



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
January 2013**

German

46652F/H

(Specification 4665)

Unit 2: Reading

Report on the Examination

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

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General comments

While there were some able students, who demonstrated a good knowledge of both grammar and vocabulary, examiners on the whole felt that the standard of performance in this examination was low. There were many students who had been entered for the examination before they were ready for it and who lacked the requisite reading skills to undertake the test satisfactorily. However, as this is the last time the January module will be offered, this option will not be available to teachers and students in future years.

Offering alternatives (bracketed or divided by an oblique stroke) often led to answers becoming ambiguous. As has been mentioned before in these reports, students should decide on their answer and stick to it. There is no need to try to explain to the examiner what one means.

As in previous examinations, poor handwriting often meant that answers were difficult or impossible to read. Teachers should stress to students that their answers will be read by people who are not familiar with the student's handwriting and that it is therefore in their own interests to make sure that their answers are clearly written.

It is also necessary to reiterate the advice given in previous reports that students are asked to write their answers in **black ink**. Blue ink often leads to a poor image when the papers are scanned for marking purposes, making it difficult or even impossible to award a mark.

Foundation Tier

Question 1

This question required the recognition of three common adjectives. However, only 29% of students were able to identify all three.

Question 2

Again, only just over half of the students (55%) were able to identify both of the common verbs used in this advertisement. 17% failed to identify either of them.

Question 3

The word *geöffnet* has been tested in several examinations, but students still seem to be unaware of its meaning. 54% gave the correct answer. Part (b) was correctly answered by a similar percentage (52%). It was significant that both parts of the question were not attempted by 5% of students.

Question 4

The relatively straightforward vocabulary *Trompete* and *neu* were correctly identified by 81% and 86% of students respectively.

Question 5

In (a) a wide variety of expressions was offered for *Sportplatz*, most of which were allowed. 91% of students answered the question correctly. Students were less successful with part (b) however, and only 35% gave the correct answer. Many answers were entirely wide of the mark, such as 'Come in' or 'Join the club'.

Question 6

Students performed well on both parts of this question. The correct answer was given by 98% and 97% of students respectively.

Question 7

Part (a) was correctly answered by 94% of students, but the other three parts proved more difficult, with the correct answer being given by just over 70% in each case.

Question 8

Parts (a) and (d) were straightforward and were correctly answered by 95% and 86% of students respectively. *Tiere* in part (b) appeared to be less well known (68% correct). In part (c) only 29% gave the correct answer. D (*Landschaften*) proved to be a strong distractor. More than twice as many students gave this answer rather than the correct one (*Berge*). Students would be well advised to read through all the options rather than immediately selecting the one that appears to be correct.

Question 9

Students found this question extremely difficult. Parts (a), (c) and (e) were correctly answered by 20% of students or fewer, part (d) by 38%, while only part (b) (60%) was answered with any degree of success. Lack of knowledge of the question words may have accounted for some of the incorrect answers, but there was also evidence that students simply 'matched' words, rather than genuinely thinking about the answer e.g. *am besten* in (e) and (7) or *Fahrkarte* in (c) and (7).

Question 10

- a) While 47% of students gave the correct answer to this question, there were a considerable number of answers which demonstrated a lack of familiarity with basic German vocabulary. *Tante* was often confused with *tanzen* (Emma wanted to dance), or she was said to be visiting the wrong relative. Many students did not know the English form of *München*. The vocabulary list contains a number of towns where the English form differs from the German (e.g. *München, Köln, Wien*) and teachers should ensure that students are familiar with these and know the correct English spelling.
- b) This question was poorly done. Only 23% of students recognised the past participle *geschneit*. In addition 8% failed to attempt this question. There were lots of guesses, suggesting that Emma had no money or that she had lost her passport, while many students did not even recognise that she was travelling by train: car breakdowns, cancelled flights and missed buses were all offered as answers. Even those who realised she was travelling by train suggested that it was either late or had broken down, or that she had missed it.
- c) 36% of students gave the correct answer to this question. There were many incorrect answers based around the recognition of the cognate *historisch*: students suggested she learnt history, read a history book, or even did her history homework. Many answers suggested she went to the history museum – a building not even mentioned in the text.
- d) Students appeared not to know the word *folgen* and as a result there were very few correct answers to this question (5%). There were also a large number of papers

where no answer was attempted (17%). Students either answered the question according to their own scenario, with many suggesting that Emma either got lost or missed the train. Many seemed to think that *folgen* was related to ‘forgotten’ and suggested any number of items which she had forgotten to bring with her.

- e) 51% of students gave a correct answer to this question. There were some who had not read the introduction to the question and did not realise that the article was a ‘trailer’ for the programme, and thus gave answers which were well wide of the mark.
- f) This straightforward question posed more problems for candidates than it should have done. The word ‘exactly’ in the question showed that both the day and the time given in the text were required. Some students lost the mark by only putting one of these. To extract this detailed information it is important that students read the whole of the sentence in which they believe the answer to be located. Of greater concern, was the number of students who were unable to identify the day referred to. *Dienstag* was frequently given as Thursday (and even Wednesday and Saturday). A secure knowledge of the days of the week (as well as months and seasons) is absolutely essential. A mark was gained by 59% of the students.

Higher Tier

Question 1

The marks showed a similar performance profile to that of the Foundation Tier question. Students performed best on parts (b) – 79% - and (d) – 58%. But correct answers on the other three parts were few: less than 30% on parts (c) and (e), and 36% on part (a). It was to be expected that students entered for Higher Tier would have performed better on this early question in the paper.

Question 2

- a) Although the same errors occurred as at Foundation Tier, performance was better at this level on this overlap question, with 72% of the students gaining a mark.
- b) Here too performance improved, with 48% of students giving the correct answer.
- c) The same incorrect answers were given to this question as in the equivalent question at Foundation Tier, with students tending to base their answers around the word *historisch*. Performance on this question did not improve as much as one might have expected at this level (58%).
- d) Performance on this question improved marginally from Foundation Tier (20% correct), but the verb *folgen* still posed a problem for many students. Again, 12% of students did not attempt this question.
- e) More students gave the correct answer than at Foundation Tier (68%).
- f) 69% of students gave a correct answer to this question, but there was still confusion between *Dienstag* and *Donnerstag*.

Question 3

This question appeared to pose few problems for students. Part (b) was correctly answered by 72% of students, while more than 80% answered parts (a) and (c) correctly.

Question 4

This type of question appears regularly in the Higher Tier paper, but students seemed to find it particularly difficult on this occasion. Fewer than 40% of students scored two marks or more, while 30% scored no marks at all.

Question 5

Parts (a) and (b) of this question were answered well, with 89% and 79% of students respectively giving the correct answer. Part (c) proved to be more difficult. Only 47% gave the correct answer, while option B drew almost as many responses as the correct option.

Question 6

Students appeared to find this question relatively straightforward, with all parts being correctly answered by 66% of students or more.

Question 7

- a) The word 'exactly' in the question should have alerted students to the fact that a detailed answer was required here. Many were quite happy to base an answer on the words they recognised and did not read to the end of the sentence, thus omitting the information "when he was young", which was essential to the answer. There were many indications here that students had been entered for a paper that was beyond their reading ability. Many stated that he hated the film (presumably a misreading of *hatte*) while a considerable number stated that it was a war film (based on recognition of the verb *war*). Many candidates even wrote on their scripts that they did not know why they had been entered for Higher Tier. Teachers really do need to give consideration to the level at which their students are working when deciding the level of examination entry. The correct answer was given by 56% of students.
- b) 32% of students correctly gave the answer 'surprised' (although they did not always manage to spell it correctly). A positive reaction was expected as an answer to this question, so 'stunned', 'impressed' and 'amazed' were all accepted. Generalisations, however, (e.g. 'he liked it'; 'it was good') were not deemed to be sufficiently accurate at this level. There were a surprising number of negative answers offered, suggesting grandfather did not like the cinema, which is hard to justify from the text. Many students realised that *überrascht* was the answer to the question but did not know its meaning. Some attempted to employ the strategy of separating the word into its constituent parts. This technique was sometimes successful (e.g. overwhelmed), but there were equally as many incorrect attempts (e.g. over-rated; over-priced). Nevertheless, it is good to see students using such strategies in an attempt to access the correct answer.
- c) There were two possible answers to this question: either a contrast: of the nature of cinemas, or of the frequency with which the films were shown. In both answers, students lost marks by not reading the text closely enough. While many said that previously the film was shown only once a day, they then went on to say that there were many films shown in the cinemas of today (rather than indicating that the film was shown with greater frequency). Those who correctly observed that there was only one cinema where grandfather lived, then often went on to say there were now ten in the area, rather than indicating that there were all contained within the one building. A considerable number of students mentioned differences between the cinemas of today and yesterday from their own knowledge rather than referring to the

text (e.g. colour / black and white; silent films / ‘talkies’). 23% of students scored two marks for this question, while 42% gained one.

- d) This question was relatively well done, with 81% of students knowing the word *bequem*.

Question 8

In part a) 30% of students gave the correct answer, but more than twice as many opted for answer B, presumably because they had read *nicht am Computer spielen dürfte*, without taking the opening of the sentence into account. Parts (b) and (c) were correctly answered by 68% and 83% of students, but performance on part (d) was again poor (42% correct). Option C drew more responses than the correct answer, *halb neun* presumably being an irresistible lure. Candidates entered for the Higher Tier paper should really be familiar with such basic features of German as telling the time.

Question 9

- a) In answering this question it was important that students referred to the actual text of the article. Many students drew on their own general knowledge and simply said that dialects showed ‘where you come from’ without reference to the ‘part of Germany’ mentioned in the article. There were also quite a few answers which showed a distinct sociological bias against certain regional accents. Poor word recognition meant that some candidates turned *welchem* into ‘welcoming’ – another sign that their reading skills were not up to the demands of this level of examination. 37% of students gave the correct answer to the question.
- b) Students were expected to draw the distinction between the dialects of Berlin and Southern Germany. Many failed to translate *Süddeutschland* and left it in the original German, thus costing themselves the mark in an otherwise correct answer. There were quite a number of students who referred to Berliners having a ‘soft’ accent (which presumably they had derived from *sofort*) – yet another example of the poor reading skills exhibited by many students in this examination.

Teachers should also draw pupils’ attention to the fact that all their answers in this examination have to be in **English**. A significant number of students thought that the question (‘What example is given...’) meant that they had to quote the relevant passage from the German text. Even if the correct German quotation was given, it could not be given credit as it was in the wrong language.

The correct answer to the question was given by 48% of students.

- c) This question was answered quite well (56% correct). A wide range of synonyms was accepted for ‘dying out’.
- d) i) The key element in answering this question was that Johanna’s grandparents spoke dialect *with one another*. Not all students gave this piece of information. A mark was gained by 21% of the students.
- ii) Quite full answers were given to this question. Although it was only necessary to state that Johanna’s father spoke dialect with his father, many also offered the additional information that he spoke *Hochdeutsch* with his children. Many students thought that he spoke *like* his father, which was not correct. 33% of students gained a mark for this question.

- iii) Too many students thought that they could simply complete the sequence 'dialect – both – *Hochdeutsch*' to answer this question and simply wrote the answer 'Standard German'. The question asked specifically about dialect usage and it was important to demonstrate understanding of the text. Two possible answers were allowed: she understood a few words, or she could not speak it. A mark was awarded to 24% of students.
- e) Responses to this question fell largely into two categories: those who clearly understood and those who did not. Some students gave good and detailed answers, and this was pleasing to see. 8% gained three marks for this question. Conversely, others simply offered one word answers, such as 'TV' or 'Radio', which at this level of the examination are unlikely to gain a mark. 64% failed to gain a mark for this question. It was disappointing to see that many students thought that the word *mobiler* had to do with the use of mobile phones, and was perhaps another indicator of the fact that many candidates had been inappropriately entered for this examination.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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

Convert raw or scaled marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion