



GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**GERMAN
AS/Advanced**

JANUARY 2010

Statistical Information

This booklet contains summary details for each unit: number entered; maximum mark available; mean mark achieved; grade ranges. *N.B. These refer to 'raw marks' used in the initial assessment, rather than to the uniform marks reported when results are issued.*

Annual Statistical Report

The annual *Statistical Report* (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

Unit	Page
GN2	1

GERMAN

General Certificate of Education

JANUARY 2010

Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced

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Unit Statistics

The following statistics include all candidates entered for the unit, whether or not they 'cashed in' for an award. The attention of centres is drawn to the fact that the statistics listed should be viewed strictly within the context of this unit and that differences will undoubtedly occur between one year and the next and also between subjects in the same year.

Unit	Entry	Max Mark	Mean Mark
GN2	367	98	64.2

Grade Ranges

A	77
B	68
C	60
D	52
E	44

N.B. The marks given above are raw marks and not uniform marks.

GN2

The majority of candidates found this paper accessible, in particular the listening task, the tick boxes in *Aufgabe 3* and the word order exercise in *Aufgabe 4*. Translation, especially the individual sentences, still proves to be a stumbling block. The same is true for the essays.

Aufgabe 1

Far too many marks were lost in this exercise unnecessarily because the answers did not address the questions directly, i.e. they did not satisfy the demands of the interrogatives *wann, welche, wie, warum* etc. For example, in answer to **qu.1** (*Was macht die Lufthansa mit den verloren gegangenen Koffern?*) some candidates wrote *sie müssen ganz viele Koffer verkaufen* instead of *sie verkaufen die Koffer* or *sie haben/machen eine Auktion*. Others failed to understand **question 4** and reported what other people (but not Jens) had found in their suitcases. In answer to **question 5** (*Wie hat Jens einen Profit gemacht?*) a high proportion of candidates stated that Jens had made a profit of 70 Euros but failed to explain how he had achieved that. One of the answers given to **qu.6** was *es gibt für sie eine schöne Überraschung*, which Sonja was perhaps hoping for but could not know for sure. It could therefore not have been the reason for her wanting to go. *Sie hoffte, daß ... vielleicht...* was, of course, accepted as a correct answer. Candidates must be advised again and again that quoting from the text never answers the question satisfactorily. It might contain some of the relevant information. However, the task is to answer the specific question.

Aufgabe 2

This was straightforward enough except that the answers for gaps 1 and 2 could be either in the present or the past tense. But there needed to be consistency, and once students had chosen the tense for gap 1 the context demanded the same tense for the next gap. As a result many students lost marks here because they then used a different tense for gap 2. It was also surprising to see that hardly anyone knew the third person present of *wissen*, and forms such as *wisse, wisst* or *weiß* predominated.

Aufgabe 3, Teil 1

On average this exercise was completed competently. It seems that candidates re-read the text carefully and also checked their answers conscientiously. Some answers, however, were not in line with the text and even defied logic, for example *Meistens haben jugendliche Fahrer einen Taxifahrer, weil sie zu schnell fahren* or *Die Mädchen sind da anderer Meinung und fahren dann langsam/selten/betrunken mit dem Taxi*.

Aufgabe 3, Teil 2

This exercise provided evidence that the reading skills of most candidates are well developed, and good scores were achieved on the whole. Some candidates either overlooked or did not know the word *bald* in **qu. i** and therefore judged the statement to be true.

Aufgabe 4

Most candidates appeared to have understood the mechanics of German word order and applied their knowledge well to the individual sentences in this exercise. Some were occasionally let down by inadequate knowledge of inflection and wrote *deshalb sprechen die Diskobesuchern mit blauen Engel* instead of *deshalb sprechen die blauen Engel mit Diskobesuchern*. An unexpected variation to the standard answer was not only amusing but also scored full points: *Deshalb sprechen die Engel mit blauen Diskobesuchern*.

Some candidates mistook *sein* in the selection bracket (*sein Autofahren gefährlich kann*) for a possessive pronoun. Others were convinced that *sein* had to feature both as a possessive pronoun *and* a verb and used it twice: *Wenn man betrunken ist, kann sein Autofahren gefährlich sein* – which unfortunately lost them a mark. In general, German word order allows for a fair degree of variation, and where that was the case any correct version was, of course, accepted; for example *...fährt man am besten mit dem Taxi / ...fährt man mit dem Taxi am besten* or *...wollen sie anderen wirklich helfen / ...wollen sie wirklich anderen helfen*.

Aufgabe 5, Teil 1

This exercise posed problems since there were gaps in vocabulary. Frequently adverbs such as *selten*, *einfach*, *meistens* and *gleich* were not known. Even very common elementary words of everyday German such as *Köche* (frequently misread as *Küche*) and *Mahlzeit* caused difficulties.

The task here is to render these phrases in good English or Welsh, not just in any shape that is at least intelligible. What is not common English/Welsh usage was not accepted. For example, some candidates translated a German word with the first direct English equivalent they could think of, but that practice does not necessarily result in idiomatic English, e.g. *Bernd Siggelkow wanted to do something against the situation* instead of *about the situation*. Similarly, some students translated *einfach* with *easily* which led to an unacceptable rendition of the sentence: *My parents easily do not have very much money*. One candidate conjured up a global warming horror scenario: *Most come to school in the Ark*.

Aufgabe 5, Teil 2

Generally speaking, students coped better with this task than with the previous one. Again some adverbs caused translation difficulties (*anfangs*, *besonders*, *sogar*). The last sentence of the passage proved to be a puzzle for quite a few candidates who could not make sense of the word *schlimmer* and took a wild guess, relating *schlimmer* to the English *slimmer*. As a result many candidates claimed that the poverty had decreased in many families or that wealth was on the increase. It is sometimes surprising that so many students do not have a firm grasp of even very common GCSE vocabulary.

Aufgabe 6

The first two essay titles were the most popular. Once again, far too many students just wrote down their pre-learnt essays. In most cases these essays did not address the question as set and scored low or very low marks for content. Students seem to forget how important it is to reflect on the scope of the question first of all and to draw up an essay plan so as to organise their ideas, which will also help them to concentrate on linguistic aspects when writing up their essay. Those who did so generally fared a great deal better than others who started writing straight away – for fear of forgetting what they had learned by heart.

In answer to **qu. a**, a range of essays presented no more than a list of activities that would have suited a title such as *Was ich in meiner Freizeit mache*; but the question whether that was indeed the *only* way to enjoy life or whether it was possible to enjoy life outside and beyond one's leisure activities was not considered. Many essays also missed the point made by **qu. b** which suggested shortage of time as an excuse for not eating healthily. Numerous candidates wrote a general essay on how to stay healthy, but the time factor was not addressed at all. Indeed, it was not even clear in many cases whether the candidates had understood the word *ernähren* since they made exhaustive reference to exercise and its importance for a healthy life style, the pros and cons of various forms of sport, and the ills of smoking or drinking alcohol instead of focusing on a healthy diet. Merely narrating learned facts, however detailed, does not answer this type of question and gets no credit *per se* (cf. marking schemes which allocate low marks for predominantly *descriptive* accounts); presenting views and arguing a case does.

There were, of course, also many students who did address the questions directly and included detailed accounts of their own experience and opinions, which were often very interesting to read. This was true also of some linguistically weak candidates who scored a very respectable overall mark because they had focused on the question without deviation and often developed an interesting argument. One candidate for instance argued in response to **qu. d** that he could not feel at ease in fashionable clothes since he knew that they were often produced in sweatshops where child labour was employed. Although that candidate struggled linguistically he nonetheless succeeded in getting an unusual and unexpected idea across, which is much more of an achievement than learning a general essay by heart. That question, incidentally, produced quite a varied range of different viewpoints both for and against.

Language still leaves a great deal to be desired, and only a minority of candidates demonstrated the kind of linguistic competence one would expect at this level – i.e. by no means perfect but with every indication that the basics had been well understood and could be put into practice. Good candidates could draw easily on a good range of both lexis and structures that enabled them to express all they had and wanted to say in well structured German: a sound platform to build upon. With the majority, however, there was a wide gap between what they might know theoretically but were not able to apply in the essay. Even candidates who scored good marks in the discrete grammar tests often failed to put that knowledge into practice when writing their essays. There were many cases where candidates had completed the word order exercise quite correctly but in their essay could not write one correctly structured sentence. Some essays would also have benefited from more careful checking of endings and agreements, and it was obvious that many students were plain careless.

Some recurrent errors included wrong use of prepositions (*nach Uni / nach ein Gymnasium / in die Hause gehen* (=go home), *für 9 Stunden arbeiten, über ein Problem denken*), *wenn* vs. *als* (*wenn ich jung war*), wrong use of *um* (*kein Geld um essen zu gehen / genug Geld, um essen zu gehen*); *Leute* on its own (as in English) instead of *die/ manche/, viele/ alle Leute*; incorrect logical links (*zusammenfassend/ abschließend/ zuletzt ist gesundes Essen wichtig [zu Anfang ist es nicht wichtig?]* instead of *zusammenfassend /abschließend kann man feststellen/ sagen, daß...*; similarly *in der Zukunft bin ich der Meinung [aber was ist deine Meinung jetzt?]*, *daß Frauen mehr verdienen*); use of *mit keiner/mit keinem* instead of *ohne*; and, of course, the hardy perennial *in meine Meinung nach denke ich....*



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