



GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**GCE
GERMAN
AS/Advanced**

SUMMER 2022

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UNIT 1 – 2820U10-1

General Comments

For the first time this year the unit 1 oral examinations were conducted by teachers. In 2022 the discussion section with three cards only, formed the basis of the assessment. Card B1 concentrated on “Eltern von verliebten Teenagern”, B2 on “Backpacking” and B3 on “Hitzefrei” in German schools.

Comments on individual questions/sections

The aims are for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of German speaking countries, their ability to understand and respond to a text, and their fluency and spontaneity in expressing views and opinions on selected areas of the specification.

Generally speaking, candidates were again well prepared for the challenges regarding AO4 and AO2. A number of candidates struggled with the AO3 demands of this exam, others faced difficulties when responding to questions.

As regards the three B cards, the majority of candidates managed to demonstrate their understanding of the text successfully. As in previous years, candidates employed to good effect structures such as: “der Text sagt”, “laut dem Text”, “wir lesen im Text, dass...”. Occasionally, however, the teachers had to refer the candidates back to the text so that they were able to gain good marks for AO2. All three B cards worked well since they directly referred to the students’ experience such as problems with parents or problems encountered when travelling or having to study in hot weather.

On the whole, teachers were very well prepared for conducting the AS orals. The majority of teachers approached their task with enthusiasm and dedication, which enabled the candidates to show their full potential. All three questions were asked and generally the candidates had a chance to access all skill areas. So that candidates can access AO4 marks it is, however, advisable to keep personal questions to a minimum. It is preferable for instance to discuss the German education system rather than discussing the candidates’ A level choices or the situation of the sixth form in their school. On the whole, candidates fared better if the teacher asked precise questions and kept their own comments and reactions to a minimum. Generally speaking, the texts were exploited very well, for B3 some teachers discussed “Kältefrei”. For card B1 the discussion was frequently extended to cover “Helikoptereltern” which candidates could relate to, as this topic featured on a card in previous years. When the discussion of the card had been exhausted a number of teachers broadened the topic. For B1 for instance family structure in Germany and problems with family life were discussed successfully. As concerns card B2, hobbies and interests of young Germans were examined. Whilst discussing Card B3 candidates managed to give their opinions on the German education system.

Summary of key points

Candidates are well advised to immerse themselves in the German language as much as possible, by reading German texts, by listening to German news items and by speaking German in the classroom

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UNIT 2 -2820-1

General Comments

This unit caused no major problems for the majority of candidates. Most marks were lost in the translation exercise and in the essay.

Comments on individual questions/sections

The first listening exercise on the Oktoberfest was completed successfully, as a high number of candidates achieved at least 6/8 marks. Several candidates ticked **8a** *Um Probleme zu vermeiden durfte man nicht so viel trinken*, which is a common sense answer which, however, does not relate to the text.

- Q.2** Question 2 was tackled successfully by a considerable number of candidates. In some cases, false statements were identified, but the correction was left out. Marks were lost in **2a)** and **2e)** because of wrong choice of possessive pronoun. *Gesa wächst mit seine Vater auf* and *Gesa hat seine Mutter vermisst* give rise to misunderstandings, as it is not clear that Gesa grows up with her father and missed her mother, not her father's mother. A number of candidates struggled with the correction of **j)** as they lacked the linguistic ability to express what Gesa expects from society.
- Q.3** Marks were lost in this section because candidates failed to check their answers carefully against the text. *Zukunft* and *Freunde* fit grammatically in **5)** but contradict the text as Linda talks about her anxieties and not about her friends or her future. In a similar fashion *generieren* in **4)** makes grammatical sense but Jonas simply observes certain situations, and cannot generate them with his drone.
- Q.4** Most candidates found the text fairly accessible and managed to complete the sentences in this exercise. Problems were encountered in **a)** where a frequent offering was *ein Jahr über den Austausch nachzudenken*, which fails to comply with the text. The same is true for **e)** *den Titel eines Kochbuchs zu geben*. Vera thinks about buying a German cookbook for the host family, but she does not intend to give them the title of a cookbook. Candidates should be encouraged to check their answers carefully against the text.
- Q.5** Difficulties in this section stemmed from a lack of vocabulary, and a high number of candidates did not know *Entscheidung*, *nachdenken*, *Schüleraustausch*. Frequent offerings for the first sentence were *Vera thought well about going abroad for a year*, which does not convey the idea of carefully considering a decision. A considerable number of students translated *Sie meinten* as *she thought*, obviously the third person plural was mistaken for a third person singular. Surprisingly, the second sentence caused difficulties for some candidates who claimed that she planned her trip with her parents, even though she just discussed them with her parents. A small minority of candidates even thought that Vera went on a plane with her parents. *They thought it was best to begin the sixth form abroad* was a frequent offering for the third sentence, which is not quite correct as she is going abroad before starting the 6th form in Great Britain.

Q.6 Again, the majority of essays were on the film *Das Pferd auf dem Balkon*, followed by *Barfuß*. Most essays contained an introduction and a concluding paragraph.

The majority of candidates who chose *Das Pferd auf dem Balkon* opted for title a). The better candidates explained the importance of the horse for Mika's development, but also pointed out the importance of other figures. The majority of candidates had a good knowledge of the film and seemed to have enjoyed watching it. Those candidates who had opted for title b) elaborated on the problems associated with Mika's autism, his lack of friendships and the problems Lara faces with her autistic son. The humorous side of the film was also dealt with in detail as the scene in the casino and the joyful party at the end of the film were mentioned.

Those candidates who opted for *Barfuss* mainly completed essay title a) which concentrates on humorous and sad elements in the film. Most candidates elaborated on Leila's sad life before she meets Nick. The better candidates also pointed out that Nick's relationship with his family was a cause for concern. The majority of candidates managed to provide a good amount of detail relating to humorous aspects such as scenes during their travels or the end of the film where they go shopping.

As in previous years, there was a high incidence of grammatical mistakes in a number of essays:

- Word order mistakes, especially as concerns the finite position of verbs in subordinate clauses, but also in main clauses e.g. *Sie eine besonders traurige Hintergrund hat.*
- Problems with possessive and personal pronouns, e.g. *Sie hat keine Erwartungen in sie Leben. Es war schwierig für ihr mit Autismus zu leben.*
- This year more candidates than before used English words when they encountered lexical difficulties e.g. *important, joke, now* and *paternal*.
- False friends frequently led to mistakes e.g. *schauen* was used *instead of zeigen*.
- In many cases verbs were missing e.g. *weil sie beide glücklich.*

Summary of key points

Careful checking of answers in the listening and reading sections would have led to an increase of marks. It is also advisable to check the essays for word order mistakes or endings in order to increase the AO3 mark.

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UNIT 3 – 1820U30-1

General Comments

For the first time this year schools could either opt for “live” examiners or examiners conducting unit 3 orals by Teams. Five centres opted for the remote assessment mode. In most cases the technology worked well, and candidates and examiners felt comfortable with the process. It was feasible to have an introductory talk to break the ice even in this remote way. Occasionally, candidates or teachers stayed behind after the dedicated time to have a chat.

Comments on individual questions/sections

This year again the majority of candidates were well prepared for the IRP as, on the whole, they had chosen suitable titles with a spectrum just wide enough to allow them to present their research findings in two minutes.

Most candidates had structured their talk efficiently, presented their findings within the time limit and also left some loose ends for the discussion. Unfortunately, a small minority of candidates had to be stopped because they had exceeded the time limit. Candidates can of course take their IRP Pro-forma into the exam which might help them to jog their memory.

In most centres candidates had chosen different titles which ranged from analysing the importance of German Christmas Markets to Gender Pay Gap of German women. Here is a list of some IRP titles:

- Was ist der Transrapid und warum ist er gescheitert?
- Inwiefern hat sich Covid -19 auf die Qualität der Ausbildung in Deutschland ausgewirkt?
- Welchen Einfluß hatte der Regisseur Rosa von Praunheim auf die LGBTQ Bewegung?
- Inwiefern hat Helmut Kohl zur Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands beigetragen?
- Sind die Lieder von Rammstein wirklich so brutal?
- Inwiefern gibt es in Deutschland eine Bildungskrise?
- Inwiefern wirkt sich die mehrsprachige Kultur der Schweiz auf ihr Bildungssystem aus?

Most candidates had a personal interest in their chosen topic and usually managed to argue their points successfully and back them up by AO4 evidence. In many cases candidates enjoyed being the experts on their chosen topic and having to explain their arguments to the examiner.

Summary of key points

Those candidates whose IRP title was formulated as a question or who had attempted a comparison between two aspects were more likely to provide analysis in their presentation than those who had chosen a very general title such as *Bundesliga* or *Formel 1*. The accuracy marks in the discussion section were again relatively low for a number of candidates, apparently because they lacked oral practice. In order to improve their performance candidates are well advised to immerse themselves as much as possible in a German context by watching German films, listening to news items or exchanging news with a German pen friend. It would also be helpful if they took every opportunity to speak German in the classroom.

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UNIT 4 – 1820U40-1

General Comments

The third year of this unit 4 exam proved to be even more challenging for a high number of candidates than in previous years. A high proportion of candidates left gaps or even failed to attempt a whole section. Questions 3, 6 and the translation proved to be very demanding.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Q.1 The first listening exercise posed no major problems, most candidates scored at least 7/10 marks.

Q.2 A number of candidates struggled with the concept of “*Überparteiliche Sammelbewegung*” and therefore scored low marks in the matching exercise. Frequently parts of sentences were matched up which failed to form a sentence e.g *Viele Menschen oft aus Wut gewählt* or *Die Afd wird politisch aktiven Menschen, die mit der Politik unzufrieden sind*. Candidates obviously failed to check their answers carefully.

Q.3 Answers to comprehension questions for the third listening were either not precise enough or gave evidence of misunderstandings. In answer to the first question **a)** *Wie kann Herr Münkler beweisen, dass er Deutscher ist?* a number of candidates wrote *Herr Münkler ist Deutscher*, which meant that candidates just rephrased the question. Obviously, the verb *beweisen* was not known.

As concerns **d)** very few candidates provided the correct answer. For **f)** the majority of candidates just mentioned one item i.e *Die Integration gelingt* and therefore just scored one point out of two.

Q.4 For the first time this year the cloze procedure of previous years was replaced by questions on the text carrying 10 marks and a gap fill carrying 5 marks, in order to make this question more accessible. In spite of this change, a number of candidates skipped this question, even though the text was not very demanding and carried a familiar theme.

In answer to **e)** *Was wollen die Deutschen über den Araber wissen?* Only the better candidates started their answer with *Die Deutschen wollten wissen* A number of candidates simply copied the questions from the text without manipulating them, which led to a loss of marks.

On average candidates who completed the gap fill exercise just scored 3 out of 5 possible marks. For **3)** frequent answers were *vergessen* which is grammatically correct, but does not relate to the text. *Gefragt* was another frequent offering which, however, leads to an ungrammatical sentence: *weil die Fragen zu seiner Vergangenheit, die Enheimischen 3) gefragt, ihn traurig stimmen*. As concerns **4)** very few candidates inserted the correct word, it seems that *Entwicklungen* was unknown to the majority of candidates.

- Q.5** On average, the first part was generally done well, candidates found it easy to identify synonyms in the text. Very few candidates, however, identified the correct synonyms for **e)** which should have been *derjenigen*. A number of candidates just inserted any word they could spot in the text even if the word was not a noun e.g for *weiß über – Erzählungen* was given. In relation to Question **5b)** a high proportion of candidates faced difficulties matching up the second part of the five sentences. In contrast to that, **5c)** was generally done well, even weaker candidates scored full marks on this exercise.
- Q.6** A significant number of candidates failed to attempt this question, for others there was a high amount of gaps in their answers to the reading comprehension questions. Obviously, the text was perceived to be very demanding, and a number of candidates could not cope with the complex ideas of the text. In cases where two items were required some candidates only mentioned one as for example for **a)** *Junge Männer müssen Wehrdienst machen*, but the fact that their life was endangered in case of war was not mentioned. The same applied to **k)** as a number of candidates only mentioned that women go into retirement five years earlier than men. The fact that men do not live as long as women was not expressed. With respect to **f)** a frequent offering consisted in *95% der Berufsunfälle sind Männer*, which conveys the wrong meaning. The better candidates managed a more suitable answer such as *Männer haben 95% aller Berufsunfälle* or *Frauen haben nur 5% aller Berufsunfälle*.
- Q.7** Limited vocabulary as well as a lack of grammatical knowledge led to a loss of marks in this translation exercise. Frequently, the following vocabulary items were not known: *Löhne, ehemalgig, Anerkennung, Ungerechtigkeit, Zufall*. Only very few candidates managed to translate *one is Merkel herself*. Frequent renderings were *Ein ist Merkel sich* or *Selbst ist diese Ostdeutsche*. In many cases verbs were missing, candidates were not familiar with the comparative which resulted in expressions such as *mehr schlecht*. Occasionally, English constructions were employed *belongs to* became *gehört zu*, *means* was translated as *meint*.

Summary of key points

As Unit 4 is a very busy paper with nine different tasks which have to be tackled in two hours it may pay off if candidates first attempt the sections which carry the highest marks i.e., question 6 and the translation. Weaker candidates should be encouraged to complete question 4, as after the change of format it is not as demanding as in previous years. It is of course also good practice to watch the time carefully whilst sitting the exam.

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UNIT 5 – 1820U50-1

General Comments

This is the third year of this unit 5 exam, and candidates seemed to be better prepared since lessons had been learnt from the previous cycles.

By far the most popular text proved to be *Zweier ohne* again, with the majority of candidates opting for essay title a). The more traditional play by Dürrenmatt *Die Physiker* took second place, and one or two centres opted for Lenz' *Fundbüro*.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Regarding essay title a) for *Zweier ohne*, a number of candidates successfully analysed the importance of rowing in the novel. They pointed out that rowing brings the two boys together and leads to the "Zwillingsgelübde", but that rowing was also associated with problems. The better candidates demonstrated that their rowing boat is a symbol of their friendship since it does allow the two rowers only, in the same way as their friendship excludes all others.

Owing to a lack of linguistic competence some candidates experienced difficulties in analysing the role that rowing plays. Surprisingly a number of candidates employed English words to overcome their lexical problems e.g "hug, physical, affection". "Bekommen" instead of "werden" was frequently used. Word order problems were prevalent in various essays, and frequently German constructions were influenced by English structures, for example: *Es war wichtig zu Ludwig*.

Of the two questions on Dürrenmatt's play, title 2a) was most popular i.e. *Das Stück „Die Physiker“ ist nur eine nette Geschichte über die Situation in einer psychiatrischen Klinik. Inwiefern bist du auch dieser Meinung?*

The majority of candidates managed to exemplify that the drama represents more than a nice story. The better candidates explained convincingly that the play concentrates on the dangers of scientific research and the responsibilities of scientists. With respect to the second title, i.e., *Welche Rolle spielt Überraschung im Stück und welchen Effekt hat sie auf den Zuschauer?* most essays exemplified successfully that the surprising elements in the drama are intended to make the spectator think about the dangers of scientific research.

Owing to a lack of linguistic competence some candidates found it difficult to express their ideas. A small number of candidates produced incomprehensible sentences such as : *Meiner Ansicht nach dass die Situation in das Irrenhaus schwer ist, weil der Weg Mathilde von Zahnd spielt nicht das Rolle die Irrenärztin aber ein Patient möchte*. Word order mistakes were quite prevalent and in some cases verbs were missing altogether.

Summary of key points

It is surprising to see that hardly any candidate wrote an essay plan prior to tackling the essay, which in some cases led to overlong essays that lost focus and mainly consisted in retelling the plot. Candidates should always bear in mind that they will have to write approximately 400 words.

Candidates are also well advised to check their essays carefully for word order mistakes, endings and agreements so that they can achieve high marks for AO3.



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