



GCSE Examiners' Report

German
GCSE
Summer 2024

Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each unit.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.¹

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

| Document | Description | Link |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Professional Learning / CPD | WJEC offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here. | https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/ |
| Past papers | Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination. | Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page |
| Grade boundary information | Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day. | For unitised specifications click here: Results, Grade Boundaries and PRS (wjec.co.uk) |

¹ Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Exam Results Analysis | WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre. | Portal by WJEC |
| Classroom Resources | Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning. | https://resources.wjec.co.uk/ |
| Bank of Professional Learning materials | Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain. | Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page. |
| Become an examiner with WJEC. | We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching. | Become an Examiner WJEC |

Contents

| | Page |
|--|-------------|
| Executive summary | 5 |
| Unit 1 Speaking | 6 |
| Unit 2 Listening | 8 |
| Unit 3 Reading | 10 |
| Unit 4 Writing | 13 |
| Supporting you – useful contacts and links | 16 |

Executive Summary

This year, candidates have demonstrated that they are familiar with the format of all four Units. The vast majority of candidates attempted all questions on all four Units and good attempts were made at all question types, not just multiple-choice questions in the receptive skills. On the whole, it was evident that candidates were entered for the appropriate tier, but some candidates seemed to struggle with the Higher Tier speaking and writing assessments.

Particular attention should be given to the management of speaking assessments. This includes ensuring an appropriate venue within the centre, following the guidance provided on the WJEC website. Additionally, centres should ensure that all documentation, including the set allocation form, should be uploaded to Surpass alongside the recordings for the cohort.

Overall, Principal Examiners were pleased with the performance of candidates across the qualification. There is evidence of improvement in both the speaking and writing papers. Candidates, especially higher attaining candidates, ensured they gave only the required length of responses, minimising the tendency to self-penalise as in previous series. There was also improvement in role plays in the Speaking Assessment and on Q1 on the Foundation Writing paper, suggesting that centres have successfully adapted their approach in teaching for these questions that they need only write/say a short, relevant sentence including verbs to fulfil the requirements.

A recurring area for improvement year-on-year is knowledge of theme-specific vocabulary. Gaps in knowledge affected comprehension marks on the receptive skills of Listening and Reading and on occasion limited candidates' ability to extend their responses and reach the higher mark bands for Speaking and Writing. Candidates should also be sure to read over their responses for Listening and Reading to check they have not contradicted themselves within the response.

| Areas for improvement | Classroom resources | Brief description of resource |
|--|---|--|
| Candidates should be familiar with theme-specific vocabulary | Vocabulary list Knowledge Organisers | Vocabulary list in the specification Knowledge organisers to apply the vocabulary |

GERMAN

GCSE

Summer 2024

UNIT 1 SPEAKING

Overview of the Unit

The speaking exam consists of three parts: the role play, the photo card and the conversation. The candidates are prescribed a Set from 1-6 which includes the role play, the photocard and a choice of conversation topics. Across the three tasks, all three themes are addressed. For the role play, candidates should try to attempt “complete response”, although marks are still available for varying degrees of ambiguity and inaccuracy. The photo card is marked according to communication and interaction and linguistic knowledge and accuracy. Similarly, the conversation takes a holistic view of the communication and interaction and linguistic knowledge and accuracy from the two parts of the conversation, but also marks each candidate’s pronunciation and intonation.

Most centres had made an accurate assessment of each candidate’s ability and entered them for the correct tier. However, as was seen last year, a small number of centres did seem to be too ambitious in their judgement, meaning that some candidates struggled with the conversation at higher, whereas they would have been closer to / or indeed comfortably within the top band on foundation.

Overall, candidates performed well and performance was similar to that of previous years. There were, however, areas which all centres are asked to consider for future examination series:

Appropriate venue:

Most centres conducted the tests in areas which were clearly well away from the usual hustle and bustle of a school day. There were times, however, when noise from passing students required the teacher-examiner to halt proceedings and go to the door to ask people to be quiet. Centres must ensure procedures are in place so that this is avoided as it disrupts the flow of the test and could potentially unsettle the candidate sitting the exam. Teacher-examiners should also ask if it is possible to suspend the use of the school bell for the duration of the assessments as this too can cause it difficult to hear responses.

Administration:

The Unit 1 speaking assessments were virtually all completed and uploaded onto the system within the required time frame. The uploading of the administrative documents required was excellent, although it should be reiterated that centres are required to upload the set allocation form, as without this, examiners are unable to mark the submissions.

Uploading of files

Again, this was done very well. Whilst difficult to check that an examination has recorded successfully to the end it is recommended that centres check for any suspiciously small sound files which could indicate a recording that has been cut short.

Timings

Timing of exams is improving year on year. Role play and photo card discussions were particularly pleasing. The two parts of the conversation were also generally well balanced and very few candidates went over the overall 9-minute (Foundation) and 12-minute (Higher) limit.

Comments on individual questions/sections

The Role Play

The majority of candidates were able to fulfil the requirements of the role play activity at Foundation and Higher Tier. This year, it was pleasing to hear so many candidates able to both ask a question and answer the unseen question. Unfortunately, a number of candidates still self-penalise, especially on the higher tier, by extending their response unnecessarily, resulting in an inaccuracy in either use of vocabulary or grammatical structures.

The Photo Card

The photo card brought out some extremely interesting and natural German which was very nice to hear. There was much more relevant and detailed information expressed in comparison to previous years, which enabled a good number of candidates to attain the higher band. Whilst candidates were again able to provide answers to unseen questions on this part of the exam, it should be stressed that for the best marks, candidates need to provide justification to their opinions, and should always endeavour to explain their ideas. Candidates who can provide two sides to an argument tend to score very well on this part of the exam.

The Conversation

The majority of candidates provided pleasantly natural responses to the conversation. Clearly, candidates are being well prepared for the examination but not simply learning long chunks of language which causes candidates to lose marks for interaction and spontaneity. Candidates usually initiated part one of the conversation and teachers asked questions relevant to the sub-sub-theme, allowing for a natural and coherent flow to the conversation.

Pronunciation and intonation were generally good across all centres.

Most candidates were able to develop their answers to questions and the candidates who performed best were those who could express and justify opinions and views, using complex structures. Those candidates who performed confidently when using time references were able to access more marks than those who struggled when referring to past or future events.

GERMAN

GCSE

Summer 2024

UNIT 2 LISTENING

Overview of the Unit

Unit 2 is a listening comprehension assessment of approximately 35 minutes at Foundation Tier and 45 minutes at Higher Tier. At both tiers there is a mixture of question types, box ticking, gap filling and answering briefly in German and English / Welsh.

Candidates completed tasks related to themes and sub-themes at both levels. There were very few unattempted questions or sections to questions. Several candidates introduced information that wasn't required but which, unfortunately, contradicted their answer, resulting in a +1/-1 mark. There were a number of exemplary scripts in this series, particularly at Higher Tier.

Teachers and candidates are to be congratulated for their hard work in preparing for the examination.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation Tier

- Q.1: No areas to highlight.
- Q.2: Some minor confusion with part(b)
- Q.3: Section 1(a) caused the most problems. Telling the time again is generally unfamiliar. Section 2 was well answered.
- Q.4: This appears to have caused difficulties, especially with the first line answers. Question words need to be reinforced.
- Q.5: Section 1, part (a) was well attempted. There were very few correct answers to part (b). Candidates failed to pick up on the fact that no one lives in the region. Section 2 produced good responses.
- Q.6: Section 1 part (a) appears to have caused difficulties. Candidates mostly wrote the report was about no teachers/not enough teachers. Section 2 produced good answers.
- Q.7 Foundation/Q1 Higher: Section 1 was well attempted. Section 2 appears to have caused some difficulty in section (b) with all 3 boxes being chosen equally.
- Q.8 Foundation/Q2 Higher: At both levels this appears to have produced better responses than in previous series. Section 1 appears to have caused few problems. There was some confusion in Section 2 when candidates offered a time - many wrote 7pm. Some candidates offered too much information, sometimes contradicting themselves, resulting in a +1 -1 mark.

Q.9 Foundation/Q3 Higher: Generally well-attempted, particularly by candidates entered for the Higher tier. The exception being section (e).

Higher Tier

Q4. Section 1(a): Generally well attempted , though candidates sometimes offered the incorrect time, sometimes resulting in a +1/-1 situation.

Part (c) A few candidates picked up on the fact that *financing* their phone was the problem. There were no issues with part (d)

Q5: Generally well-attempted, section (a) producing a variety of ticks in the boxes.

Q6: Generally well-attempted. Minor confusion arose with section (b). where a number of candidates chose *verloren* as their answer.

Q7: This question produced a variety of good responses. In section 1 some candidates offered *sport* as a response instead of *water sports*.

Q8: This question produced several good responses from candidates. Issues arose in section (d) with occasional mis- translation of *Programm*

Q9: A number of candidates performed well. Section (c) caused the biggest difficulties. There were very few correct answers to this section. Surprisingly section (e) offered a variety of answers from the Italian ice cream industry to the Italian car industry.

GERMAN

GCSE

Summer 2024

UNIT 3 READING

Overview of the Unit

Candidates were able to show their understanding of a wide range of German covering all sub-themes as outlined in the Specification.

Questions in the Foundation and Higher Tiers were accessible to all candidates. The paper followed the same format as in previous years and candidates were familiar with the type of questions, e.g. tick boxes, what is the text about etc. In FT and HT, candidates performed overall well in matching-up and multiple-choice tasks. The majority was also able to give correct short answers in English/Welsh when required, but weaker candidates were unable to identify inference e.g. Q8 (e). Even though short answers in English/Welsh are generally encouraged, answers must not be ambiguous.

Higher Tier candidates were usually able to achieve more marks than Foundation Tier candidates for the common questions Foundation Q8+9 / Higher Tier Q1+2.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation Tier Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5

Basic vocabulary was identified well, and simple language structures were understood by most candidates. Opinions were also generally well identified in Q2. Statements on traditions in Q3 were more challenging for candidates who did not understand topic-specific language e.g. *Karneval*. In Q4, weaker candidates did not identify finer differences such as negation in statements related to the text e.g. ... *geh zu Fuß* with the options and *nicht zu Fuß gehen*. Q5 was generally well approached including identifying different tenses.

Foundation Tier Q6

Only very few candidates were unable to identify *Frankreich/Paris* for (a). The vast majority answered (b) and (c) correctly, but many did not understand *traurig* (d). Only very few were able to understand the question required to answer (e). Question (f) was often misunderstood and answered literally e.g. "in the last 2 lines" rather than looking at the content of the text.

Foundation Tier Q7

A large number of candidates did not understand *Wurst*. Many candidates answered (b) and (c) not precise enough. Vegetarians do not only like the hotel, but they like to stay there (*besuchen*) and they don't buy sausages in the shop, but make their own.

Similarly, some answers could not be accepted because they were not detailed enough such as for (d) "24 per day". It was not clear what 24 refers to. Another example for a lack of precision was seen in (e) where some candidates answered with "abroad" which does not translate to the idea of "all over the world" clearly enough.

Foundation Tier Q8 (overlap with Q1 Higher Tier)

Topic specific vocabulary for School Life was often not understood in (a) *Schulhof* and (b) *Turnhalle*. Many candidates struggled to understand inference in (c) *weil wir mittags nicht nach Hause gehen*. Several candidates thought that the chicken nuggets were „interesting“ in (d). The answer to question (e) had to make clear that Oleg wanted Paula’s nuggets, therefore “nugget” alone was not precise enough to gain a mark. For question (f) many answers were guesses, and candidates did not identify the meaning of *länger schlafen*.

Foundation Tier Q9 (overlap with Q2 Higher Tier)

Most candidates were able to identify the meaning of the text. They coped well with the demands of the questions, but some candidates could not be awarded marks for being too vague e.g. (c) “white” – it was not clearly communicated what was white i.e. the background. Weaker candidates misinterpreted *Schulbildung* as school building and *Interessen* as interesting, which would not answer the question “...what else should you list” in concise English.

Foundation Tier Q10 – Translation

Candidates performed well in this task overall, but weaker candidates often overlooked small details i.e. *ich gehe ...gern* was translated into “I go” not communicating the positive idea of *gern*. Similar omission of detail was found in the second part: *immer* was often missed out. Many candidates mixed up *lieber* and *liebe* in part 3, but almost all candidates translated part 4 correctly. Part 5 and 6 were often moved around, and answers that included all details for both parts were accepted regardless of the order. It was pleasing to see that most candidates were able to translate all tenses correctly.

Higher Tier Q3

This question was generally well completed, but some candidates saw *Müll* in Mila’s text and wrongly assumed it was the answer to (vi). The key word *sammelt* was overlooked/not understood.

Higher Tier Q4

Candidates found this question very challenging. Like in previous years, factual texts are often more challenging but (e) was mostly answered correctly.

Higher Tier Q5

The text about technology did not prove as challenging as the previous task and most candidates performed well here. Only (f) *abhängig / süchtig* was often not understood.

Higher Tier Q6

Candidates did not answer questions with enough precision e.g. (a) *Vorweihnachtszeit* was often translated as “in winter” or simply “Christmas”. A similar error was made in (d) where many candidates wrote “funny” instead of “funniest” (superlative had to be identified). It was pleasing to see that some candidates understood more advanced vocabulary i.e. *Beamte*.

Higher Tier Q7

Most candidates performed well on the literary text this year. (D) was challenging and only few candidates understood the word *Ankunftshalle*. Many guessed the answer for (e) and (f) writing answers like the children were left behind and that the van broke down. Inference in the last question was mainly identified correctly.

Higher Tier Q8

Questions (a)-(c) were generally answered correctly but some candidates referred to the eco-element of the park. However, the text states clearly *besonders attraktiv für Urlauber, nicht nur wegen der wunderschönen Landschaft und Ruhe, sondern auch wegen der Aktivitäten*. Many candidates guessed the answer to (d) and only a few understood *keine öffentlichen Verkehrsmittel*. Questions (e) and (f) were often not answered precisely enough e.g. "the date" and "cars and bikes" (the idea of **parking** the vehicle in the park had to be communicated clearly).

Higher Tier Q9 – Translation

Candidates performed overall well in this task. Some vocabulary proved to be more challenging e.g. *nützlich, kennenlernen, getroffen* (irregular past participle) and *Judomannschaft*. Tenses were identified correctly and only a few did not communicate clearly that the two friends are still practicing judo. The simple past was incorrectly used instead.

Similar to previous years, many candidates could not be awarded marks due to a lack of precision in their English/Welsh answer. Adverbs are still often overlooked and omitted in their responses. It was pleasing to see that most candidates were able to understand a wide range of vocabulary and structures. Different tenses were identified especially well this year by both Foundation and Higher Tier candidates.

GERMAN

GCSE

Summer 2024

UNIT 4 WRITING

Overview of the Unit

The exam for Foundation and Higher Tier followed the same format as in previous years. Candidates were able to answer all questions in the allocated time and most followed the guidance regarding word count. Only weaker candidates found it challenging to write the required number of words to access marks in the top band.

Candidates were usually well prepared for the tasks and gave short, precise answers for Q1 FT, short simple sentences for Q2 FT and more extended language including complex structure and tenses for Q3FT/Q1HT and Q2 HT. The translation tasks allowed more able candidates to show their excellent knowledge of vocabulary and complex structures.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Question 1 Foundation Tier:

Candidates were required to give simple information related to the theme of Current and future study and employment.

Most candidates were able to write short, concise sentences consisting of a noun, verb and object. Full marks were awarded if the meaning was fully conveyed and a good degree of accuracy was shown. One mark was awarded if the meaning was partially conveyed or serious errors were present.

Minor errors such as incorrect gender, agreements, spelling errors that did not impede the meaning were ignored. Serious errors like incorrect verb endings, word order after conjunction or inversion word order resulted in the loss of 1 mark.

Weaker candidates were able to convey some meaning, but serious errors were often present.

Question 2 Foundation Tier

In question 2, candidates were required to give general information about holidays, but many chose to write about their last holidays. If a destination, accommodation and activity was included, marks in the top bands were awarded regardless of the tense used. However, some candidates' responses lacked detail and clarity, and could therefore not be placed in the top band for Communication and Content. Weaker candidates misunderstood the question and/or wrote a pre-learnt response about the environment or their local area. Only a low band could be awarded because the answers were mostly not relevant. Where a candidate's response was clearly below 50 words, a lack of range and structures resulted in a lower band mark for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy.

Question 3 Foundation Tier / Question 1 Higher Tier:

This question required candidates to write a blog about technology including types of technology, what mobile phones were used for and technology they would like to purchase in the future. The instructions state that information **must** be given related to these points, but many candidates did not address all three bullet points. Consequently, marks were lost for communication and content, and often for Linguistic knowledge and accuracy, because the range of language was limited e.g. no range of tenses.

Foundation candidates often found it challenging to express their ideas and opinions clearly, especially for the last 2 bullet points. They used a simple range of vocabulary and grammar, many of them were unable to form the past tense correctly. Higher Tier candidates performed better and included more opinions and detail. However, many HT candidates struggled to use verbs correctly (tenses/endings/position).

Question 4 Foundation Tier – Translation

Most candidates were able to translate (a) correctly, however many wrote *ich gehe mit dem Bus* when the verb *fahren* should have been used.

As in previous years, candidates found it very challenging to form questions. Many did not know the interrogative pronoun *wie* and were unable to conjugate the verb correctly. Weaker candidates did not translate the adjectives 'expensive' and 'uncomfortable' in (c). Most candidates were able to gain some marks in the past tense sentence (d), however word order, the use of the correct auxiliary verb and general vocabulary were challenging. It was similar for the future tense in (e) where some meaning was conveyed but grammatical structures were often incorrect.

Question 2 Higher Tier

It was pleasing to see that most candidates wrote the correct length (about 150 words) and included facts and ideas. Communication was mostly clear but there were instances where the message broke down in weaker candidates' work. Sentences were over-complicated and turned sentences ambiguous. The best candidates were able to write a clearly structured and detailed text including ideas, opinions and justifications, rather than a list of facts. Explanations should have been given for how and why their region could be improved (for option (a)) or what could be done for the environment in the future (for option (b)).

The linguistic knowledge and accuracy were generally good. Weaker candidates often used a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, but there were many errors including verbs, tenses and word order. It was positive to see that candidates were able to communicate their ideas and views clearly using a good range of language. Better candidates were confident using all tenses and they used a wider range of vocabulary and structures i.e. *um...zu*, comparisons, conjunctions and topic specific vocabulary.

Question 3 Higher Tier – Translation

Most candidates were able to convey meaning partially with basic grammatical structures used correctly. Topic specific vocabulary appeared to be challenging i.e. “6th form, grades, exams”. Word order was often disregarded after conjunctions, verb 2nd idea, and when using the conditional *möchte ich*. Verb endings were also a challenge for weaker candidates. Marks were awarded for the meaning being partially conveyed, but there were often many incorrect grammatical structures.

Many candidates had the ability to convey information, ideas and facts, and they communicate well in German. Grammatical weaknesses were identified in verb endings and tenses, as well as word order (inversion, conjunctions). Candidates who attempted more complex structures were rewarded, even if mistakes were made.

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 02922404297

Email: languages@wjec.co.uk

Qualification webpage: www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/german-gcse

See other useful contacts here: [Useful Contacts | WJEC](#)

CPD Training / Professional Learning

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: <https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/>

WJEC Qualifications

As Wales' largest awarding body, WJEC supports its education community by providing trusted bilingual qualifications, specialist support, and reliable assessment to schools and colleges across the country. This allows our learners to reach their full potential.

With more than 70 years' experience, we are also amongst the leading providers in both England and Northern Ireland.



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk