- candidates should specify which **3 different topics** they have prepared (**not** which 3 aspects of the same topic as it appears to say on the form)
- please discuss only **one** or **two** of them on the day, giving full details on the form of the general areas to be covered
- check that the topic is **not** purely "historical". In other words it must relate to the present day or, as it says in the Specification, "the last seven years" or so. It must also be related to the target language country
- please do not exceed the maximum **18 minutes** for the exam. (Markers listen to a maximum of 18 minutes.)
- within the 18 minutes allow **two thirds** of the time for the topic discussion
- within the six minutes for the text discussion please ensure that the **text itself** is discussed in detail for the majority of the time
- please always ask the question "Worum geht's/ worum handelt es sich in diesem Text?" or "Wovon handelt der Text" to start the text discussion even though this does not appear on the Examiner's sheet. The candidate's response should not just be a repetition of the title of the text, nor should it be a long monologue, but a succinct summary of a couple of the main points

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- there are only four suggested questions on the sheet, but please note that these are not sufficient to cover the text in sufficient detail, unless the candidate shows a lot of initiative. Supplement the suggested questions with some of your own.
- try to stop any monologues from developing – interrupt with probing questions, especially during the topic discussion
- please do not spend any time on "general chat", as this generally lowers the standard, takes up time that should be devoted to the text or the topic, and anyway attracts no marks
- **never** follow a "script", whether it be from the Examiner's sheet or, perhaps even more importantly, questions specified by the candidate on form ML/T/CAND/A.
- please label both the tape and the tape box, in case they get separated
- if the target country is not mentioned at all the maximum mark on the "factual knowledge" grid (4E) will be four out of ten
- some "personal involvement" in the topic will be good evidence of "research" (for example a project or visit participated in) and will gain higher marks than a theoretical discussion, provided it is not just a "chat"
- please try and ask the question "Where did you get your information for this topic and why did you choose it?"
- marks are higher when students choose their own topics, with a personal angle, rather than doing an imposed one
- all candidates at a Centre offering the same two or three "standard" topics is not a good idea.

Comments on Individual Questions

Text Discussion

A Junge Eltern in Not

The most difficult aspect of this text seemed to be the first paragraph and many candidates just stated that the mother had abandoned her new born baby, and left the second sentence out completely. Vocabulary items such as "ausgesetzt" and "sich der Polizei gestellt" caused difficulty and many candidates could not explain why the parents should have felt "enormen Druck". As stated earlier, this was an opportunity for probing or even help from the teacher/examiner. As ever, numbers were quite badly done (in all three texts). It was disappointing in text A to hear about the large number of "fifty year old mothers" who were considered "young" and even more amazing in the case of one "five year old".

In the second paragraph the weaker candidates found it hard to explain that it does not often happen that young couples end up in prison. The sentences including "theoretisch mit Gefängnis bestraft" and "wenig wahrscheinlich" were not linked up.

The third paragraph caused few problems, though not everyone could pronounce "anonym" nor explain what it meant. The two different scenarios in the last paragraph were not clearly distinguished and the fact that the key word "vor" was in italics for emphasis was ignored. Better candidates were able to explain well why the Babyklappe might not be the best solution.

A good range of interesting questions on the text and general issues was asked by many examiners, some of them apparently very simple but searching, for example: Ist es das Ziel von SterniPark, dass die Kinder adoptiert werden? Was für Leute werden am meisten betroffen? Ist das Gesetz fair? Sollten solche Leute ins Gefängnis kommen?

B Frauen in technischen Berufen

The first paragraph appeared easy, but few made the link between the example in the first sentence and the later “Berufswahl von Frauen”. Some people thought “noch” meant “nicht”. The word “laut” as in “laut Statistiken” was surprisingly misunderstood in a few cases as “girls are noisy”, one example of many where items are apparently taken right out of context and the remainder of the sentence or paragraph apparently ignored. The 20 minutes’ preparation time needs to be used to study the text in detail, rather than in thinking up opinions or long summaries.

The second paragraph offered even weaker candidates something to say, but the pronunciation of “Pilot” was often poor and some people got the statistic the wrong way round (i.e. *not* 15% of women studying I.T.). The interesting sounding “Jungenforschung” (sic) was encountered occasionally. “Studenten” was misunderstood as “school students” by many.

The third paragraph was more challenging and only the best candidates could give all the reasons for women not wanting to be engineers. Many examiners were satisfied with just one of the reasons and this was another opportunity to probe in more detail to ensure higher marks on grid 4A. Few mentioned the female Professor of engineering!

The last paragraph was harder than it looked and few people exploited the example of Sonja Wegner or explained the point she made in the last sentence.

Some good additional questions made reference to “stereotypische Meinungen” or “Rollenklischees”. Good questions were: “Sollten Spielzeuge geschlechtsneutral sein?”, “Könnten ihre Erfahrungen, wenn sie ganz jung sind, ihre spätere Berufswahl beeinflussen?” or “Sind diese Vorurteile biologisch programmiert?”

C Tiere haben auch Rechte

The first paragraph caused quite a lot of problems. Some people did not know about the “Grundgesetz” and few could put the quote from Gandhi into an appropriate context or thought to mention “nach jahrelangem Streit”. The detail of the second paragraph was surprisingly often skipped over, especially since the statistics were so accessible, or so it was hoped. The third paragraph offered an invitation to “lift” information from the text, which does not lead to high marks on grid 4B, as this does not show true understanding. The majority of candidates, however, had opinions on “Freiheit der Religion/Kunst”, as they did, often vociferously, on the general issues arising. The final paragraph offered the easy example of the 200 Euro fine, but it was more challenging to put this into context as to why not everything in Germany is “positiv” regarding “Tierschutz”.

Topic Discussion

Far fewer centres than usual had all their candidates prepare the same topic and there also seemed to be less pre-learned material, or less material that sounded like written German: both very good developments. The new favourite topic for this year was undoubtedly “Angela Merkel” and it was often treated very well, as was, surprisingly, the football World Cup, which offered a whole range of demanding approaches, often involving the economy and social issues. There was a nice variety of topics from many Centres and a lot of candidates showed a great deal of creativity in the way they tackled them. Most information was up-to-date and the “seven year” rule in the specification was mostly adhered to. Regarding quality of language, it was felt that more candidates were perhaps attempting complex language and not necessarily making more mistakes as a result, and vocabulary also seemed to be of a fair to high standard. Encouraging developments!

2665 German Listening, Reading and Writing 2

General Comments

Performance on this paper remains constant. On the Listening the level of comprehension is generally good, the standard of transcription is often poor and answers are sometimes too long, leading the candidate into making all manner of unnecessary errors. The answers in German on the first Reading passage are very variable, the Quality of Language usually matching the degree of comprehension. Candidates seldom do as well on the second passage as they might hope, often because their English is inadequate and their answers insufficiently detailed to gain high marks. On the final Part of the paper, Writing, candidates demonstrate most accurately their ability to write German: At the weaker end of the candidature the answers – which often look as if they have been dashed off with little drafting – are marked by anglicisms and inaccuracies of every kind, while the stronger candidates manage to express successfully both the content of the English passage and a Personal Response to the issue involved.

Section One – Listening

Generally there were good scores on the first passage, which dealt with the plight of Germany's deprived children. There were plenty of misspellings of *kein guter Ort für Kinder*, *gewaltfreie Erziehung*, *in Großstädten*, *die unter 7-Jährigen* and *Alleinerziehende* but comprehension was mostly demonstrated successfully. Quite a few candidates seemed baffled by *Rente* and *häufig*, and many confused *eigen* with *einig* in reference to *Entscheidungen über die eigene Zukunft* which they often mixed unintelligibly with *beteiligt werden müssen*.

Likewise candidates seemed at home dealing with the problem of immigration which came up in the second interview. Again there was much confusion caused by *vorurteilsfrei*, *in spezifischen Branchen* and *Industriegesellschaften* and plenty of minor slips in rendering *Bundesinnenministerium*, *Wanderungsbewegungen*, *Bevölkerungsrückgang*, *Konkurrenz* and *Arbeitsplätze*. For all the inevitable errors in transcribing what they heard most candidates performed well on this section.

Section Two – Reading

As ever performance on the first Reading passage varied widely. Most candidates work their way systematically through the passage, identifying the correct material as they go. Not all, though, have the ability to manipulate the material appropriately and many lift unsuccessfully or excessively in the process and simply do not answer the question. On the first paragraph most candidates realised that Steffi wanted to 'bunk off' today but did not seem able to grasp the concept of "eine chronische Schulschwänzerin". Very few were able to say what the attitude of the ten children mentioned in the second paragraph was ("Sie lehnen den üblichen Schulbetrieb völlig ab"), nor were many able to say exactly what benefit the regular truants derived from attendance at *Auszeit*. As for explaining exactly why Steffi was now at this special school five days a week, that was beyond large numbers of candidates. The final question also foxed a lot of candidates, who perhaps did not grasp the idea of Steffi getting 5s or 6s, i.e. bad marks, on her report.

Exercise 4 asked for definitions/explanations in German of *lockerer*, *duzen*, *gehänselt* and *Alleinerziehende*. Quality here varied wildly; few were successful in scoring 4 marks. Inevitably there were plenty of inadvertently funny answers, especially for *lockerer* (apparently a place to put your books at school) and *duzen* (having a relationship with your teacher). The most disappointing aspect of the answers was the tendency to think English and write answers like "Das ist wenn du heißen eine Person Namen" (for *gehänselt*) or "Das ist wenn ein Eltern ein Kinder ohne ein Partner aufbringt" (for *Alleinerziehende*).

The second passage concerned the persistent differences between the two halves of Germany a decade on from the *Wende*. Not all candidates really seemed to grasp the concept of *eine klare innerdeutsche Grenzlinie* in consumer preferences and thought that *Frosch* was something used for cleaning your teeth in the middle of Germany (geputzt wird mit Mitteln von Frosch). The overwhelming majority of candidates did not recognise the term *Wohlstand*, nor did many understand the drastic effect that clear east German preferences had on the market as a whole. Plenty of candidates were confused as to the popularity of *Mumm* champagne, but most did, however, understand the situation as it applies to milk.

As ever, it is lucky for many candidates that the quality of their English is not assessed here. Few would score full marks.

Section 3 – Writing

This exercise produced the traditional range of performances, from 1/10 to 10/10. The passage dealt with a serious issue which applies in all European countries and must by now be familiar to candidates. Most candidates manage to explain in German the content of the English passage, albeit with great awkwardness in many cases. There were constant confusions of *Kopftuch* and *Topftuch*, *Freiheit* and *Freizeit*, *Gericht* and *Gesetz*. Many scripts contained errors in expressing simple phrases like “in the classroom” [e.g. “im Klasse”] or “a (female) Muslim teacher” [e.g. “Fereshta Ludin ist Musli”]. Predictably, only the best candidates consistently used *dürfen* rather than *können* when talking of Ludin being allowed to wear her headscarf in the classroom, and attempts at using *erlauben* were often ungrammatical. Many used *meinen* to render “mean”, *Kampf* for a “clash” and *neuter* for “neutral”. Rare was the candidate who realised that the verb from which *verboten* comes is *verbieten*. Few could copy *Baden-Württemberg* correctly and many thought the Constitutional Court is *der Verfassungsgerichts*. And as for the variants offered for ‘religious’,

When it came to the Personal Response, a variety of views kicked in, mostly sympathetic to Ludin, though often along the lines of “When you are in someone else’s country, you should do as they do”, but the old linguistic problems remain. Few candidates can actually use *Meiner Meinung nach* correctly; many use pre-learned phrases clumsily or inappropriately (*ein schweiriges/schwieriges Thema, es ist nicht zu leugen, es legt auf der Hand*, etc) and sentences become unnecessarily complex once they start off with “Ich denke dass wenn...” Just as there are many “failed states” through the world, so too there are countless “failed sentences” in this Section. Candidates continue to write too much (80 words really is the required maximum) and to do so with little apparent drafting. There is, however, good news: there is less repetition of material from the previous four answers than there used to be and modal verbs are being used better to express opinions (especially *sollte*), so Centres are clearly having success in drilling their candidates in the right approach to this exercise.

2666 German Culture and Society

General Comments

The number of candidates for this paper has decreased in recent years, as more Centres have entered for the coursework option, but numbers have reached an equilibrium. This year there was a large number of native speaker candidates. This does not disadvantage the other candidates since the examination is criteria-referenced and all candidates are judged on the merits of their essays, according to the criteria set out in Grids 6A1 (knowledge and relevance) and 6A2 (understanding, analysis and evaluation) and the 6B language grids. A number of the native speakers did not score highly for the content and structure of their essays, as they had not done any preparation for the examination and wrote in very general terms in answer to the question. Usually, but not always, the German was of a high standard: in the cases where this was not so, the candidates wrote in slapdash fashion without punctuation, with few capital letters for nouns and with repetitive vocabulary and simple syntax. Some native speaker candidates had seemingly not been told to answer only two questions on different topics or texts and had not bothered to read the rubric. Several wrote a few sentences in answer to nearly every question, showing little or no knowledge on any subject. There were some excellently written, fluent and accurate essays from candidates who were not native speakers, as well as some from those who were, and these candidates demonstrated a wide knowledge of vocabulary and idiom and the ability to use an impressive range of sophisticated structures. At the other end of the range were candidates whose grammatical knowledge was so weak that genders of common words and essential topic vocabulary were not known and cases after prepositions and inflected endings were repeatedly wrong. Only very few candidates were ignorant of German word order: although there were errors, of course, most candidates clearly knew the rules and took pleasure in using German syntax. The most important general comment is that candidates should be advised to write relevantly in answer to the question and to use their knowledge intelligently and pertinently. For Section B it is obviously important to choose an appropriate question for the text studied and this is not always done.

Comments on individual questions

Section A

Q.1a Candidates made a good attempt to address the question of irony and why it was used. Most did not discriminate sufficiently between the two deaths and not all analysed in enough detail why and how Tötges played a part in bringing about his own death.

Q.1b Essays were disappointingly thin and superficial and sometimes did not go beyond the Blornas support for Katharina and their role as her employer.

Q.3a Some candidates relied only on the printed passage to make their comments. There was often only superficial analysis of Shen Te's behaviour, which amounted to little more than telling the story.

Q.3b Most candidates made an attempt, sometimes a very good one, to deal with this question in the light of Brecht's aims, as exemplified in the play. One or two dealt with it only on the level of plot.

Q.4a This was the most popular text and answers were evenly divided between the questions. Not all candidates knew the text well enough to be able to pinpoint Ill's feelings of danger. There was similarly a lack of knowledge about when and why the Pfarrer changed his mind, which affected the analysis of his significance.

Q.4b There were a number of very interesting and lucid essays, which avoided simply telling the story. Sometimes the evidence provided for the choice of hero seemed to contradict rather than support the choice.

Q.5b Many essays were disappointing and lacked detail and depth. They tended to focus on the early love story with no attempt to deal with the catastrophic ending.

Q.6b Candidates made a good attempt to analyse the role and character, but were less successful in evaluating the importance of the ideas for the text as a whole.

Q.7a This was the second most popular text and more candidates chose this first question. There were some excellent answers, which showed a good knowledge of the text and an ability to weigh up the effect of Gregor's change on his relationship.

Q.7b Again this was often excellently done: a discriminating choice of detail to prove the points made, showing a good knowledge and understanding of the issues. Most candidates concluded appropriately.

Section B

Q.9 A number of candidates wrote on *Die Wolke*. While this is an entirely suitable question for the text, many candidates wrote essays which fell into narrative mode and simply told the story. There was little analysis and evaluation of the predicament. The analysis was better, in the case of those candidates whose text was *Ich fühle mich so 50-50*.

Q.10 The two texts chosen were *Der gute Mensch* and *Andorra*, both suitable, although the role of women is more obvious in the former where the principal protagonist is a woman. The treatment of the theme with reference to the latter was disappointing, as there was no evaluation of the great difference in the role played by the three women, and the account of Barblin often ignored her role at the end of the play.

Q.11 The texts chosen were *Im Westen nichts Neues* and *Mutter Courage*. Candidates tried to argue that the quotation was appropriate to their text, even while producing mainly examples which proved the contrary. Sometimes appropriate references, which would have made a better argument, were omitted. One candidate used *Der Vorleser* as the text and had difficulty developing a clear line of argument: some of the other questions in this section could have been used for this text far more effectively.

Q.12 Texts were *Andorra*, *Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.* and *Die Physiker*. The first two proved far more fertile ground than the last, perhaps because the happiness of the individual is not really an issue in that text. Candidates did sometimes tie themselves in knots about whether Andri had accepted or should have accepted society's norms or not and did not always choose examples appropriately to prove their point. One candidate dealt with *Sansibar*, but this too proved unsatisfactory for the candidate's contentions.

Q.13 Most candidates wrote on *Das Brot der frühen Jahre*, a very appropriate text, which was often inadequately exploited. Many resorted to telling the story and there was often a lack of balance in dealing with the different characters. This weakened the evaluation and the conclusions drawn. One candidate wrote on *Der Besuch*, a much less appropriate choice, and had difficulty proving that love motivated the characters, but this was a short second essay and on the same text as dealt with in the first essay.

Q.14 Candidates wrote on *Die Judenbuche*, an ideal text, with varying degrees of success. Some candidates gave excellent analyses of the reasons for the importance of the background; while others resorted to narration and description.

Section C

Q.15a The quality of response varied, but there were several outstandingly good historical surveys, which addressed the question admirably. Some candidates, however, did not know or did not make clear that they knew when *Die große Inflation* took place and what its direct and indirect effects were.

Q.15b The same mixed success was evident as regards explaining the effects of the treaty. Few candidates made clear that they knew the conditions and had views on the effects produced. There was often a lack of clarity and coherence in the argument.

Q.16a The degree of knowledge about German radio which was shown varied widely. It is fair to say that most candidates had too little and too imprecise information. Some native speakers were an exception. Candidates do need to have listened to several radio stations and have a good knowledge of at least two to be able to tackle this topic successfully.

Q.16b Only one candidate chose this question and it was well done, showing good knowledge and an interesting evaluation.

Q.17a This was by far the most popular topic overall and this question was chosen by four times as many candidates as **17b**. Despite the evident relevance of the topic to their own lives, or perhaps because of that, many candidates had only a very general and imprecise knowledge of the topic as far as Germany is concerned. There was a serious lack of detailed knowledge relevant to the question asked. A few, usually unsubstantiated, statistics of a general nature are not enough to prove detailed knowledge of Germany. Not many candidates could mention any measures taken with precise dates and details and any evaluation was even rarer.

Q.17b Candidates tackling this question also lacked detailed knowledge upon which to base their argument. There were some useful statistics, but candidates were at a loss as to how to use their small amount of information to the best advantage and the line of argument suffered.

Q.18a There were some excellent well-informed studies, the best of which led to a relevant evaluation of the director's contribution. Only one or two were purely descriptive. Caroline Link was the director most often selected.

Q.18b Although slightly more candidates attempted this question, they had difficulties identifying the current problems and few knew anything about measures, which have been taken to counteract the problems.

Q.19a This was, perhaps unsurprisingly, the second most popular topic. There was a wide range of knowledge and competence shown. Disappointingly few candidates have precise knowledge of how sport is organised in Germany and there was much generalisation.

Q.19b This question also threw up a wide variety of responses and was tackled by twice as many candidates. There were some very good essays, virtually all on football, and all referring to the world cup, but which also managed to put the history of football in Germany into perspective and relate it to the post-war recovery of national pride and also to the welding of the nation after reunification, and even of its value as an integrating factor for Germany's multicultural society. It is only fair to say that these lines of argument were usually advanced by native speaker candidates. It is, however, a useful line of research for all candidates, since precise knowledge needs to be shown, not just generalisations.

Q.20a Although some candidates were well informed, a surprising number had an insufficiently precise knowledge of the topic and did not address the question and give concrete reasons for their views. In particular, the second part of the question about deficiencies in the system was sometimes not answered or dealt with cursorily.

Q.20b Some candidates still give too much information about the general chemical processes of, for instance, acid rain and lack detailed knowledge of where trees are affected or not and which measures have been tried with success.

Q.21a Candidates' main error was to write generally about the town sometimes with only a sentence about culture and occasionally with no reference to it at all. Such essays lose many marks for relevance and since they are usually descriptive and lack any analysis or argument they gain few marks for content.

Q.21b Few chose this question and it was disappointingly treated. An essay on Bonn, for instance, which might have elicited an interesting analysis, lacked any knowledge of the economic effects of the choice of Berlin as a capital and was limited to general description.

2667 German (Culture and Society) Coursework

General Comments

There was a slight increase in the number of candidates submitting coursework this year. Most of the essays were interesting to read and showed evidence that candidates had been prepared well by their teachers. There were many thoughtfully chosen topics and titles and some candidates had clearly pursued their own individual interests and researched their topics well. The majority of Centres met the deadline for submission of coursework and complied with all the requirements concerning wordcounts, length, bibliographies, plans, mark sheets and authentication forms, enabling moderators to carry out their task efficiently. Most Centres now send their candidates' work in plastic punched pockets, which is much appreciated, as it keeps the work together and is light and easy to post.

A small number of Centres did not send all that was required. Problems arose in particular when candidates failed to count their words, or miscounted them or when the Centre ignored the fact that the essay was either far too short or too long. This was often the reason for marks having to be changed. Some moderators also commented on the fact that occasionally work arrived without front covers, names, page numbers or even paper clips to separate one candidate from another. Fortunately this was rare.

Topics

Not surprisingly the World Cup was chosen by several candidates. There were essays of varying quality, and many were well researched and successful. The most common approach was to discuss the advantages and disadvantages for Germany. Examples of titles are:

“Ist es vorteilhaft für ein Land, ein bedeutendes Turnier auszurichten?”

“Wird die WM in Deutschland erfolgreich sein?”

“Ist die deutsche Kultur durch Fußball und die bevorstehende WM beeinflusst worden?”

“Inwiefern wird die WM umweltfreundlich sein?”

It was pleasing to see that several candidates were interested in the German political scene, a popular topic this year being the new government and Angela Merkel. Again essays were of varying quality, with some devoting a disproportionate amount of their essay to biographical details. Nevertheless there was also some impressive knowledge and analysis of the political situation demonstrated by other candidates.

Fewer candidates wrote on literature this year; there were essays on Böll (Das Brot der frühen Jahre), Dürrenmatt (Der Besuch; Die Physiker), Borchert (Draußen vor der Tür) and Frisch (Biedermann). Often all candidates from one Centre wrote on the same text, and this was highly successful where they chose completely different aspects to write about. In one or two cases there was overlapping of material, as essays titles were too similar. This tended to be even more the case where all candidates studied the same film or films. Candidates who were overprepared in this way usually failed to achieve high marks. The most common films remain “Goodbye Lenin” and “Lola rennt”.

Other topics that remain popular are “Deutschland seit der Wende”, immigration, unemployment, schools, recycling, energy, obesity, alcohol/drugs, genetic engineering and the Nazi period. Problems only arose with these topics if they were not firmly rooted in a German speaking country or if there was too much comparison with England. The most unsuccessful topics were those involving cars, as they tended to be descriptive and those on towns/tourism, for the same reason.

Good titles

The best titles were clearly those that the candidate had developed together with the teacher, and that fitted the material the candidate had already researched. There were many good titles (not necessarily all answered well), which could have led to the development of an argument. It was pleasing to see that many Centres are giving thought to the phrasing of titles in order to provoke a response that goes beyond the narrative, often starting with "Inwiefern..." A few examples of this year's appropriate titles are:

"Inwiefern ist Deutschland auf dem Weg, den Kyoto-Vertrag zu erfüllen?"

"Ist der Euro wirklich ein *Teuro* oder nur ein Sündenbock der schlechten deutschen Wirtschaft?"

"Stellt die Eröffnung einer Dignitaszweigstelle in Hannover eine Bedrohung für die Werte der deutschen Gesellschaft?"

"Inwiefern ist der Erfolg der Waldorfpädagogik zweifelhaft?"

"Welche Symbole, Gleichnisse und Metaphern verwendet Böll, um Walters Charakter zu entfalten und seine Verwandlung darzustellen?"

Poorer titles

Titles tended to be unsuccessful when they had been imposed on the candidate; it was always clear when this had happened. Some were simply beyond the intellectual capabilities of the candidate. There were still a few labels, which did not give the candidate or reader a clear focus. Some titles were only an apparent question, and invited description or narrative. Some titles required a yes/no answer and often got this simply in the conclusion. Some titles had too many strands, thus leading to a bitty response. Examples are:

"Obdachlosigkeit in Deutschland"

"Ist Nikotinsucht eine große soziale Sorge in Deutschland?"

"Neo-Nazis in Deutschland"

"Der Hamburger Hafen: wie groß ist er wirklich, und auf welchem Platz ist er weltweit und was bedeutet er für die Hansastadt Hamburg?"

"Inwieweit glaubst du, dass Frauen die wichtigsten Figuren in *Biedermann* sind?" (It is surely impossible to argue that they are.)

"Hat Dürrenmatt den Charakter von Möbius auf eine interessante Art entwickelt?"

"Hat Petersen die andere Seite des Kriegs gezeigt? Und hat er einen erfolgreichen Film daraus gemacht?"

Quality of language

Language varied from being almost faultless to being very poor. In the majority of cases, however, candidates had grasped the rules sufficiently well for the reader to follow the essay with relative ease. Problems arose when candidates tried to translate English source material, probably with the aid of on-line translating tools. The outcome was invariably unsuccessful and there were a few essays that were consequently practically incomprehensible.

Centre assessment

In the majority of cases it was pleasing to find that assessment was accurate. Adjustments to marks were necessary mainly when Centres had overmarked the content of the essay, usually because of a tendency to narrate and describe rather than structure, argue and evaluate. The assessment of language was generally satisfactory. Sometimes in the case of native speakers, although full marks were deserved for language, at times the content marks were overvalued by the Centre.

Advanced GCE German 7862

June 2006 Assessment Series

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	a	b	c	d	e	u
2664/01	Raw	60	48	43	38	33	29	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2665	Raw	80	65	58	51	44	37	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
2666	Raw	60	46	41	36	31	26	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2667	Raw	60	50	45	40	35	30	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (i.e. after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
7862 (Agg Code)	600	480	420	360	300	240	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
7862 (Agg Code)	34.98	59.29	78.47	92.45	97.92	100.0	1152

1152 candidates aggregated this series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;
www.ocr.org.uk/OCR/WebSite/docroot/understand/ums.jsp

Statistics are correct at the time of publication

Advanced Subsidiary GCE German 3862

June 2006 Assessment Series

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	a	b	c	d	e	u
2661/01	Raw	60	47	41	36	31	26	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2661/02	Raw	60	47	41	36	31	26	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2661/03	Raw	60	47	41	36	31	26	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2662	Raw	80	65	58	51	44	38	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
2663	Raw	60	47	41	35	30	25	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (i.e. after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
3862 (Agg Code)	300	240	210	180	150	120	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
3862 (Agg Code)	24.43	46.26	68.36	82.16	92.11	100.0	1457

1457 candidates aggregated this series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;
www.ocr.org.uk/OCR/WebSite/docroot/understand/ums.jsp

Statistics are correct at the time of publication

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