

GCE

German

Advanced GCE **A2 H476**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS H076**

OCR Report to Centres June 2016

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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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F711 Speaking

General Comments:

Many teacher/examiners conducted the speaking tests correctly, establishing a warm, friendly atmosphere and being well-prepared. Most timings were good for both parts of the examination, and the Randomisation sequence on page 2 of the Teacher/Examiner booklet was adhered to. Many used the OCR Repository to upload recordings and in some cases the paper documentation too. Centres are reminded that markers should receive a Working Mark Sheet and Oral Topic Form for every candidate, topped and tailed, for both the 01 (Repository) and 02 (CD) routes, together with the Attendance Register.

Role-Play

Markers concluded that the four role-plays set this series were accessible and of equal difficulty, each one being designed to have easier and harder elements for candidates to convey. Many candidates, now familiar with the format, conveyed the stimulus material enthusiastically. Grid A is marked according to the Key Points issued with the Mark Scheme. Candidates should try to convey all the details in the stimulus material and not just summarise the text in broad terms. A minority of candidates seemed unaware of this and offered little detail. Some had written out translations and simply read out what they had written in the preparation stage. Teachers should strongly discourage this, as it sounds contrived and tends to lower the mark on Grid B (Response to Examiner). The best responses to the final two bullet points were where candidates demonstrated ability to develop their ideas creatively and with imagination.

As in previous series, role-plays were most effective when

- teacher/examiners had a thorough knowledge of the Examiner's Sheet and the Candidate's Sheet
- teacher/examiners encouraged candidates to supply information from the stimulus material by using open questions
- teacher/examiners did not supply the information which candidates were intended to supply (thereby limiting marks available on Grid A)
- teacher/examiners listened carefully and elicited further information, if they became aware that candidates had omitted parts of the stimulus material
- teacher/examiners reacted to candidate responses and suggested further stimuli designed to extract more information
- teacher/examiners used the correct form of address
- teacher/examiners followed up the final two bullet point questions with extra questions, giving candidates the opportunity to be inventive and imaginative
- candidates changed the word order and/or verb ending in the initial two questions
- candidates conveyed the stimulus material systematically and chronologically
- candidates took the initiative and used their imagination to be inventive
- candidates did not at any time read out notes written in the preparation stage
- candidates reacted spontaneously to questions.

There were some very impressive performances, but some potentially strong candidates did not convey all the details, at times because they were not given the opportunity to do so. The best teacher/examiners managed to elicit details even from weak candidates. Centres should also be aware that the final two bullet points are an opportunity for candidates to be linguistically creative and engage with the teacher/examiner imaginatively. This may very well happen during the course of the role-play itself, not necessarily only at the end.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Role-play A: DAB

Most candidates responded reasonably well to this stimulus promoting the value of a DAB radio, although the pronunciation of DAB proved to be variable. The two initial questions caused few difficulties. Those who supplied the details scored highly on Grid A, which is marked according to the 15 Key Points. Many centres are now aware that a brief summary of the text will not suffice to gain high marks on this grid. Successful candidates were able to convey information from the text such as: listening enjoyable / one-off cost / find your favourites by name / new stations added all the time / nearest department store or specialist shop / your pocket and your lifestyle. The final two bullet points were accessible to all and allowed candidates to respond to questions asking whether candidates liked listening to radio and whether they preferred television.

Role-play B: SciQuest

This brochure on a science visitor attraction proved to be accessible to all. The initial two questions were asked successfully in almost all cases. Candidates who performed well provided details such as: for all ages / for primary and secondary pupils / in action / open door to world of science / in everyday life / help and advice from experts / learning by doing / what not to do with household objects. The final two extension bullet points, asking whether the candidate would like to come along as well and the best way to learn, provoked a range of responses: many were open-minded and saw science as vital and interesting. A few rejected science as irrelevant to them.

Role-play C: Bonfire Night

This role-play on an English tradition proved to be very accessible. The initial two questions setting the scene caused no problems. As with all role-plays, some teacher/examiners recognised that candidates had omitted some details and by skilful questioning were able to encourage them to provide these details. This enabled access to higher marks on Grid A, as long, of course, as the teacher/examiner did not convey the information required first. Successful candidates were able to express: celebrated / 1605 / tried to destroy Parliament / have burnt / figure of Guy Fawkes / unusual tradition / in old clothes / 20th century / good causes. The expression “used for good causes” may have been seen by candidates as a difficult item to convey, but the half mark was awarded to candidates if they were able to give an example of such a good cause. The final bullet points, asking candidates whether they personally celebrated Bonfire Night and what tradition they regarded as the most important, elicited a range of responses. Many gave good personal input and reasons for this. Weaker candidates simply repeated what they had said earlier about Bonfire Night.

Role-play D: E-Bikes

The Randomisation sequence means that role-play D was the least used of all the role-plays, but most candidates given it tackled it with enthusiasm. The two initial questions posed few difficulties, although the use of *du* rather than *Sie* varied dramatically, even though *Sie* was given in the examiner introductory statement as a help. Well-performing candidates supplied details such as: batteries / getting more popular / number has risen / many manufactured / if hills / don't have to do all the work / hire / try out / excellent condition. As with other role-plays, expressing numbers correctly caused some difficulties at times. Good teacher/examiners questioned erroneous years (e.g. *achtzehntausend*...? for 1895), which gave the candidates an opportunity to correct wrong details. The final bullet points, asking for personal reactions to E-bikes and the best means of transport on holiday, proved to be no problem and offered candidates the opportunity to speak freely.

Topic Discussion

Centres are now aware that it is a requirement of the specification that topics must relate to the AS topic list, and it is pleasing to report that almost all topics offered by candidates this series were deemed to be appropriate. Discussions ranged, as in other series, from the extremely impressive at one extreme to the decidedly weak at the other. The majority of candidates had prepared themselves very well for this part of the examination, and many successful and interesting conversations took place. The most successful discussions are the ones where teacher/examiners and candidates interact spontaneously. Some candidates were over-prepared and delivered a series of mini-monologues. Good teacher/examiners were able to prevent this by intervening at random points and challenging candidates' statements, which allowed access to the higher marks on Grid E1. The best candidates were able to expand on their topics very well and had a wide range of opinions. Some topics, particularly those with a high factual content but with limited scope for development of ideas/opinions, can result in marks being restricted on Grid D. Candidates should be encouraged to select a topic which is relevant to a German-speaking country, which interests them, and which they can research in depth. The headings on the Oral Topic Form are not intended to be a mini-essay but provide some simple structure to the discussion. In consequence, they should be brief. Also, topics should not be too wide-ranging, as they then lack depth.

Grid D (Ideas, Opinions, Relevance) awards a maximum of ten marks for the ability to convey ideas and opinions, supported by factual information referring to a German-speaking country. Long lists of factual or statistical information, however, are not interesting in themselves, and are considerably less important than developing analysis of them. Candidates with the ability to converse at a high level and with personal views on the issues can score high marks on this grid.

Grid E1 (Fluency, Spontaneity, Responsiveness) has a maximum of ten marks for the ability to use German naturally, fluently and genuinely spontaneously. Those candidates who are in charge of the conversation, i.e. those who can keep the momentum going, are likely to achieve a mark of at least 7-8. The headings outlined on the Oral Topic Form should be followed in chronological order. Candidates are not penalised if a heading is omitted, as long as the conversation has been successful. The recommended length of the discussion is nine to ten minutes. Centres should be aware that overlong discussions do not bring candidates any advantages, as assessment ceases after ten minutes.

Spontaneity is vital. One of the many roles of teacher/examiners is to react to statements made by candidates, to challenge these statements or ask for further clarification. Those candidates who can respond spontaneously and fluently to such interventions score highly on this grid. Good teacher/examiners encourage many genuine and spontaneous interchanges. These happen in a natural way when discussions have not been over-rehearsed. Contrived situations, where expected questions lead to expected answers, do not bring high rewards in this grid and at this level. Teacher/examiners are not expected to script their questions.

Grid C1 (Quality of language) awards up to 5 marks for a combination of accuracy and range. Candidates who mostly offer accurate basics but little ambitious language are restricted to a mark of 2/5. Those offering more ambitious structures in accurate German are rewarded with higher marks.

Grid G (Pronunciation and intonation) (5 marks) rewards candidates with good German pronunciation and intonation.

Recordings can be submitted in various formats, the preferred one being mp3, which is often excellent in terms of quality of audibility.

F712 Listening, Reading and Writing 1

General Comments:

This year's paper appeared more accessible to candidates than last year's although the outcomes were broadly similar. The paper differentiated well with a full range of marks (including full marks) with very few candidates below half marks. Candidates had been well prepared and there were few instances of candidates misinterpreting the rubric or failing to attempt questions. Candidates seemed to have had sufficient time to complete the paper.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A – Listening and Writing.

Q1 This task about a volley-ball player required candidates to select the correct answer out of a choice of three. It achieved its aim of providing a confidence-boosting introduction to the paper. There were no part questions which caused significant problems.

Q2 Parents and parental leave formed the topic of this listening task and candidates had to choose 10 correct statements from a list of 16. Most gained 7 or more marks. *Mitglied der Regierung* in (a) proved difficult.

Q3 This was a listening task on the topic of a school music competition with questions in English. Many candidates showed they had understood the text and scored high marks. Close attention to detail was needed and marks were lost by those who gave insufficient information. In (b), candidates had to refer to a "band" in at least one of the parts, and in (d), the title bestowed was for the "best school band". The second part of question (dii) differentiated well. *Publikum* in (e) seemed surprisingly unfamiliar and the comparative was often ignored. As a result, one of the answers to (f) was sometimes given in (e) and some candidates had difficulty finding enough points for (f). In (g) candidates understood the gist but were not able to produce "convince" or "win over".

Q4 Candidates were well prepared for the email and wrote confidently. As in previous years, the email referred back to Q3. English words ("Finals", "con/kon-gratulieren", "Effect", "Project") were not accepted but positive attempts to find a German word were (*erfolgreich* used as a noun for example). *Austauschprogramm* was a familiar idea to many candidates but quite a number used *Sendung*, a translation of "programme" but not correct here. "A mixed group of our older pupils" consisted of several elements and caused difficulty. "Still" and "if so" in the final task were often omitted with a loss of marks.

Most candidates had sufficient command of German to communicate the message. There was little mixing of *du* and *Sie* (either was acceptable) but there was confusion about how to express "your". Word order was generally sound but case endings and genders often seemed to be chosen at random and to change during the email.

Section B – Reading and Writing

Q5 This task consisted of two parts and was on the subject of Christmas markets. In the first part, candidates had to identify the person to whom the statement referred and write the correct letter. The task was well done with many candidates scoring full marks. In the second part, candidates had to pick a word from the text which was a synonym for the expression given. There were few instances of candidates choosing phrases. Many candidates gained full marks.

Q6 Candidates read a text about a man with HIV and answered questions in German to test their comprehension of the text. Most understood the gist of the passage and managed to manipulate the text to give the correct answers. A small number thought that *Erich* was female and were penalised once only.

In (a) *vor / für* were not accepted. (b), (c) and (d) were generally well answered although the past tense of *fallen* was often incorrectly formed. It was clear that candidates knew where to find the answer to (e) but not necessarily how to express it. *Praxis* caused some confusion when candidates understood it as “surgery”. (f) and (g) were answered well and there were few instances of candidates confusing *Vorteil* and *Nachteil*.

The last paragraph of the text was more difficult and the last four questions were less well answered. In (h i) *Berlin / dort* was required while in (h ii) the formation of a reflexive separable verb (*sich anstecken*) was problematic.

The Quality of Language was generally sufficient to convey the meaning, vocabulary was correctly selected from the text and most candidates successfully manipulated from the first person to the third person.

Q7a The two paragraphs about young people imagining their futures were well understood and summarised confidently. The marks were generally high. Candidates were comfortable transposing the first person into the third person. Marks were lost when details were ignored. Tanja spoke of “career and security” but *Sicherheit* was often omitted. That she was romantic was mentioned but not that this was in spite of her interests. Markus’ assertions *ich möchte genug Geld haben, um mir was leisten zu können* and *ich möchte mir treu bleiben* were not fully understood.

Q7b This essay was well within the competence of all candidates and they had plenty of ideas. Straightforward answers looking at all aspects of their life in 15 years and justifying the reasons for their choices scored well. The best essays were often imaginative and considered different scenarios for their own future, or looked at the influence external changes to the environment and technology would have on their life in the future.

It is important to answer the question in the title and candidates were expected to talk about a more distant future than university. Extensive introductions and conclusions are not necessary at this level but it is worthwhile for candidates to spend a few minutes marshalling their ideas so as to present them in a logical order and to avoid repetition.

Candidates have an extensive vocabulary at this level and most were determined to use as wide a range as possible. The use and formation of the future and conditional tenses was impressive and gave rise to higher marks for accuracy than has often been the case.

F713 Speaking

General Comments:

As usual, there were few problems as far as recording quality, paperwork and conduct of the examination were concerned. A generally high standard of examining was again noted and the vast majority of candidates were correctly entered at this level. There was again a good variety of chosen topics and some very interesting conversations around them.

All three texts seemed capable of stretching the stronger candidates, with the help of good examining, and yet were accessible to less skilful linguists. Virtually all candidates were willing to enter into lively discussions on all three texts after only 20 minutes' preparation, which is extremely encouraging. As previously stated in these reports, candidates should be encouraged to speak spontaneously rather than looking at, or even reading out, their notes about the text. It is difficult to achieve high marks on the marking grid for "understanding and responding to the examiner" when using this technique. It is also worth noting that the text discussion is indeed a discussion and not a reporting exercise. This year there was encouragingly less evidence of use of the present subjunctive to report on the texts, as this tends to sound artificial in a discussion, even if a candidate's intention to use complex structures is in itself laudable. Candidates should also be encouraged to avoid simply reading out parts of the text as a response to a question.

Comments on individual Texts:

Text A

Doping im Sport

This text was frequently chosen, possibly because it covered a topic that was very much in the news and extremely controversial. It was tackled enthusiastically by many candidates. Finding synonyms for words in texts is an excellent principle, in order to avoid being too text-reliant and missing out on the higher marks for responsiveness, but this need not be overdone. Occasional use of synonyms is fine, such as *früher* or *ehemalig* to replace *Ex-*, as in *Ex-Radprofi*. Natural replies are preferred, even if the text vocabulary is re-used in a spontaneous response to a question. Examiners should probe for the correct information if they become aware that something has been omitted or misunderstood, such as the gender of the justice minister mentioned in the first paragraph or the cycling coach in the second. There are marks for responsiveness if candidates correct themselves after an intervention by the examining teacher. The importance of having practised simple numbers is regularly mentioned and there were again problems this year but mainly in the other two texts. It was disappointing how few could correctly pronounce the admittedly unusual German names in this text, for example *Grischa Niermann*. Candidates should be trained to practise personal and place names occurring in the texts by saying them out loud during the preparation period.

In the first paragraph "*wiederkehrendes Problem*" was rarely explained but frequently repeated from the text. In the second paragraph *beschuldigt* was clearly not well-known and taken to mean not "accused of" but "guilty of" (taking illegal substances). This was not penalised however. *Dazugehört* was not well explained, also in this paragraph, and, surprisingly, sometimes *Pressegespräch*.

In paragraph three the percentage was expressed as a fraction by good candidates, or alternatively it was turned around to become a positive result, 66% of Germans presumably being in favour of doping controls. It was surprising how few candidates protested at the rather controversial view expressed in this paragraph that doping was no worse than smoking or drinking.

The final paragraph was complex but seemed to pose few problems and was generally well covered.

Under no circumstances may the questions the examiner intends to use in the follow-up conversation be revealed to the candidate in the preparation period. Many examiners find the suggested questions perfectly adequate, though excellent alternative ideas are frequently heard, such as in this case: *Wie sollte man Dopingsünder bestrafen?* or *Haben Sie ein Vorbild aus dem Bereich Sport?* Examiners need to ensure that any alternative questions they use are related to the texts, and it was possible here to have brief conversations on general issues, such as the benefits of sport and the problems connected with drugs, as long as the more specific issues raised by the text pre-dominated. Questions should be sufficiently sophisticated to stretch the candidate but at the same time not too complex. Nearly all candidates seemed to be in favour of strict controls and punishments, supporting the views of student Anna in the final paragraph.

Text B

Ist unsere Presse in Gefahr?

This text was chosen slightly less often than the other two, but still led to some very good discussions. The numbers in the first paragraph, although simple, were not always used correctly, but skilful candidates were often able to interpret them well, such as by stating that the numbers of people buying a daily newspaper had dropped by seven million in 13 years. Good examiners probed for apparently minor but significant details such as *jeden Tag* in the first paragraph or *insgesamt* and *in Europa* in the second.

In the third paragraph some of the detail tended not to be clear to all candidates. The expression *sind sich nicht bewusst* was difficult to use in a response if not replaced by a synonym, but there were many good suggestions for alternatives, such as *sie wissen nicht, dass...* or *sie merken es nicht*. *Eine kleine Gruppe von Zeitungsinhabern* was not well understood.

In the final paragraph there was, surprisingly, some difficulty in dealing with *unabhängig* and in pronouncing *Demokratie*. Good alternative vocabulary items heard included *unterschiedlich* for *verschieden* and *nicht so ernst* for *weniger dramatisch*.

Inwiefern? is often a good interjection for examiners to use, and this was heard quite often in this text discussion and in conversations on the general issues arising. Good candidates can then display their more detailed knowledge or justify their views more effectively. Most candidates, in line with the information in the text, said they did not read a newspaper and preferred the internet as a source of information, but many read newspapers on line and were able to explain why this is preferable. The argument that on line is environmentally sounder was an interesting one. Some centres were able successfully to widen the discussion to include *Pressefreiheit in der DDR*, or the lack of it! The third bullet point for possible questions on general issues was intentionally designed to be possibly widened to include TV and the internet and led to some good debates, albeit brief ones. Some good alternative questions formulated by examiners included: *Kann die Presse 100% frei sein?* *Wie zuverlässig sind die Informationen in Zeitungen?* and *Hat die Presse zu viel Macht?*

Text C

Roboter statt Menschen?

This text was often very enthusiastically discussed, as the topic clearly appealed to some candidates and had been appropriately chosen for them by the teacher examiner. Some centres ask their candidates to provide a general introduction before launching into the first specific question. It is not essential, however, and it is also not necessary for the examiner to query the meaning of every difficult vocabulary item in the texts and to ask for synonyms, though it is good practice to say: *Was bedeutet das?* occasionally.

The first paragraph of this text was generally well dealt with, though relatively few candidates noticed or referred to “*und sehen auch viel besser aus, ihrer Meinung nach*”. This was admittedly a tongue-in-cheek comment and not penalised if missed, but was extremely well re-phrased by some candidates: “*Sie können denken und Meinungen haben. Sie denken, sie sind attraktiver als wir Menschen*” was one good interpretation. *Wir machen uns Sorgen* and *sie könnten Menschen ersetzen* were further examples of candidates’ “own words” used to cover other parts of the final sentence of the paragraph.

The details of the imaginary future football tournament in the second paragraph were frequently rather muddled but the main points were usually conveyed successfully, though some candidates struggled completely. In paragraph three the numbers and dates were sometimes so poorly expressed as to be incomprehensible. This is an aspect of the task that would surely be more successfully dealt with if basic numbers were practised more before the test. There were several difficult words to pronounce in this paragraph, but the standard was quite high, and pronunciation is in any case not assessed in the text discussion. *Tschechischer* caused some problems and was sometimes even conveyed as *technischer*. *Griechische Mythologie* and *skizzierte* could be avoided, however, if considered difficult, by such interpretations as *seit mehr als 2000 Jahren* and *Leonardo hatte die Idee für einen Roboter*, among other good solutions heard.

Similarly, in the final paragraph, *Spezies* could be replaced by *Rasse*. It appears that the verb *erhalten* was not well understood, but “*sie werden ihre eigenen Kinder bekommen können*” was a good interpretation of the clause containing it. The advantages and disadvantages of robots were effectively summarised here and often expanded upon in the discussion of general issues that followed. There were some thoughtful responses to the possible question as to how the future might turn out to be, some expressing the hope that current problems such as global warming, war or discrimination might be solved. It should be noted that questions in this section can lead to a general discussion, instead of one specifically on the topic of the text. Robots were intentionally not mentioned in the second suggested question here, for example. Similarly, “scientific progress” in the third bullet point was intended to lead to a discussion of other areas, perhaps atomic energy or genetic manipulation, thus giving candidates an opportunity to address a different topic of their own interest, albeit only briefly.

Topic Conversation

This should be a natural conversation around the chosen topic area and not a presentation by the candidate of learned material. It is good to note that the latter technique is not employed by many centres and that the majority of examiners and candidates adopt the conversational approach.

It should not be obvious to anyone listening to the recordings that a candidate has written anything down, either in preparation for the text discussion or the topic conversation. There was a good variety of topics again, with candidates opting to discuss something of their own interest, or a controversial issue, such as the refugee crisis. Of the topics covered by the texts, only Robot Technology was quite often chosen as a candidate topic, and the centres concerned chose an alternative text for the candidate by way of contrast, as prescribed. Very few candidates offered inappropriate topics from the AS list and hardly any centres encouraged all their candidates to cover the same topic.

The following is a list of some of the imaginative topics successfully discussed this year:

- *Ist “Andorra” noch relevant?*
- *Hans Magnus Enzensberger*
- *die deutsche Gebärdensprache*
- *Vorurteile gegenüber Deutschen*
- *Franz Kafka*
- *Auswirkungen der Immigranten auf die Wirtschaft*

- *Merkels Flüchtlingspolitik*
- *Technologie am Arbeitsplatz*
- *Die Angriffe in Köln*
- *Kriminalität in Berlin*
- *Hannah Arendt*
- *“das Boot”*
- *türkische Integration*
- *Armut*
- *Wagner*
- *Michael Ende*

In conclusion, it is again worth pointing out that some good individual research and a certain depth of knowledge is expected for a high mark on Grid M (“Development of Ideas”). It is not sufficient merely to have read a single article or short story or to have discussed the topic in class. Fortunately most centres and candidates go far beyond this and many of the discussions heard are both interesting and very informative.

F714 Listening, Reading and Writing 2

General Comments:

There was a reasonable spread of marks. Candidates appeared for the most part to find the paper accessible and in general showed appreciation of the overall meaning of the passages. Mostly candidates read the questions well and there were very few cases of people answering in the wrong language. There were also very few instances of candidates not completing the paper, and some found the time to write very lengthy essays indeed. There is no need for candidates to produce massively long plans for their essays, but some degree of planning is clearly useful in helping them to focus on the exact question which has been asked rather than the one they were hoping for. If candidates find timing a problem then they should certainly be advised not to count the words in their essay, which some do very carefully and quite unnecessarily, since they should have had sufficient practice during their course to know whether or not their essay is long enough. Writing a draft of the essay first and then copying out a neat version also uses up valuable time, and additional errors tend to creep in, especially towards the end of the final draft. A small number of candidates may have lost marks because of handwriting which was so difficult to read as to be indecipherable. There were also candidates who crossed out their answer to a question and then wrote it somewhere else on the paper, perhaps at the bottom of the page or on an additional page, without telling the Examiner that they had done so. Candidates should be strongly advised to state clearly where they have written the answer to a question if it is not in the expected space.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A: Listening

Task 1

Most candidates coped well with this task on the whole and, where errors were made, these tended to be in the questions for which two or more marks were available – candidates failed to give the required number of details.

The main problems occurred in:

- d) Many candidates thought incorrectly that Simone's handwriting was illegible, which is the opposite of what she actually says. The concept of her having become accustomed to writing everything in capital letters was one with which many struggled.
- e) The idea of young people expecting the older generation to use technology to keep in touch with them was not conveyed clearly by many candidates, which resulted in all but the best losing a mark here.
- f) Many candidates found this question surprisingly challenging.

Task 2

The majority of candidates found this exercise accessible, although the quality of some of the written German produced was rather disappointing, leading to some low marks for Quality of Language.

The main issues arose with:

- a) Weaker candidates tended to confuse the answer to this question with that for the next, which resulted in them losing two marks quite unnecessarily.
- c) The incorrect use of *sozialist* as the adjective here cost some candidates marks.

- f) The word *Fürsorge* seemed not to be known by many candidates and was often incorrectly guessed at.
- g) Many candidates incorrectly mentioned *die Gleichberechtigung im Arbeitsleben* as the second of their two points here, when they should have been *Vereinbarkeit von Familie und Beruf* and *Gewalt gegen Frauen*.
- h) There was only a difficulty with this question when candidates failed to give the required two details.
- i) Weaker candidates ignored the word *genau* in this question, and in j which followed, thereby losing marks.
- m) Caused problems for those candidates who wrote *nacht* instead of the correct *nackt* as their adjective.

Section B: Reading

Task 3

This exercise caused very few problems, and gave the majority of candidates a good lead into the text as a whole and into the following exercises. Even weaker candidates were able to score 4 or 5 of the 8 possible marks. The most common errors were a mixing up of the answers to a and b, and the use of *erinnert* for f.

Task 4

The vast majority of candidates showed good comprehension of this section of the text, but the weaker ones among them struggled to make their responses fit the instruction *dass der Satzbau stimmt*. This was especially problematic in c, where too many candidates simply lifted the imperfect tense forms of the relevant verbs from the text rather than then converting them into the past participles which were needed to make the resulting sentence grammatically accurate. Candidates would, it seems, benefit from considerably more practice at this relatively simple type of grammatical transposition. Equally concerning was the lack of awareness that the response to d needed to be in the dative case.

Task 5

Most candidates found this exercise more accessible than they had the previous one, although that may have been because quite a number of them resorted to lifting relatively lengthy passages from the original text without necessarily knowing the meaning of what they were copying. This was especially evident in f, when many wrote *weil die Abschiebung ohnehin rechtswidrig gewesen wäre* simply because they had managed to work out where the piece of text containing the answer had to be. Many candidates also struggled with rendering the answer to c – it was clear that they had understood what was scaring Ousmane, but that they could not express this in accurate enough German to merit the 2 marks available.

Task 6

The Transfer of Meaning task provided many candidates with a relatively straightforward introduction to the next group of exercises, and there were few instances of people scoring below half marks here. Examiners did comment, however, on the number of very basic errors of English grammar and syntax which they encountered in their marking of this task. Some candidates lost marks for making careless spelling mistakes and for failing to render some words at all. The vocabulary items which caused the most difficulty were *endgültig* and *uralt* and, more surprisingly, *vor kurzem*, *noch genutzte* and *bereits*.

Task 7

The majority of candidates found this exercise quite accessible, with the most able producing very accurate responses which also helped them to score highly when it came to the later

assessment of Quality of Language. Weaker candidates were generally able to gain more than half of the comprehension marks available for this exercise, but their often very brief responses then cost them marks for linguistic quality, with 2 out of 5 not being an uncommon mark. Questions which caused the most difficulty were d and e.

Task 8

All but the most able candidates found this exercise somewhat challenging, not because they had failed to understand the section of text on which it was based but rather because they again failed to ensure that the wording they used resulted in grammatically accurate German. The gaps which required the insertion of more complex verbs tenses unsurprisingly caused the most difficulties.

Task 9

This task proved reasonably accessible to the majority of candidates – even where responses were not totally grammatically accurate, they were clear enough to merit being awarded a mark. The most challenging question was b – weaker candidates appeared to have become totally focussed on the environmental nature of the text on which the questions were based, and thus attempted to explain a *Jahrestag* in the context of a nuclear accident, which tended to tie many of them in knots.

Section C: Writing

Language:

In almost all cases the level of language was of an appropriate standard for A2, with marks for range (structures, vocabulary and general fluency) often better than those for accuracy, reflecting a sometimes patchy grasp of cases, verb and adjectival agreement, word order and tenses. Of course, candidates were writing under time pressure, which may have led some to sacrifice accuracy for speed – having said that, a significant number of essays exceeded the maximum suggested length, which indicates that some candidates are opting for quantity rather than quality of material produced. As always, some native or semi-native speakers also lost language marks because they failed to write in the right register or because spellings were phonetic rather than accurate. It was very reassuring to see essays written by very good non-native speakers whose linguistic performance right through the paper was most impressive. Some candidates managed to produce linguistically accurate essays by including predominantly pre-learnt material – however, since much of this was then irrelevant to the question set, this had a negative impact on their marks for content.

Content:

Many candidates were able to structure their essays in a reasonably logical and coherent way. Some took the time to produce sufficiently detailed plans prior to starting writing, which then enabled them to avoid lots of arrows and asterisks in their work.

One noticeable thing in many of the essays this year was the number of factual claims made by candidates which were clearly false. Candidates should be advised not to make up statistics if they do not have accurate ones at their fingertips, as examiners will soon be able to check out the veracity or otherwise of their claims.

Q10

This was one of the essays which produced the most frequent use of unrealistic statistical claims, which considerably weakened the arguments put forward by some candidates. Many weaker candidates also appeared to forget or ignore the second part of the question, where they were meant to try and explain why some groups in society might be likely to commit more crimes than others.

Q11

One pleasing thing about responses to this question was that the majority of candidates did attempt to take a personal approach to the task, writing with some degree of conviction as though they really were a helper at an organisation supporting refugees. Clearly this is a topic with which most candidates feel comfortable, as a good number chose to answer this question. Weaker candidates did, however, tend to focus on the general issues facing refugees rather than those specific to refugees in German towns.

Q12

This essay differentiated well between candidates, as all but the most able tended to ignore the reference to *Ozeane* in the question and write instead about charges for carrier bags to avoid people using so many of them. Many of these candidates then wrote in very general terms, showing little knowledge of German-specific initiatives.

Q13

Many candidates failed here to obey the instruction to write a newspaper article. This question also led to a large number of very vague, generalised pieces which could have been about energy-saving efforts by families in any developed country.

Q14

There were very few attempts at this question, possibly because candidates were wary of producing explanations which could have been true of the increased life expectancy of people in any developed country.

Q15

Again, there were relatively few attempts at this question – and again, those which were seen tended to ignore the requirement to focus on German-speaking countries.

Q16

Although relatively few candidates attempted this question, those who did produced some thoughtful and well-argued pieces of work. The best answers showed very detailed knowledge of the works studied and also real efforts to analyse those works rather than to simply regurgitate details of the plot.

Q17

The candidates who chose this question did, on the whole, try to write persuasive letters about the merits of studying the period of history which they had chosen. Weaker responses tended to contain sweeping generalisations about Nazi Germany but other candidates had chosen to focus on different periods in which they clearly had a keen and well-informed interest.

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