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# **GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS**

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**GCE (NEW)  
GERMAN  
AS/Advanced**

**SUMMER 2018**

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:  
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?l=en>

### **Online Results Analysis**

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

### **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.

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**GERMAN**  
**General Certificate of Education (New)**  
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**Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced**  
**AS UNIT 1: SPEAKING**

Communication with centres was efficient as always, this year it was even easier to arrange dates as the window for exams started after Easter. Most centres communicated efficiently with the examiner in advance so that the suggested timetables could function smoothly. Some centres even provided a map or instructions for travel to the school and reserved a parking space, which makes all the difference when time is short. This year all centres were aware of the change of regulations regarding the need for an invigilator. The accommodation provided was nearly always appropriate, away from noise as much as possible, with no disturbances outside the examination rooms, and preparation areas and toilets close by. Refreshments were kindly offered in nearly all centres. In most centres, examiners were able to meet the candidates for short briefing sessions prior to the day's exams. These meetings are particularly useful for explaining the new complex rules for the selection of A and B cards and, even more importantly, for "breaking the ice", and for reassuring the candidates that examiners will try to support them as much as possible.

**Unit 1**

The aims are for students 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, students were again well prepared for the challenges regarding AO4 and AO2. The majority of students succeeded in arguing their chosen point of view relating to card A by tapping into their knowledge of Germany. A higher number of candidates than last year managed to apply to good effect argumentative structures such as "Da haben Sie Recht, aber..." "Ich finde aber...", "Ja vielleicht, aber...Ich habe aber gelesen, dass". In general, candidates' knowledge of the country has improved. Many candidates were able not only to quote names of writers or artists or film directors but also to give more detailed information on them and their works. In the shortness of time available, however, it may be difficult for teachers to cover all topic areas in depth. As approximately one third of the marks is allocated for AO4 teachers seemed to have concentrated on imparting knowledge of the country, which might have been at the expense of oral practice and teaching grammatical structures. A small number of candidates had a good or even very good knowledge of the country but found it difficult to express their ideas in appropriate German. As in previous years, students who had access to a language assistant fared better than those who lacked that chance. Furthermore, students who had been to Germany could more directly relate to the AO4 knowledge they had learnt in the classroom and could often refer to their own experience of the country e.g. refer to German museums or art exhibitions they had visited, German music they listened to, specialities they had tried or religious festivities they had experienced.

As regards the B cards, the majority of candidates managed to demonstrate to good effect their understanding of the text successfully. More candidates than before employed structures such as “der Text sagt”, “laut dem Text”, “wir lesen im Text, dass...”. Occasionally however, the examiners had to refer the candidates back to the text so that they were able to gain good marks for AO2. All A and B cards worked well, but those cards which directly referred to the students’ experience, such as the ones relating to German popular music, individualism and pocket money worked better than the ones on New Year’s Eve traditions, German traditional festivals, or German/Swiss/Austrian art. A higher number of students than last year were able to talk about the film they had watched for their written exam; but they found it difficult to give examples of humorous elements in the film as card A6 demanded. Some candidates, for instance, referred to comic elements in *Good bye Lenin*, but when prompted to give direct examples they were struggling to do so. Students will obviously benefit from discussing the unit 2 film in class and do so in German rather than English or Welsh and, as time in the classroom is precious, they should also be encouraged to watch further films in their own time.

The numbers of AS candidates in Wales are still a matter of concern, but the numbers have risen from 78 candidates last year to around 100 this year. However, now that teachers have gained more experience of the new specification, they will hopefully be able to encourage more students to opt for German A level in years to come and thus once again enhance their students’ educational, professional and career prospects.

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### AS UNIT 2: LISTENING, READING, TRANSLATION AND CRITICAL RESPONSE IN WRITING

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

The first listening exercise in **Question 1** about a project for more local shops in the country was completed successfully, and a high number of candidates achieved at least 6/8 marks. Surprisingly, several candidates ticked **6a** *Bei der Planung muss man an den Profit denken*, even though the text specifically stated that the shop will not make a lot of profit.

**Question 2** was tackled successfully by a considerable number of candidates. In some cases, however, though a statement was correctly identified as being false, the correction provided did not apply, which then resulted in a loss of marks nevertheless; for instance in answer to **2b**) *Videospielfirmen wollen Frauen beschäftigen, weil sie nicht so viel verdienen*, where a number of candidates stated: *Sie verdienen genauso viel*. The emphasis here was on strategic reasons why video games companies want to employ women and not on their remuneration which was not mentioned in the text at all. As concerns **2g**) numbers were frequently misinterpreted. Only 20% of women work in the video game industry, but according to a few candidates the number of women is 20% less than that of men: *Es gibt 20% weniger Frauen*.

#### Question 3

Marks were lost in this section because candidates failed to check their answers carefully against the content of text: Although *interessiert* fits grammatically in **2**), it does contradict the text which states that grandma is genuinely interested in her granddaughter's problems. In a similar fashion, *schickt* in **3**) does not make sense as Hannes does not send Anna's SMSs but reads them.

#### Question 4

Most candidates found the text fairly accessible and managed to complete the sentences in this exercise. Problems were encountered in **d**) as several options applied grammatically but failed to express the ideas of the text. Offerings ranged from *war schlecht für die Musiker* to *kam leider zu spät* or *führte zu Verträgen bei den großen Musikfirmen*.

#### Question 5

Difficulties in this section stemmed from a lack of vocabulary: *Auftritt*, *bekannt*, *etabliert*, *bemerkenswert* and *deutschsprachig* were not known to a high number of candidates. In addition to that, a lack of knowledge of the country led to translation difficulties. Even though candidates had been taught a vast amount of AO4 related information in preparation of the oral exam, hardly anyone seemed to know *Berliner Reichstag*. Translations such as *rich day* or *national day* or *rights day* were not uncommon.

Frequently verb forms such as *wurden* caused difficulties and were translated as *would* or *were*.

## Question 6

Most essays were on the film *Das Pferd auf dem Balkon*, followed by *Barfuß* and by one or two essays on *Nichts bereuen* and *Scherbenpark*.

The majority of candidates who chose *Das Pferd auf dem Balkon* opted for title a). The description of the relationship between Sascha and Mika which helps to create a warm atmosphere was frequently tackled in a superficial manner with general statements such as *Sie haben eine gute Beziehung und meistens ist Sascha nett zu Mika* giving no further details. The more successful candidates managed to describe Sascha as a father figure and to analyse Sascha's role in Mika's positive development. In a number of essays, comical elements such as the events in the casino were mentioned, but again no details were given. Only the better candidates managed to explain and analyse the comical elements. Furthermore, they successfully demonstrated how characteristics such relationships and comical elements served to create a warm atmosphere.

A number of well written essays on title b) *Junge Leute können viel von dem Film lernen. Inwiefern bist du auch dieser Meinung?* went beyond the pointers supplied beneath the essay titles and explained convincingly what you can learn about autism or Asperger's syndrome.

Without exception the candidates who opted for *Barfuss* completed essay title b) which is about complicated family relationships in the film. When attempting to analyse the relationship between Leila and her mother some candidates simply repeated the bullet point. Better candidates pointed out that Leila's mother treats her very badly by keeping her prisoner, which has a long term effect on Leila's life. They also pointed out that Leila fails to come to her mother's rescue when she suffers from a heart attack, which again has long term implications for Leila's outlook on life.

Nick's relationship with his family was often portrayed in a one-sided way since only his shortcomings were referred to but not those of his family. The more able candidates managed to point out that both Nick and Leila had negative experiences with their respective family, but that they forge a new positive family relationship with each other.

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**A2 UNIT 3: SPEAKING**

This is the first year of this new oral exam. Nonetheless, 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, for a small minority of candidates the delivery of their talk was extremely fast, presumably because they attempted to accommodate a wealth of information. In some of those cases the pronunciation suffered, which made it difficult for the examiner to comprehend all aspects of the IRP.

In most centres candidates had chosen different titles which ranged from analysing the importance of Brecht for modern German theatre to a comparison of the health systems in Germany and GB. Here is a list of some further IRP titles:

- Ein Vergleich zwischen dem Fremdsprachenunterricht in deutschen und walisischen Primarschulen.
- Wie effektiv ist Angela Merkel als Kanzlerin?
- Inwiefern gibt es noch Unterschiede zwischen den alten und den neuen Bundesländern?
- Wie hat der Flüchtlingsstrom nach Deutschland das Land verändert?
- Inwiefern ist die Sendung „Germany’s top model“ schädlich für junge Zuschauerinnen?
- Wieso gibt es keine Star-Architekten in Deutschland?
- Wie hat sich die Einstellung und die Gesetzgebung in Bezug auf Homosexuelle in Deutschland verändert?

Candidates who had a personal interest in their chosen topic usually fared better than others as they very successfully argued their points and backed them up by AO4 evidence. 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 very general titles such as *Traditionelles Essen in Deutschland*. A number of candidates had learnt by heart big chunks of information relating to their chosen topic and were very keen to present those during the discussion. It is understandable that the candidates are keen to present everything they have researched into, but they still need to interact with the examiner. The accuracy marks in the discussion section were relatively low for a number of candidates, who obviously lacked oral practice. In order to improve their performance candidates could try 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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#### A2 UNIT 4: LISTENING, READING AND TRANSLATION

It was the first year of this unit 4 exam which proved to be quite challenging for a high number of candidates for two major reasons: They had to complete three listening exercises, three reading exercises and a translation in just 1 hour and 45 minutes. Furthermore, a high number of candidates struggled with the cloze exercise in Question 4 and with the reading comprehension exercise in Question 6. Most marks were lost in these two exercises. The first listening exercise posed no major problems, and most candidates scored at least 7/10 marks.

#### Question 2

Answers to the second listening comprehension questions were either not precise enough or gave evidence of misunderstandings. In answer to the first question *Welche Rolle spielte Ungarn bei der Wende*, one candidate claimed that Hungary had built a wall and others just claimed that Hungary played an important rôle which, of course, is not specific enough. The same applies to question **g)** *Was haben die Alliierten gemacht, um ihre Interessen zu vertreten?* An answer such as *Sie sprachen miteinander* again was not specific enough as the Allies engaged in so-called 4-plus-2 negotiations that went beyond just talking to one another.

A fair number of candidates misunderstood the phrase *den Zusammenschluss der Bundesrepublik mit der DDR wenn nicht zu verhindern, so doch einigermaßen zu kontrollieren*, and therefore faced difficulties in answering question **d)** *Was wollten Frankreich und Großbritannien?* In this case, *einigermaßen* was frequently interpreted as *einige Maßnahmen*, which resulted in the inappropriate answer *einige Maßnahmen kontrollieren*. For question **f)** a number of candidates simply copied a sentence from the text or they stated: *Deutschland muss Hand in Hand gehen*, which in both cases resulted in a loss of marks.

**Question 3** was generally done well.

#### Question 4

The cloze procedure in this exercise is a format most candidates are not yet familiar with, and most candidates by far scored no more than 5 out of 15 points. One candidate even noted on his exam paper that he had not been given a text to work with. The majority of candidates failed to realise that the West-German Sabine talks to the East German Maria about the situation before and after the Fall of the Wall whilst they are travelling from West Germany to East Germany. In their attempt to fill the gaps, a number of candidates simply inserted any word they came across in order to possibly score some points by sheer fluke. Even if the candidates had not comprehended the text their common sense should have guided them and made them realise that statements such as *Gefängnis doch einfach ein* or *Weißt du überhaupt, dass wir keine eigenen Grenzen hatten?* or *Es sieht doch so aus, als ob die Wessis endgültig fallen werden* do not make any sense.

Candidates need to learn to read through the whole text to get an overall impression of the content and/or the main characters, and to identify clues which help them to find the correct word for the gap fill.

**Question 5:**

The first part was generally done well, candidates found it easy to identify synonyms in the text. The second and the third part again caused no problems.

**Question 6:**

There was a high amount of gaps in the answers to the reading comprehension questions for a number of candidates who found the text very demanding and could not cope with the complex ideas of the text. There was a tendency for candidates to confuse the problems in Neukölln with the causes for these problems. *Gewalt und Radikalisierung* are problems in Neukölln, but they cannot be seen as the causes of the problem. The better candidates managed to identify as causes of these problems a lack of education and insufficient knowledge of the German language on the one hand or a lack of job prospects on the other. In answer to question **g)** *Was muss Seyran Ates Meinung nach passieren, um ein friedliches multikulturelles Zusammenleben zu ermöglichen?* a number of candidates wrote *Menschen müssen unabhängig von ihrer Kultur sein*. In this context, however, *unabhängig von ihrer Kultur* implied that irrespective of their culture people have to obey common rules.

**Question 7**

In this translation exercise, lack of vocabulary plus lack of grammatical knowledge led to a loss of marks in many cases. The following vocabulary items were not known: *einladen, Angriffe, Verbrechen, Politik, verbunden, Bevölkerung, ethnische Minderheitsgruppen, Außenseiter* and *umziehen*. A number of word order mistakes occurred, and a high number of candidates did not know common past participles such as *gezogen* or *eingeladen*. Only very few candidates managed to produce a correct German passive structure when translating *Ethnic minorities are sometimes seen as outsiders in modern society*.

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#### A2 UNIT 5: CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL RESPONSE IN WRITING

This is the first year of this unit 5 exam, but the format is similar to the literature option of the legacy exam, the only difference being the reduced number of texts from nine to four. By far the most popular text proved to be *Zweier ohne*, 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 essays were completed on Brecht's *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan* and Lenz' *Fundbüro*.

In response to essay title a) for *Zweier ohne*, a number of candidates successfully analysed Ludwig's positive and negative influence on Johann. They pointed out that Ludwig answered to Johann's need for a friend, helped him to lose his fear of death and offered him the chance to have a first positive sexual relationship with a girl. But the candidates were also aware of the fact that Ludwig had more or less total control of Johann's life and his relationship with others. Several candidates argued successfully that Johann still had some independence as he continued his relationship with Vera even though he knew that Ludwig was opposed to it. The candidates did, however, take note of the fact that Johann kept his relationship a secret and that he only met with Vera at night and in places where Ludwig was unlikely to find them. The better candidates demonstrated that Ludwig's influence went beyond his death and that even then Johann was not free of his friend's control.

Owing to a lack of linguistic competence, some candidates experienced difficulties in analysing the "Zwillingsgelübde", the motor bike incident or the fact that both boys had to keep the same weight prior to their boat race. The uninitiated reader would not have been able to understand some of the candidates' utterances, e.g. *Ludwig sagt, dass er der Motorrad fährt, wenn Ludwig fährt und die Polizei sieht. Johann würde preferieren, dass die Polizei mit ihm als Ludwig sagt.*

Word order problems were prevalent in various essays, and frequently English constructions could be found, e.g. *Am Anfang, wenn sie Zeit zusammen verbringen, Ludwig macht Johann auf der Brücke mit er zu steigen.* Often there was no differentiation between the relative pronoun *das* and the conjunction *dass*, e.g. *als Johann alles macht, dass Ludwig will.* As in previous years, personal pronouns and reflexive pronouns caused problems, e.g. *weil Ludwig mit sie schläft* or *In der Schule freundet Johann mit Marco an.* Separable verbs were not always identified, e.g. *und er abnimmt, und er zunimmt.*

Of the two questions on Dürrenmatt's play, 2a) was the most popular, i.e. *Das Stück „Die Physiker“ ist eine Tragikomödie. Welche Elemente im Stück findest du komisch und welche tragisch?*

The majority of candidates were able to exemplify the tragic and comic elements of the play quite well, giving a good amount of evidence from the text. One candidate argued convincingly that, even though the play was called a tragicomedy, he personally could not find any humorous aspects in the play.

Some candidates tried to incorporate their knowledge of Dürrenmatt's 21 points or the concept of "schlimmst mögliche Wende" into their essays but did not fully succeed in relating it to the topic.

Surprisingly there was a lack of vocabulary which directly related to this work of literature. A number of candidates referred to *das Spiel* instead of *das Drama*. The main characters were called *Physik* instead of *Physiker* e.g. *Aus diesem Grund glaubt er als einem Physik, dass Wissenschaft und die Menschheit wichtiger als seine einiger Glück*. Frequently *Tode*, *ermordet* or *Mörder* were not known even though those vocabulary items occur in the text.

At times candidates started complicated sentence structures which not only followed English structures but which were incomplete in that vital verbs or whole parts of the sentence were missing; for instance: *Weiterhin bin ich davon überzeugt, dass Möbius nicht seinen Sohn will, ein Physik zu werden, und wir sehen, dass als er "verbiete es dir"*. Candidates need to check their sentences carefully and need to be aware that English structures such as *he does not want him to be a physicist* have to be expressed as a subordinate clause in German *er möchte nicht, dass sein Sohn Physiker wird*.

Some utterances were fairly puzzling when read for the first time: *Sie sagen "Bon appetit" und zusammen essen, nach Arme gegenüber einander punkten haben*. *Arme* here stands for *Waffen* and *punkten* for *richten*. In some cases, insufficient linguistic competence frustrated the communication of ideas altogether, for example: *Wann entdeckt Einstein, dass Möbius hat seine Arbeit, dass könnte der Weltraum enden verbrannt, beschreibt es wie genug "wahnsinnig werden"*. There was strong evidence throughout that more than just a few candidates were trying to use sentences from sample essays they might have discussed in class, irrespective of whether or not those fitted the particular task in hand, but in the end they failed to even recall them correctly. The abundance of English sentence structure also suggests that a large proportion of discussions may have been conducted in English rather than German.



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