GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

GERMAN
GCSE

SUMMER 2023

Introduction

Our Principal examiners' reports offer valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. They are written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and detail how candidates have performed.

This report offers an overall summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It goes on to look in detail at each question/section of each component, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.[i]

The information found in this report can provide invaluable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	Eduqas offers an extensive annual programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 6 months after the examination.	www.wjecservices.co.uk or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the overall subject, rather than for each component that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results and Grade Boundaries (eduqas.co.uk)

Exam 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.	www.wjecservices.co.uk
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	www.wjecservices.co.uk or on the Eduqas subject page.
Become an examiner with WJEC / Eduqas.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with invaluable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Exam Marking jobs | Examiner & Moderator Vacancies From Eduqas

Subject Officer's Executive Summary

Overall, candidates were well prepared for all four components this year. The vast majority were entered for the appropriate tier.

A common theme across the four skills was a weakness with common vocabulary and synonyms. Also, for the speaking and writing components, it was evident candidates were not always comfortable with conjugating verbs, both regular and irregular.

Another common feature across the four skills was a tendency to write more than required. While not out of the scope of the assessments, this generally resulted in candidates introducing errors in work which would otherwise have been sufficient to reach the top bands in Components 1 and 4, or to satisfy the mark scheme for Components 2 and 3.

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Candidates should be familiar with high-frequency vocabulary	Vocabulary list Knowledge Organisers	Vocabulary list in the specification Knowledge organisers to apply the vocabulary
Carefully read the rubric to only answer what's required.	Past Papers Mark Schemes OER (Online Exam Review) CPD material Exam Walkthroughs	Previous responses from candidates/mark scheme

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COMPONENT 1 SPEAKING

Overview of the Component

The speaking exam consists of three parts: the role play, the photo card and the discussion. Candidates are prescribed one set of three tasks from the available 9 sets. Most candidates were very well prepared and entered at the right level.

Role Play

Generally, the role plays at Foundation Tier were performed well, providing candidates at the lower end of the ability range with the opportunity to gain a few points by giving single word answers. Most candidates were able to ask questions.

As with the Foundation Tier, Higher Tier candidates generally coped well with the role plays. There were some candidates who wanted to part with a lot more information than was needed for the individual questions, perhaps due to being unfamiliar with the format of a role play.

Accuracy in utterances is key to score 3 marks. Candidates who said far too much in the role plays often introduce errors in their extended responses, whereas if they had stopped promptly they would have scored a full 3 marks each time.

Photo Card

Most candidates were able to say a couple of sentences to describe the picture. More able candidates did rather well with the picture itself. Some had been taught phrases like *Ich sehe, im Foto/im Vordergrund/Hintergrund gibt es* which helped.

The questions were not always answered well but most candidates gave it a good try. At times teacher-examiners tried to simplify the questions to support candidates, which is permitted as long as the meaning of the question does not get altered.

Conversation

Candidates were generally well prepared for their chosen theme and were able to answer questions on it. The follow up theme was sometimes not so well performed.

The most effective conversations were the ones where the questions were linked together. This enabled the candidates to express thoughts and views better and it also created opportunities to narrate an event, however briefly.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Role Play Foundation Tier

There were some tasks that the candidates found challenging because they didn't know or understand words or phrases.

- In RP 8 the word *verkehr* was often not known
- In RP 9 only a few candidates understood *wo wohnst du gern im urlaub?* to be a question about accommodation
- Candidates often didn't understand the question words *wann? wo? wohin?*

Role Play Higher Tier

As with the Foundation Tier candidates, the Higher Tier candidates faced similar challenges with regards to unknown words and phrases and question words.

- The scenario for Role Play 1 was often misunderstood and the candidates struggled with the first question.

- The candidates found the pronunciation of *vegetarisches essen* to be challenging.

Photo Card Foundation and Higher Tier

- Photo 1 at FT the word *prüfungen* was rarely known
- Photo 3 at HT - candidates frequently did not know that Austria is a skiing country so missed the point about holidays in winter there. Candidates were talking about going to the beach and swimming in the sea in Austria.
- Photo 5 at HT - the last two questions were generally poorly answered - *vorbereiten* was not well-known and neither was *sich bewerben*.
- Photo 7 at FT and HT - the word *Hut* was often misunderstood
- Photo 8 at FT and HT - *friseur / friseursalon* were often misunderstood
- Photo 9 at HT - the last question was rarely understood or answered adequately

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COMPONENT 2 LISTENING

Overview of the Component

- This component tests candidates' ability in AO1 (Listening). Candidates are required to understand and respond to different types of spoken language.

- Questions in this paper are from each of the sub-themes in the specification. For this component, learners respond to spoken language such as monologues, conversations, interviews, and announcements. The spoken extracts increase in length and complexity as the paper progresses. Questions are given in English and in German across both tiers. The format of questions includes multiple choice questions, selecting correct/false statements, and short answer responses in English.

Comments on individual questions/sections

FOUNDATION TIER

Q1 & Q2: These were answered well - no areas to highlight.

Q3: This was answered well. A few pupils ticked too many boxes – a rubric infringement which resulted in no marks being awarded.

Q5: This was generally well answered, though some candidates used the same letter option twice, and a few candidates wrote a sentence in the 'reason for career choice' for Max instead of selecting a letter for the corresponding picture. Candidates are advised to read the question instructions carefully, as rubric infringements can result in no marks being awarded.

Q6a: Many candidates did not give sufficient detail for this section, as the question was specifically about German schools.

Q6b: No areas to highlight.

Q6c: Many candidates incorrectly selected 'end at 12pm' – presumably because they did not hear '*heutzutage*' and the information that followed.

Q6d: no areas to highlight

Q7a/Q1a Foundation Tier: Some candidates added incorrect details e.g., 'in a supermarket' which negated their correct answer.

Q7b/Q1b Foundation Tier: this was generally answered well and showed candidates' understanding of the high frequency word '*genug*'. Candidates would benefit from a comprehensive knowledge of high frequency words.

Q7c/ Q1c Foundation Tier: This was answered well, with candidates opting for the full range of possible answers. Some candidates did not read this question accurately and answered with Mia's opinion of her job.

Q7d/Q1d Foundation Tier: Many candidates answered this correctly, but there was some confusion with candidates writing 'wants to be an artist'.

Q8a/Q2a Foundation Tier: Many candidates were awarded 1 or 2 marks for this question. In several instances, candidates gave more than two details as specified. Candidates are advised to give the correct number of details for an answer as specified in the question – 'give one detail' means that only one piece of information should be given by the candidate.

Q8b/Q2b Foundation Tier: Some pupils gave information for this answer which was from the transcript but not relevant to the question, which was specifically about school.

Q8c/Q2c Foundation Tier: This was answered well – no areas to highlight.

Q8d/Q2d Foundation Tier: Most candidates opted for the mention of sport in this section, with many pupils not giving sufficient detail for the time marker: 'after' sport.

Q8e/Q2e Foundation Tier: Many candidates answered this question incorrectly; the plural form of '*Zahn*' and the verb '*schützen*' were not identified. Candidates would benefit from recognising pronunciation changes in plural nouns so that they can identify topic vocabulary in spoken German.

Q9/Q3 Foundation Tier: The candidates who scored the most marks on this question answered succinctly with a verb and a noun, as this gave sufficient detail. Many candidates gave correct activities for Paula and Edda, but they wrote them in the incorrect time. Candidates are reminded to use time markers and tense differences to identify the correct information in this question style.

HIGHER TIER

Q4a & Q4b: These were answered well – no areas to highlight.

Q4c: This was generally answered well – most candidates identified 'theatres/film' as being suitable for creative individuals, but some wrote 'media' which was mentioned, but at a later point in the spoken text. Here candidates are advised to read the question thoroughly before answering, and only give an answer which is specific to the question.

Q4d: Many candidates translated '*arbeitsplätze*' incorrectly as 'workplaces', whereas the context implied jobs.

Q5 & Q6: These were answered well – no areas to highlight.

Q7a: This section was generally answered well; the most frequent error was 'his brother had a class/lesson'.

Q7b: Many candidates were awarded one of the possible two marks for this section. Some candidates gave incorrect food examples (e.g., vegetables) and some mentioned newspapers instead of magazines.

Q7c: Most candidates were able to identify one of the points here, but far fewer candidates identified that they talked about their childhood or life in the town. Many pupils gave correct information from the transcript, but it was not relevant to this question (e.g., they have lots of

good friends and walk together often'.) Here, as advised for Q4c, candidates are advised to read the question thoroughly before answering, and only give an answer which is specific to the question.

Q7d: this was generally answered well – no areas to highlight.

Q8: The first section was answered quite well, although some candidates misunderstood the first part of the transcript and gave the incorrect answer of 'travelling **to** Great Britain', rather than 'in/around'. Some candidates did not give sufficient detail in the table – candidates should be aware that for an advanced question on the higher paper, one-word answers usually will not suffice, as more detail is required. A few candidates gave relevant and detailed answers such as 'the passengers are noisy' and 'the trains are not always clean'.

Q9a: This section was answered well – most candidates were able to translate '*gymnasium*' as 'grammar school', with some candidates translating incorrectly as gym/gymnastics.

Q9b: This was answered well – no areas to highlight.

Q9c: This section was answered well, with successful candidates answering with sufficient detail, e.g., 'the teachers are helpful'. A few candidates wrote 'teacher is helpful', which was not correct. Where a plural noun has no difference to the singular noun, candidates should use the verb and surrounding information to distinguish between singular and plural.

Q9d: This question was not always answered accurately, with some candidates giving general answers that did not answer the specific question of what she is experiencing now.

Candidates are advised to make effective use of the 5 minutes reading time before the tape script begins. Strong candidates made notes on questions and noted possible vocabulary. Using this time to note possible synonyms and time markers that they might hear during the examination is an extremely effective use of time.

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COMPONENT 3 READING

Overview of the Component

The reading papers at both foundation and higher tier cover the full range of topics from the three broad themes. On the whole, candidates responded well to the demands of the paper, with the overwhelming majority of candidates entered at the appropriate tier. As the paper is marked online, candidates should be reminded to ensure that their answer is written on the lines provided, or in the case of tick boxes, the tick should only be in one box. Candidates responded well to the tick box questions and generally acknowledged the need for the appropriate number of ticks required for each question. Most candidates followed the rubric and answered in the correct language.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation Tier

Q.1   Most parts of this question were well done with the exception of *rathaus* which was not generally well known.

Q.2   Many candidates did not recognise l*ebensmittel* which prevented them from matching the department to the more familiar *obst und gemüse*.

Q.3   This question was answered well by many candidates.

Q.4   Parts (c), (e) and (f) highlighted candidates' misunderstanding of words/phrases such as *nicht so viel*, *nur*, *rund um die uhr* and *nicht nur*.

Q.5   Many candidates in this question lost marks by not being specific in their responses, for example in (d) stating "It was too small". The use of the pronoun here gave responses ambiguity. In part (c) many candidates demonstrated misconception of the number (*vierundzwanzig millionen*). Many candidates did not attempt part (e).

Q.6   The first of the literary text questions was reasonably well answered, except for the words *böse* and *lehrerzimmer* which were not well understood by all candidates.

Q.7   The words *verkäufer* and *ausbildung* were not widely recognised. Some candidates lost marks through their misinterpretation of *nie* as "not".

Q.8/Q1 Foundation Tier   The level of difficulty increases as candidates progress through the paper. Unsurprisingly therefore, many foundation tier candidates found this question challenging with parts (c), (d) and (f) being the most problematic.

Q.9/Q2 Foundation Tier   Part (b) of this question was generally well answered. In part (c) *zur toilette gerannt* and in part (d) *aus frischen tomaten* were not well understood.

Q.10   In comparison to last year, candidates showed a better understanding of the sub-sub-theme used for this year's translation question (work experience and part-time jobs). As

with last year however, modal verbs *mögen* and *können* were not always accurately translated. Some candidates did not recognise *in der Schweiz.*

Higher Tier

Q.3   Mostly well done. Some candidates did not recognise the synonym *kamaraden* for *freunde.* The word *schüchtern* was not understood by all candidates.

Q.4   Mostly well done.

Q.5   Mostly well done. In part (e) however, some candidates were unable to make the connection between *geburtsort* in the text and *geboren* in the choices for answers.

Q.6   Mostly well done with the exception of *zigarettenrauch* which was often misinterpreted as cigarettes or smoking.

Q.7   Some parts were generally well answered. However, in part (b) the words *heizung* and *kühlschrank* were not well known by all candidates. In part (d) the word *Liebe* was sometimes misinterpreted as life.

Q.8   Mostly well done. For part (d), some candidates focussed on the word *erst* in the sentence *wir mussten erst einmal kunden finden* and lost marks by stating that they were "looking for their first customer".

Q.9 The following words/phrases in the translation task, were not widely understood. *kaufhaus, es hat mir gut gefallen, sicher, verstehen* and *da wieder.* Not all candidates translated the perfect tense well.

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COMPONENT 4 WRITING

Overview of the Component

The writing paper, at both foundation and higher tier, covers topics across the three broad themes. The overwhelming majority of candidates were entered at the correct tier. Foundation tier candidates found the paper more challenging than those who sat the higher tier paper. Most candidates adhered to suggested word limits of each task. Although this in itself is never penalised, it does however increase candidates' opportunity for errors and if candidates significantly exceed the suggested limits, linguistic accuracy tends to be compromised.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation Tier

Q.1   Most candidates followed the instruction to write a complete sentence in response to the stimuli, which reflects good training in centres by teachers. The most successful candidates used simple answers with an accurate verb. Candidates should therefore be discouraged with this question to answer with complex sentences that often lead to ambiguity and therefore prevent them from achieving full marks. Where verbs were inaccurate, candidates could only achieve one of the two available marks, as this is considered a major error. This proved problematic for some candidates who provided a plural verb for *sommerurlaub* and a singular verb for *winterferien.* There was much evidence of successful conjugations of key verbs although there were misspellings with some - *spiele (speile)* and *liebe (leibe).* Where German equivalents for tourist attractions such as the Statue of Liberty exist, use of English prevented candidates from accessing full marks. Some candidates demonstrated insecure knowledge of *lieblingsland* by offering place names such as Paris or London, instead of a country.

Q.2   Many candidates found this question very challenging. It is worth noting that all sub-sub-themes are covered by both foundation and higher tier papers, so centres should prepare all candidates for all topics within these sub-sub-themes. Whilst *teilzeitjobs* was generally well understood and candidates were able to write relevant information about this bullet point, *taschengeld* was less well known and sometimes interpreted as wages. Very few candidates were able to write information or opinions about *arbeitspraktikum.* Many candidates were unable to conjugate verbs accurately and word order was problematic. Many candidates used English in this question as key vocabulary for jobs, for example, was not known.

Q.3   Most candidates understood the rubric of this question. Some candidates however were not specific enough with their responses to gain full marks. For example when answering the second bullet point, they wrote about how they used technology yesterday as opposed to what they did with their mobile phone. Likewise, with the third bullet point, some candidates gave general opinions about social media as opposed to which social media they were going to use next week.

Candidates should be encouraged to write a separate paragraph to clearly demonstrate their response for each bullet point. This question will always require candidates to demonstrate their ability to refer to past, present and future events. Some candidates were not able to accurately form the future and/or perfect tense. At foundation tier, this question tended to be responded to with quite simplistic vocabulary and grammatical structures, with limited complex structures. Word order with modal verbs and subordinate clauses was often insecure.

Q.4   Most candidates attempted all the sentences in the translation question but were often hindered by their lack of vocabulary. Constructions of the perfect and future tenses in (d) and (e) were not always well known.

(a) *Vegetables* and to a lesser extent, *every day*, were not well known.

(b) The English spelling of *salad* featured regularly. The adjective *gesund* was often used instead of the noun *gesundheit.*

(c) In comparison to previous series, many candidates were unable to formulate the question using *wie findest du …?* Some candidates used the English spelling of *alcohol.*

(d) This was challenging for foundation tier candidates. *Letzten Montag* was often misspelt. There were many word order issues including not inverting the auxiliary verb and the past participle not being at the end.

(e) *Nächste woche* and *mehr* were often misspelt. Again, word order proved challenging for many candidates with the infinitive after the modal verb not being placed at the end. Some candidates mistranslated the future tense using instead *ich will* or *ich würde.*

Higher Tier

Q.1   All three bullet points were generally well covered. Vocabulary was more varied and complex grammatical structures including the formation of different tenses, were generally more secure and often accurately used. Whilst the rubric allows candidates to give further information that is relevant to the task, they should discouraged from writing generic introductions and endings that have been learnt off by heart, as these tend to detract rather than enhance a performance.

Q.2   There was no discernible difference in the popularity of the two options for this question, although the second option (*B - Schulstudium*) was answered more securely as candidates were able to confidently address both bullet points. Many candidates used the perfect tense accurately to write about what homework they had done last week. In the first option (*A – das Schulleben*), however, many candidates found discussing their dream school with the conditional tense, challenging. In addition, only a few candidates were able to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of school uniform using impersonal language. Instead, many used basic personal opinions about uniform and some simply described their own uniform.

Q.3   At Higher Tier, the translation task will be between 50-55 words. Therefore, candidates can expect the five sentences to contain complex structures and a variety of tenses.

Sentence 1: Most candidates knew how to translate *in my opinion*, however, not all inverted the verb after this phrase. Many showed knowledge of the infinitive clause with *zu* but wrote the *zu* in the wrong place. The intensifier *extremely* was not well known by all candidates.

Sentence 2: Some candidates were not able to translate *Tuesday*. Many conjugated *fahren* with *haben.* The time/manner/place word order rule was not widely applied correctly.

Sentence 3: For many candidates, the verb *duschen* was not well known and the verb *sparen* was not well conjugated.

Sentence 4: *Zu hause* was not well known. Many candidates attempted the *um …zu* structure but were not always secure with their word order.

Sentence 5: Many candidates mistranslated *I will* with *ich will.* U*mweltfreundliche produkte* was well known. Word order in the first clause was often haphazard. A few candidates knew *wenn* but only a minority conjugated the verb in the second clause correctly.

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