

Examiners' Reports

January 2011

HX76/R/11J

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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.

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Advanced GCE German (H476)

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F711: Speaking

General Comments

Role Play

Candidates were successful on this task when they:

- conveyed as many points as possible from the stimulus material
- were able to give details
- were asked for more details or encouraged to give any missing details by the teacher/examiner
- were able to change the initial two statements into appropriate questions
- were able to use initiative and give imaginative responses to the two final questions
- used a range of complex sentence structures and a range of vocabulary

Timing is important and if a role play is too short, then candidates are unlikely to get high marks. Also important to note is that assessment in the role play stops after six minutes.

Comments on Individual Questions

Role play A: Berchtesgaden

Many candidates expressed the ideas in the first paragraph well. Reactions to the section on Schöngau varied: picturesque, lovely, why not relax and if you're energetic were sometimes omitted. Some candidates had to be prompted to convey the idea of the mountain walks being guided. In the section on excursions, there was some difficulty in expressing: at the top of a mountain, Munich, Bavaria and capital. Much of the final section on accommodation was done well, although the final sentence was not always included.

Role play B: Missenden Abbey Summer School

Candidates made good attempts to convey the information from the stimulus material. Items not included were: specialise, develop your creativity and potential.

Role play C: Transport in London

Candidates did this role play well when they conveyed all the details of each section. Some details were surprisingly omitted, for example the savings at top attractions where a friend can get in free.

Topic discussion

Most candidates were well prepared for this part of the test and most discussions correctly lasted 9-10 minutes. There were many interesting discussions about Germany or a German speaking country on topics that relate to the AS topics/sub-topics in the specification.

It is important that candidates are given the opportunity to produce spontaneous language and that teacher/examiners react to and challenge what is being said. Many teacher/examiners challenged well and made the conversations genuine and interesting. The best discussions are those where spontaneous interchange takes place with constant to and fro.

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There was variable quality of language; some candidates showed an ability to manipulate ambitious structures and language effectively; some had difficulty with correct word order in subordinate clauses, verb second idea and subject/verb agreement.

Most recordings were sent on CDs and were of good quality. On a small number of CDs the recording had not been fixed and could not be heard.

F712: German: Listening, Reading and Writing 1

General Comments:

The paper gave plenty of opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of German and produced a full range of marks. Most candidates were able to express their ideas fluently.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A – Listening and Writing

- Q1** The majority of candidates achieved most of the available marks.
- Q2** This task discriminated successfully and was a good predictor of performance for the paper as a whole. The gaps most often correctly identified were (f) *identifiziert*, (g) *anonym* and (h) *illegal*.
- Q3** This task with questions in English is generally well done. The context was food and country walks. Not all candidates understood *Wanderwege*: both comprehension of the term and finding a successful English way of expressing it in (a) but a number of different expressions were accepted. In (e) comprehension of *zeigen* was necessary to the answer. In (f) it was necessary to understand *ein Gericht* to get the idea of eating during the breaks. In (h) (i) it was necessary to include 'in summer' to get the mark.
- Q4** In this writing task candidates are required to communicate the message; a word for word translation is not necessary. Many candidates were successful in communicating all the elements of the task. Sometimes candidates omitted *programme* or *holiday* and lost some marks. Similarly, if no attempt was made to write *Koch* instead of *chef* and *Black Forest* was written in English, no mark was awarded. Vocabulary for this task is often in the previous listening task and candidates can practise the technique of transferring and reusing words and phrases. There were some good ways of expressing 'excursion': *Angebot* and *Wanderung* for example. Higher marks were awarded for Quality of Language when word order, verb endings and agreements were correct.
- Q5** Careful reading of the text and the question were required to get all the marks for this task.
- Q6** The text for this task was in the first person so it was necessary for candidates to manipulate language to answer the questions to get marks for Quality of Language. Candidates are not expected to find synonyms. In (a) there was an opportunity to make the case change, *In einem Wirtshaus* and get credit for Quality of Language. In (c) candidates could have used the preposition *seit*. In (e) *ob* was needed. In (f), *er isst* was a good response. Manipulation of *schmeckt mir* in (g) can be challenging but candidates who wrote *er mag die Wurst / er findet die Wurst gut* showed not only comprehension but also an ability to express their answer in their own language accurately.
- Q7 (a)** Candidates who did well here gave a response based on the text. Some candidates incorrectly used their own ideas. If candidates are tempted to use *ich glaube* or any opinion phrase in this part of **the task**, they should review and change what they have written in order to make sure that they are doing what the question requires.

The facts about magazine sales were understood, as was the suggestion that girls read more than boys and that the press will have to move over to the internet but there was some confusion about *Klatsch und Tratsch*.

- (b) Successful answers to this question stated the various ways of getting news, mentioned the advantages and disadvantages of each medium and gave the candidate's preference. There were lots of points and interesting views. Candidates must make points that are relevant to the topic, in order to get marks both on Grid J and Grids C.2 and F.2.

Most candidates used a good range of vocabulary and structures to express their ideas. There was some confusion between *Zeitungen* and *Nachrichten*, and between *Zeitungen* and *Zeitschriften*. Many wrote fluently and also made successful attempts at humour. In some instances candidates lost marks for Accuracy because there were basic errors in agreements, commonly used verbs, plural forms and also inaccurate spelling. Some sentence introductions worked better than others: *Meiner Meinung nach ...* provides a nice variety of word order and can support the most modest of ideas. Phrases like *Es ist nicht zu leugnen, dass ...* set up expectations of sophisticated notions that candidates do not always achieve.

F714: Listening, Reading and Writing 2

General Comments:

The entry was relatively small. Some candidates performed very well, but there was evidence that a number of candidates were not quite ready to take the paper. The four or five months of teaching still to come in Year 13 before the June paper will, hopefully, give these candidates the boost they need.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A: Listening and Writing

Task 1 The benefits of a one euro job

All candidates completed this task and there was a wide range of marks. In (a) candidates were successful when they conveyed the complete concept of 'Arbeitslosengeld'. In (b) heating and health were generally understood, but not 'Versicherung'. A number of candidates seemed not to take notice of "apart from the money" in the question and gave the money as their answer. In (c), the final point was a 'stretch and challenge' item, necessitating comprehension of 'vor Eindringlingen beschützen'. Questions (e) and (f) appeared to be fair, with many candidates answering correctly.

Task 2 Gespräch mit Aysa

Most candidates grasped the general sense of the text and were able to note many of the details. The interview was in the first person and candidates needed to answer by changing it to the third person, which most managed to do, and successfully used 'ihr'. Some marks were lost for incorrect transcription. For example in (a) 'wählen' sometimes appeared as 'vellen' or 'fehlen'; 'wehlen' and was not accepted for comprehension. Short and straightforward answers were required, e.g. 'die Einbürgerungsfeier' for (f), which also showed manipulation of language in changing the 'zur' to 'die'. Candidates should, however, be aware that their answers can be too brief and that they should not simply be in note form. For (h), the question 'Warum' required an answer beginning with 'weil' and not simply 'Mutter musste auf kleinen Bruder aufpassen'. The quality of language mark was affected if answers were not syntactically correct. Most of the questions appeared to have been understood, with the exception of (k) which began with 'Womit...?' and (m) where 'geheim halten' was not always known.

Section B: Reading and Writing

Text 1 Wird Europa auch Afrikas Sonne genießen?

Task 3

This was a nonverbal task, completed by all. Many obtained full marks.

Task 4

This produced a mixed response. For marks to be gained candidates needed to read the text carefully and manipulate the language to make the sentences read correctly. For (c) and (d), for example, the past participle was required to make the sentence passive; otherwise the meaning was different.

Task 5

The questions worked well and candidates gained full or almost full marks.

When candidates did not get all the marks it was because they did not mention essential points, e.g. for (a)(ii) it was necessary to say that it was too expensive for African countries.

Text 2 Der Letzte Gefangene der DDR

Task 6

This task discriminated well. 'Vor' was needed for (a). For (b) 'zum politischen Gefangen' did not gain the mark. 'Bespitzelung' and 'Isolation' needed to be changed from nouns to verbs. Questions (e) and (f) were answered correctly; candidates correctly identified and lifted the correct words from the text.

Task 7

Items that caused difficulty were: 'ist...angekommen'; 'Verkäuferin' (sometimes conveyed as shopkeeper); 'nun' (often ignored); 'Chef' (sometimes translated as chef); 'Unternehmen' (undertakers); 'Staat' (town); 'Musterbürgern'; 'bot'; 'Vorort'; 'Reise'; 'Erlaubnis'; 'Ausland'. Candidates seemed not to have knowledge of basic vocabulary and may have benefitted from more practice on this type of task.

Task 8

Many candidates answered the more straightforward questions correctly. Question(c) required careful reading in order to produce the correct answer. There was some difficulty with (e), possibly because the verb 'betrügen' was unfamiliar. Question (g) required real understanding of events, and it was encouraging to see that many candidates followed the story at this point. The question 'wohin?' in (h) was not always understood.

Task 9

In this task, if candidates had understood the word, then the language used was usually good enough to convey the meaning. The quality of language here influences the total quality of language mark across this section.

Section C: Writing

It was encouraging to find that most candidates read and responded to their chosen essay title and wrote within the recommended word count. Candidates chose most often questions 10, 11, 12, 15 and 17.

Q 10

There was no correct or expected answer to the question and it was intended to give candidates the chance to write about what they knew and had studied, be it children living in poverty, children with disabilities, children of migrants, etc.

Q 11

Most responses were structured as a letter. Some were descriptive and could not gain marks for analysis.

Q 12

Many candidates managed to address both parts of the question and were able to structure their argument convincingly. In some instances, lack of knowledge about Germany prevented candidates from achieving marks on Grid N.

Q 15

For candidates to answer this question well they needed to have some specific knowledge about the current legal situation in Germany. A small number of candidates wrote a discursive essay giving the arguments for and against 'Sterbehilfe', which was not required.

Q 17

Candidates who chose this question showed good knowledge of the subject and there were several outstanding essays.

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