

OCR Report to Centres

June 2012

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this Report.

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A711/01/02 Listening

General Comments

The papers at both tiers appeared to be equivalent to those of last year in terms of difficulty. There were few very high marks at Foundation Tier, indicating that the majority of candidates at this tier were correctly entered. However, this did not appear to be the case at Higher Tier, where the number of low marks was higher than last year.

Overall, there was evidence of good preparation by teachers – candidates were very successful at answering objective questions based on a visual stimulus. However, it was obvious that questions which require candidates to answer in English, whether they involve selecting words from a list or producing short answers, cause problems for some candidates.

Candidates' handwriting continued to cause problems this year. It is disappointing when candidates lose marks by not writing their answers clearly. Should candidates need to change an answer and write it somewhere other than on the line provided, it helps if they put an arrow to the new answer or indicate it in some way. Candidates are not penalised for spelling mistakes in this paper, but they cannot be awarded marks if it is impossible for examiners to work out what they are intending to say.

It was good to note that candidates appeared to have taken notice of the comments made in previous reports regarding the need for careful reading of questions. This year, there were pleasingly few instances of candidates writing answers in the wrong language, though this did still happen on occasion.

Foundation Tier

General Comments

The paper achieved discrimination in the range of ability of candidates. Lower-achieving candidates were able to achieve success in the early exercises, while many candidates showed towards the end of the paper that this was as far as they ought to go.

Exercise 1: Questions 1–8

The majority of candidates scored full or nearly full marks in this exercise. However, there were a surprising number of wrong answers in Question 1, where candidates did not appear to know *ein Kaninchen*. There were also problems for some with *Viertel vor acht* in Question 3.

Exercise 2: Questions 9–16

In this exercise, the main problems appeared to come with questions 10, 12, 15 and 16. *Gar nichts* was not well known by many, nor was *Lohn*. Sometimes it was hard to tell which answer was a candidate's final attempt at the question. If they need to change a circled answer, they must make sure that they do so clearly. Sometimes it is better to wait until the second hearing of the recorded material before selecting an answer, as this reduces the number of changes to be made.

Exercise 3: Questions 17–24

This exercise was generally quite well done. Common mistakes were 'networks' for Question 18, 'borrow' for Question 20, 'text' for Question 22 and 'go to the cinema' for Question 23.

Exercises common to both tiers:

Exercise 4: Questions 25–32, Exercise 1: Questions 1–8

This exercise was suited to the majority of Higher Tier candidates, but Foundation Tier candidates had difficulty with it. Many managed to get a mark for Question 25/1, although some guessed 'white' for *weiss* or put 'shoes'. Question 26/2 was also relatively well done. Question 28/4 caused problems for some candidates, which indicated that *bequem* was unfamiliar to them. A surprising number of candidates found Question 29/5 difficult with *Taschengeld*, but Question 30/6 was well done by many – some incorrect answers referred to Jochen's doing chores around the house to make money. Question 31/7 caused problems for all but the highest achieving candidates, with very few knowing *etwas Besonderes*, and Question 32/8 proved to be similarly tricky – a common incorrect guess was that his Mum told him that he already looks good.

Exercise 5: Questions 33–40, Exercise 2: Questions 9–16

This exercise proved accessible to most candidates, possibly because of the format of the questions. The most difficult concept for candidates to deal with appeared to come in Question 37/13 with *war schon ... gewesen*. For Question 40/16, many heard *ins Kino* but did not get the 50 Euro which came later.

Higher Tier

Exercise 3: Questions 17–24

This exercise proved to be challenging for some candidates. For Question 17, incorrect guesses referred to 'bullying' and other types of bad behavior in school, while those who heard *soziale* incorrectly gave answers about 'socialising'. *Oberstufe* proved to be unfamiliar in Question 18. Question 19 was generally well done, but Question 20 caused some problems, there were answers referring to the need for pupils to work hard at school. Questions 21 and 22 were done better, but there were some incorrect answers for Question 23 – those who did answer correctly generally understood *die Kranken* rather than *die Obdachlosen*.

Exercise 4: Questions 25–28

Many candidates answered well and there were no items that caused particular difficulties.

Exercise 5: Questions 29–36

This was intentionally the most discriminating exercise. Some misunderstood the rubric and continued the sentence in the question. Question 29 was the best answered, and some understood *warnte mich* in Question 30. For Question 31, most candidates opted to put 'the colour' or 'the style', but Question 32 was well answered. In Question 33 *Pech* seemed to have caused difficulty; common guesses referred to Maria having to walk or catch a bus or train to the salon. Question 34 produced incorrect guesses along the lines of 'died it the wrong colour' or 'didn't cut enough off'. Question 35 proved to be challenging, with candidates often guessing at 'dull' or 'too light', 'too bright' and similar. Question 36 did, however, enable many candidates to finish off the paper in a positive way – lots of candidates were able to answer 'embarrassed'.

A712 Speaking

This is the second year of this new specification requiring Centres to conduct Controlled Assessment of Speaking, which is marked by Centres and moderated by OCR. On the whole, there have been improvements in all areas of the Controlled Assessment for German Speaking.

Administration

The majority of centres carried out the administration well. However, there was an increase in the number of clerical errors found in both Task 1 and in Task 2. Centres should ensure that:

- all arithmetic has been checked to avoid a delay in moderating
- the transfer of marks from the Working Mark Sheet (WMS) to the Centre Mark sheets (MS1s) is correct – the correct mark for the correct task.

Recordings were generally of good quality, and the paperwork with the WMS was generally accurate. Candidates' notes forms were nearly always attached, and most centres correctly included the Centre Authentication Form (CCS160) in the material sent to the moderator – only one CCS160 per centre is required. Teacher Information forms are not required, but should be kept in the centre until November. The MS1s (or a centre-generated substitute) for both tasks are needed and should be included with the material sent to the Moderator.

Centres using Component 01 uploaded their samples to the OCR Repository. It is possible to upload scans of WMS, Candidates' Notes Forms and CCS160 to the Repository under Administration, although many centres preferred to send these to the moderator by post with the MS1s.

Centres using Component 02 sent their recordings to their Moderator on CDs. Mp3 format is what OCR currently specifies. It is not necessary for there to be one CD per candidate.

Internal Moderation

Centres are responsible for ensuring that their candidates have a reliable order of merit. This means that internal moderation needs to be carried out. Many centres did this but a few were asked to re-examine their order of merit this year. Where this is the case, centres may need to review their internal procedures.

Candidate Performance

Candidates are asked to take part in a 4–6 minute interactive spoken activity. Please note that the format and topic can be chosen by them.

Notes Forms

These were generally present with the Working Mark Sheet. Most candidates had made good and honest use of these, keeping to the 40 word limit.

Timing

The 4–6 minutes is timed from the end of the teacher's announcement of the candidate. After 6 minutes, the teacher may complete a question which has been started, and allow the candidate a brief response. Beyond that point, no credit should be given. In some instances, recordings were very long; this is unfair to candidates and can result in the reduction of marks at moderation. If teachers have not begun to ask questions using a range of time frames, or opinions and justifications the upper bands of the mark scheme for Communication and Quality of Language are not available. Centres with this noted on the Report to Centre should review their examining technique.

Where candidates do a Presentation and Discussion, the Presentation should not exceed 2 minutes. Lengthy Presentations do not allow for spontaneity and candidates are unable to access the top bands for Communication if their task becomes a monologue. This should be reflected in the marking. The mark scheme specifically refers to unpredictable questions in Communication, and to get high marks, candidates need to be able to respond to them. Tasks short of the minimum of 4 minutes may be self-penalising in that candidates are not able to include a range of vocabulary and structures, including tenses, or fully answer the questions posed.

Tasks

In general, centres set appropriate and interesting tasks. There were some good Presentations and Discussions, Conversations and Interviews. Role plays needed to be carefully organised so that the candidate had enough to say to be able to access the top bands for Communication; giving additional information and responding fully to all questions. It is best if the teacher says relatively little and does not supply options to choose from unless the candidates are stuck.

Asking more open-ended questions will allow candidates the opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do and enable them to access higher marks for Communication and Quality of Language.

The mark for Pronunciation and Intonation is not limited by the amount of spoken material candidates produce. Common mistakes were the mispronunciation of *weil* as *wiel*, *viel* as *veil* and *mochte* for *möchte*. These are often used by candidates so it is important that they are pronounced correctly. Intonation can also be affected if candidates are too reliant on their notes and have not practised more difficult structures and phrases.

A713/01/02 Reading

General Comments

There was a range of performance on the Reading paper across both tiers. Most candidates seem to have been entered for the appropriate tier and to have dealt well with the tasks set. There seems to have been a shift in candidates from Foundation to Higher in the light of 2011's experience, showing that teachers have analysed results carefully. Successful candidates based their answers exactly on what they read rather than trying to apply common sense or existing knowledge to their answers.

Most candidates write upper case letters clearly in boxes when required. Two things are worth commenting on. Firstly, lower case letters, particularly c and e, h and k, are often indistinctly written. Upper case is simply safer. Secondly, where candidates change their mind, they should cross out the answer and write the correct answer next to the box to avoid confusion.

Comments on individual questions

Foundation Tier

Exercise 1

This exercise was intended to be straightforward. Most candidates gained full marks.

Question 1 was straightforward for most.

Question 2 'Footballer' was almost universally known.

Question 3 was often done well. However, those who didn't choose G (hospital) offered A (flowers) K (teacher) and D (clothes shop).

Question 4 was mostly done correctly, but F (factory), B (office) and A (flowers) were also seen.

Question 5 caused few problems, *Theater/theatre* making this straightforward.

Question 6 caused few problems. Some however chose D (clothes shop).

Question 7 was unproblematic for nearly all candidates.

Question 8 was clear to most, but a good number of candidates chose F (factory).

Exercise 2

This exercise tested the understanding of mainly sentence length statements. Most candidates gained full marks.

Question 9 *Geburtstag* was obviously well-known to nearly all.

Question 10 was unproblematic, with *schwimmen* well known.

Question 11 was a little more challenging, with lower-achieving candidates choosing A, which distracted because of *friends*.

Question 12 was often well done, but *Freunde* led some to choose A.

Question 13 required candidates to understand *Apfel* and *Saft*. Most did, with no noticeable pattern of incorrect answers.

Question 14 was straightforward, as most knew *tanzen*.

Question 15 appealed to those who love to shop – *einkaufen* is well known, it seems.

Question 16 was well done by most, who clearly knew *Großeltern*.

Exercise 3

This exercise began to discriminate. Successful candidates showed understanding of the German sentences and had read the questions carefully.

Question 17: Many correctly identified Paul. But Richard (*Lieblingsurlaub* perhaps misled), and, less explicably, Inge, Christian and Ali were all named as answers.

Question 18: Most candidates identified Ali's bedtime as *well before midnight*, but some chose Inge or Christian.

Question 19: Better candidates correctly chose Franziska. Joanna was tempting for some, but David, Christian and Inge were often chosen, suggesting that *spülen* is not universally known.

Question 20: Most spotted that *Klavier-Konzert* and *Mozart* pointed to classical music.

Question 21: Christian was chosen by a majority, but not a large majority. It seems *Meer* is not well-known.

Question 22: Most spotted that *meine Katze* was a pet and chose David.

Question 23: Joanna's lawn-mowing was identified by many.

Question 24: Nearly all candidates were able to associate winter sports with *Skifahren*.

Exercises common to both tiers

Exercise 4 (Exercise 1 in Higher Tier)

Many candidates did this exercise well.

Question 27/3 proved the easiest, with Question 28/4 the hardest, perhaps because a more intensive reading of Ulla's piece was required, including an understanding of *trotzdem*.

Question 26/2 also caused some difficulty, again because Ulla's piece needed careful perusal.

Questions 30–32/6–8 caused few problems to most, as school subjects and break-time activities are well-known.

Exercise 5 (Exercise 2 in Higher Tier)

This exercise discriminated very well. It is possible that the topic of environment is not as well-known as others, and the questions were phrased to require reading of the passage, not guesswork.

Question 33/9: Exact understanding of *Altstadt* was required to get a mark here. But various renderings such as town centre, old town, historic centre were allowed. *Town* on its own was not credited.

Question 34/10: While a majority of candidates identified that cars, vehicles and traffic were not to be found within the city walls, there was quite a bit of guesswork in evidence, involving football stadiums, airports and car parks, for example.

Question 35/11: Very many candidates could identify some form of shopping experience. *Market* was not credited.

Question 36/12: It was surprising that *Weinachtszeit* was not often correctly identified, with less than a quarter of Foundation Tier candidates getting the notion of Christmas. Some candidates went for 'night time'. Topic area 3 of the specification includes special occasions and festivals.

Question 37/13: The notion of public transport was not well known. It was decided to allow any form of public transport mentioned in the text and also to tolerate the mention of parks.

Question 38/14: Many candidates managed to recognise *flach*, but there were also lots of guesses.

Question 39a, 39b/15a, 15b: There were three possible answers, of which two were required in any order. These were: (i) walked (to school), (ii) disposed responsibly of chewing gum and (iii) put bottles in the bottle bank. Many candidates managed option (i), even if it was awkwardly expressed. For example: *goes by foot*. Some candidates could manage (ii), but there were those who thought that burgers were involved. Option (iii) caused lots of problems. *Flaschen* were rendered as 'flasks', *Container* was rendered as 'containers' rather than 'bottle bank'. Recycling on its own was not allowed.

Higher Tier

Exercise 3

This exercise was done well by many candidates. Most candidates circled their choice, but some wrote it in the space. Both methods were accepted.

Question 16: Nearly all candidates correctly chose *a short while*.

Question 17: Most candidates correctly chose the third option. However, others were tempted by the two uploading options.

Question 18: Most candidates chose at *his home*.

Question 19: A large majority gave the correct *careful*, but *no hurry* was chosen by some.

Question 20: Candidates found this question to be the most challenging in this exercise, although most still chose the correct *prove nothing*. Approximately a fifth of candidates chose either *are vital* or (less commonly) *are easy to get*.

Question 21: Most got *public*, but there were some who chose *local*.

Question 22: Only isolated candidates did not choose *introduce him to a parent*, and most of those favoured *insist a friend comes too*.

Question 23: Nearly every candidate chose the correct *refuse to meet him*, although a few candidates preferred *confide in a friend*, with only a handful choosing *report him to the police*.

Exercise 4

This exercise was intended to discriminate amongst high achieving candidates and did so effectively.

Question 24: This question was an easy starter question, depending on understanding *deutschsprachigen*. Most got it right, but there were those who thought one of *Belgian, Belgium, Flemish, Dutch* or *French* was appropriate. *Deutsch* was not allowed, as the rubric says: Answer the questions briefly IN ENGLISH.

Question 25: The required answer was that the owners enjoyed (i) *explaining or talking about their bike* or (ii) *showing off their bike*. *Meeting fans* was also tolerated. There were quite a lot of distracting elements which resulted in many incorrect answers. One was *am gestrigen Sonntag zum Marktplatz*, which led to answers about visiting the market or riding round the market. Another misunderstood word was *Krafträder*, which led to answers about trading and craft.

Question 26: The answer required was either (i) the top speed or (ii) the fuel consumption. *Höchstgeschwindigkeit* prompted lots of answers about wind and riding in bad conditions, and was not well known, even with the mark scheme being quite generous in rewarding any mention of speed. *Benzinverbrauch* was also not well understood. A lot of candidates simply guessed and asked about price, where to get a Harley-Davidson, how it was made, the petrol tank, and, despite the phrasing of the question, the Harley sound.

Question 27: A mention of *17 new models* was allowed. However, answers which talked about *model bikes* or *modelling* were not allowed.

Question 28: This question about the young man's attitude to the expensive bike required careful reading. Nearly all candidates agreed that 45 000€ was a lot of money for a bike. However, the young man added *es lohnt sich aber!* Only a minority of candidates gave a correct answer – *it was worth it*. There was interference from English with answers such as *I need a loan*, and educated guesses about saving up.

Question 29: The correct answer required the information that the (*Eupen*) *Harley day had made a name for itself*. However, answers along the lines of *Harley Davidson is a famous name* were not credited.

Question 30: Candidates spotted that the Eupen Harley-Davidson club only has 12 active members. However, there were a few who chose a different number beginning with *z*, for example *2* or *20*. Answers referring to *managers* or *club presidents* were incorrect.

Question 31: This question allowed one of three responses: (i) it was noisy, (ii) it was unforgettable / amazing / astonishing or (iii) it was done on a 450 kg (heavy) machine. *Noisy* was the least commonly seen, and there were some who were led astray by *Lärm* to talk about *alarms* or *alarming*. *Unforgettable* was the most frequently seen answer. There were correct answers about the use of a *450 kg bike* for the acrobatics. However there were those who erroneously understood that *Rüdiger Weiß weighed 450 kg* (about 90 stone), or that *he could lift 450 kg* or even that *he could eat 450 kg*.

Despite the difficulties outlined above, a good number of candidates demonstrated considerable skill at picking out the known and ignoring the unknown.

Exercise 5

This exercise is intended to differentiate between the good and very highest achieving candidates, and seems to have done so.

Question 32: With this exercise the text and the questions need to be read very carefully. Those who spotted *Später hat Alexandra...* would find the correct answer *gut gefunden*.

Question 33: For this question, the word *Süßigkeiten* in the question should have directed candidates to *etwas Süßes* and *ab und zu* just in front of it. The nearest synonym in the options was B, *manchmal*.

Question 34: In this question, candidates had to infer when she might allow herself a *Belohnungsgeschenk*. This was C.

Question 35: The correct answer depended on the synonyms *angerufen* and *telefoniert*, assisted by the heading *Richtigen Hunger? Was anderes machen!* However option B was a tempting distracter, but wrong when the text is checked.

Question 36: The whole of the paragraph about the fun of trying foodstuffs she did not previously know needed to be understood to decide that B, *toll* was the right answer.

Question 37: Clearly candidates' own experience of cycling in the rain coloured their answers. There is no mention of rain in the text, but there is mention of burning extra calories, which points towards losing weight.

Question 38: More candidates got this question right than any of the others– she bought only *was auf ihrer Liste war*. Those who got it wrong often went for *was frisch aussah*, but this was not mentioned in the text.

Question 39: This one was difficult, and there were numbers of candidates who got every question except this one right. There were distracters in the text for the incorrect options, such as *Fernseher / Lieblingsprogramm* and *Zeitung / Nachrichten*. However the pairing of *Abendessen* with *Gericht* was probably found difficult by many. The Vocabulary List has *das Gericht* as a Foundation Tier word.

Conclusion

These Reading papers had something in every exercise that most candidates could do but they were still appropriately challenging. At the end of Higher Tier, the absence of having to write in German helped many candidates demonstrate pure reading comprehension.

It was noticeable that fewer candidates than expected knew the less frequent vocabulary from the Vocabulary List, perhaps because of concentration on a limited number of topics for Writing and Speaking Controlled Assessment.

A714 Writing

General Comments

There was some excellent candidate work this year, the best of it convincingly personalized and detailed in its content, and original in its development and ideas. Such work was not overlong and certainly not in excess of 400 words. Differentiation of task topic and teachers making suggestions that allow their candidates free rein according to their differing interests and abilities undeniably produces the best written work seen at GCSE in this language. It can sometimes be difficult for teachers to hand such control to their pupils, and in some centres it was clear that greater differentiation of tasks would have benefited more candidates. It is acknowledged that this may be more time-consuming, but hoped that informed experience will lead to wider recognition of its potential for the individual.

Approach to Tasks

The *Purpose* requirement caused few problems, with a 'Report' or an 'Article' being the most common option. 'Narration', 'Blog' and 'Competition Entry' are not different in format, though they should involve some change of style and emphasis, and there were fewer 'Letters' and 'Emails'. It would be a pity if pupils no longer practised how to address different recipients in writing. A 'Brochure', normally visually more creative, is less suitable for completion within the prescribed 60 minutes; as such creativity cannot be assessed in this Writing unit. An 'Interview' can reduce a candidate's scope to develop content, and so to access the higher mark bands, if the format is that of short answers to many questions.

Preferred topics this year again tended to be the more conventional ones of *Schule, Urlaub, Freizeit, Arbeit* and *Familie*, or less frequently *Stadt* or *Wohnort*. Tasks on *Arbeit* or *Arbeitspraktikum* provide good scope for individuality, and a number of candidates clearly benefited from some less usual work experience opportunities and the opportunity to extend their vocabulary interestingly in writing about them. Such items made for very good reading in their authenticity. Other items on this topic were sometimes less convincing, and appeared to draw significantly on course-book scenarios of work experience in a *Grundschule* or *Büro*. These items tended to be more stilted and formulaic.

The *Umwelt* topic was often well done, but there is an attendant risk for candidates to regurgitate course book material, sometimes without understanding ideas and concerns on pollution and the environment or the subtleties of the relevant vocabulary and structures. The outcome is often loss of 'effectiveness' in the Communication mark, as well as muddled or repetitive sequences relying heavily on *man sollte*, and *...weil es gut für die Umwelt ist*. Differentiation of task according to ability is evidently essential for this topic: whilst lower-achieving candidates struggled – often at inappropriate length – with the specialist vocabulary and manipulation of ideas, mastery of specialist vocabulary and phrases did not necessarily lead to a convincingly individual and coherent piece of writing.

Tasks on *Gesundes Leben* often had a repetitive style and content. There was much repeated use of *ich esse ... weil es gut für die Gesundheit ist* and most candidates were able to produce *um gesund zu sein / bleiben* in this context, often doing so many times throughout the item. Lists of food and drink judged as healthy or unhealthy according to this format were usually presented, coupled with *ich spiele...*, followed by *ich sollte...* which were then justified by exactly the same structures. Many candidates found it difficult to go beyond basic ideas and show originality.

Some tasks set as film or book reviews can prove rewarding, but GCSE candidates tend to struggle with appropriate idiomatic language and structures. Content can also be demanding, if it is to go beyond simple description of characters and personal opinions of them.

More able candidates write more effectively on tasks that are less prescribed. An outline situation without further direction, allows a candidate to use initiative as to content and delivery, whereas even the highest-achieving candidates will tend to follow a sequence of suggestions, if they assume these to be recommended, and then find themselves constrained by ideas that they have not made their own. Lower-achieving candidates undoubtedly need some guidance for content, but here too ideas and views are best first elicited and shared in class, so that candidates are helped to form their own opinions and points of view. This approach may help to reduce simple repetition of structures and justifications for their own sake, such as *ich gehe ins Kino, um einen Film zu sehen*, which are merely grammatical. At all levels of ability the processing and organisation of the final response should be the candidate's own, and teachers are reminded that giving candidates set phrases and specific structures for inclusion is contrary to regulations. There was some infringement of this rule this year. Teachers are reminded that they must be able to authenticate work as the candidate's own and insist on acknowledgement and referencing of any sources used.

Where various suggestions on task content are constructed for candidates, it is perhaps worth a reminder that demonstration of tense competence for its own sake is not necessary. Evidence of three tenses or time-frames is no longer a requirement for the C grade in this new specification – see *Grade Descriptions*. Many ideas for development of a narrative task will quite likely lead a candidate naturally to thoughts of past and future, but it is important for effectiveness of Communication to focus first on relevance and development. Separate paragraphs simply to demonstrate tense ability can undermine the wholeness of the item, and candidates pursuing higher marks in particular should focus on coherence in the progression of their writing. What appears to be random material cannot receive Communication credit. However, connecting phrases and adverbial links, which logically justify a new direction of content, help to enhance clarity and coherence, and consequently overall impression. Candidates should be able to draw on what they are taught in their English literacy lessons in this respect. From a Language Quality viewpoint, paragraphs focussing simply on tense, risk becoming list-like.

Quality of Language

Assessors can only assess what candidates write, and cannot guess, assume or work out what they might have meant. The absence of *Umlaut* on *würde, könnte, möchte, schön* etc undeniably sounds different and also changes meaning. Similarly, mis-spellings *blieben* for *bleiben*, *Riese* for *Reise*, etc and, for example, *denn, den* and *dann* are quite different and alter meaning significantly.

Candidates should also pay attention to punctuation, as a misplaced full-stop can easily spoil a structural sequence. The subordinate conjunction *obwohl*, for example, is often delivered as a stand-alone main clause, being misused for 'though' in the sense of 'but'. *Doch, aber, trotzdem* are in fact required.

The adjectives *spannend* and *entspannend* remain popular opinions, but seem often to be confused, or used illogically without explanation – eg: *ich liebe es am Strand zu liegen, weil es spannend ist*. Frequently seen also was so in its English sense of 'therefore' in place of *also, daher* or a *denn / weil* clause.

As seen in previous years, access to a dictionary remains of little help to those candidates who rely on it as a first resource on the day. If the candidate cannot identify different parts of speech, such as nouns as opposed to adjectives, the dictionary is of no benefit – example: *Die Lehrer sind Jahrmarkt* (fair). The dictionary is best utilized as a double-check facility, eg: for spelling, gender or case requirement.

Many candidates offered a wide variety of interesting and effective vocabulary and idiomatic sequences. Simple adverbs, such as *außerdem, immerhin, dafür, trotzdem, zwar, daher, deswegen, infolgedessen, auf jeden Fall* etc and numerous adverbial phrases were often used to good effect, and their value as particularly useful connectives was well appreciated by a fair number of candidates. Further explanatory idioms such as *das liegt / lag daran, dass...; aus diesem Grund...; im Vergleich / im Gegensatz zu* etc offered good variation from the routine *weil* and *obwohl*, which were again relied upon by some candidates, especially with *ist* and *war*. There was some over-emphasis on these and other routine subordinate conjunctions, notably *dass...(ist / war)* and *wenn...(ist / war)*, possibly for their word order requirement, but without regard for coherence and effect. Other more fundamental grammatical features, such as correct case usage, with and without prepositions would have benefited from more attention. The different meanings of different case usage with those prepositions which can take both accusative and dative cases needs careful attention as does the inversion rule in German.

Administration

Most centres submitted the required paperwork for candidates without problem by the requisite 15th May submission date. In a few cases, completed Coversheets were omitted, and occasionally candidate scripts were not collated. It is most helpful if each candidate's scripts, together with the relevant Notes forms, and topped with the Coversheet, can be attached in the sequence indicated with treasury tags. Plastic wallets keep candidates' work separate, but are less easy to manipulate. Paperclips invariably attach themselves to other papers as well.

Some teachers included Teacher Information forms with suggested task details, but this is not necessary. (Some of those sent did show task details in German, when they are required to be in English in the interests of fairness to all candidates.) The Candidate Notes forms, however, even if not used by the candidate, are a submission requirement, and must be signed and dated by the candidate. These may show a maximum of 40 words over 5 bullet points, without pictures or any form of code, and teachers are required to check that these rules have been correctly observed. Crossings-out, if still legible, must be included in these 40 words. The signing of the Centre Authentication Form (CCS160) is a confirmation of compliance with these and all Controlled Assessment regulations. Some candidates included English words or translated items, and whilst this is not prohibited, it is not the intended purpose of this Notes form.

It is good practice for candidates to include word counts, although there was slightly less tendency to do so this year. There were also fewer items of excessive length. Given that the writing-up time is 60 minutes only, candidates are best advised to focus on quality rather than quantity, and to leave themselves time to check their work through carefully. The published recommended lengths of 100–175 words (x 2) and 200–300 words (x 2) for G-D grade and C-A* grade targets should be re-emphasized to pupils.

There was a tendency this year to omit the Centre Authentication form (CCS160) from the script package, and teachers are reminded that this completed form is a primary requirement. A separate form is necessary for the Speaking Unit. Without it, an entry's marks will not be released. The OCR Attendance Register, which should also be included with the scripts, allows the assessor to check that all candidates' work has been sent.

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