GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

GERMAN
GCSE

SUMMER 2022

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Annual Statistical Report

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COMPONENT 1 SPEAKING

General Comments

After no formal exams for two years, this exam has been taken in a pandemic recovery period with the learner's education having been disrupted. Nevertheless, in most cases the candidates showed competence at their chosen level and seemed well prepared. Most candidates coped well with the role play, the discussion of the photo card and the conversations. However, there were still a number of common mistakes with regard to the conduct of the exam.

A fair number of centres did not adhere to the recommended timings of the individual tasks. The timings for each task as indicated in the table below are approximate; however, teachers must adhere to the overall timings of 7-9 minutes (foundation tier) and 10-12 minutes (higher tier). **Any speaking evidence that exceeds these timings will not be marked.**

Task	Approximate timings	
	Foundation tier	**Higher tier**
Role play	2 minutes	2 minutes
Photo card discussion	2 minutes	3 minutes
Conversation (Part 1 and Part 2)	3-5 minutes	5-7 minutes
All tasks	7-9 minutes in total	10-12 minutes in total

Comments on individual questions/sections

Role Play

Foundation Tier

Generally, the role plays were performed well, giving even candidates at the lower end of the spectrum the opportunity to gain a few points, giving just single word answers. On some occasions candidates did not understand or recognise the setting of the role play, for example being at the cinema or the tourist information. There is still a problem with some question words, especially *Wo?* Another new skill was to have to ask a question. There was often a pregnant pause and a fair number of candidates had to be prompted to ask the question in the role play.

RP 2: In the first interaction, the candidates had to ask for tickets for a film at a time or day. The situation was often misunderstood and the time was missed. *Wann* had not been understood

RP 3: In the second interaction, the candidates had to say where they liked to listen to music – most candidates misunderstood and gave the answer to what kind of music they liked

RP 5: The candidates didn't realise that they were booking a hotel room. Some had problems telling their surname in the (!) question

RP 9: Candidates were rarely able to answer the question *Wo lernst du am besten?*

Higher Tier

As with the Foundation Tier the 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, which shows that they did not really know about the format of a role play.

Answers in the role play have to be perfect to score 3 marks. Candidates who said far too much in the role plays often lost marks, whereas if they had stopped promptly they would have scored a full 3 marks each time.

As with the foundation role plays, the settings were often ignored or forgotten which resulted in wrong answers. Most mistakes were made when a specific tense was required. Register infringement also happened, however the more able candidates managed very well.

RP 1: The setting was in a mobile phone shop and a number of candidates did not grasp the first interaction. Most candidates had difficulties answering the question *Welche Farbe möchten Sie?*

RP 2: The words *mit wem* were often ignored and candidates only said what sports they did

RP 4: *Nachteil* was often missed, and candidates spoke positively about their area

RP 5: Candidates often didn't understand *wie* and again *mit wem*.

RP 9: Candidates rarely understood the word *Traumarbeitsplatz*

Photo Card

Foundation Tier and Higher Tier

Most candidates were able to say a couple of sentences to describe the picture. The more able ones did rather well with the picture itself. Some had been taught phrases like *Ich sehe, im Vordergrund/Hintergrund gibt es* which helped. However, sometimes candidates added non relevant material like what the people on the photo may have done yesterday and what they were going to do next week.

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

There were quite a few recordings where the teachers unnecessarily added questions to the prescribed questions, sometimes not even connected to the subtheme of the card. The advised timing for the photo card is 2 minutes at Foundation level and 3 minutes at Higher Level. Teachers should aim to adhere to these timings.

Foundation Tier

- **PC 1:** *Autofahren ist zu teuer* was often dumbed down to just very expensive rather than too expensive
- **PC 2:** The whole scenario was often misunderstood. The sub theme was jobs and future plans and not current study. Therefore, the second question *Wie findest du Arbeit in einer Schule*? was answered from the point of view of a student at school commenting on their school work.
- **PC 6:** Again, the notion of *zu teuer* was often missed
- **PC 9:** it was rare to hear anyone able to mention *Schnee,* or *es schneit*

Higher Tier

- **PC 5:** The candidates did not understand the phrasing *Was ist bei einem Job das Wichtigste?*
- **PC 8:** *Liebesfilme sind besser als Kommödien* was rarely understood and had to be re-phrased

Conversations

Foundation and Higher Tier

Candidates were generally well prepared for their chosen theme. Unfortunately, some were over rehearsed, which resulted in a very distinctive lack of spontaneity/natural conversation. This part of the exam is a conversation and not a presentation followed by a discussion. It is not a requirement for the candidate to say which theme they have chosen or to give a short presentation. The teacher should just announce the theme of the first part of the conversation followed by the first question.

The idea of a conversation is that the candidate responds to a question and that the next question is linked to the candidate's response. Otherwise, it becomes a question and answer session of unrelated items. This has an effect on the interaction, which is an element that is being assessed. Unfortunately, there are still centres where all candidates get the same unrelated questions. It would be more beneficial for the candidate if questions were more linked together, which would enable them to express thoughts and views better, as well as been given the opportunity to narrate an event, however briefly.

There was often a discrepancy in the performance between the chosen and prescribed themes, with the latter being not as well executed. There were also occasions where the centres chose the wrong second theme, or where both parts were not given equal timing. This had an effect on the marks awarded for the conversation.

Summary of key points

On the whole, the candidates were well prepared this year and performed well. Most exams were well conducted.

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates should:

- Make sure that they learn the German question words: *Wer? Wie? Was? Wo? Wohin? Was für? Wann? Welche?*
- Make sure that they learn how to ask a question. *Wie findest du...?/Hast du...?*
- Make sure that they learn how to give an opinion: *Ich finde...gut/schlecht. Ich mag... . Ich mag... nicht.* Or the use of **gern** : *ich esse gern…/ich trinke gern../ich sehe gern…*
- Practise giving short descriptions of pictures concentrating on: **where** was this photo taken: *das Foto zeigt../im Foto sehe ich…ein Klassenzimmer/ein Café/einen Supermarkt*; **who** you can see: *ich sehe zwei Mädchen/eine Familie/drei Jungen*; **what** they are doing: *sie essen/sie fahren Rad/sie reden/sie machen Sport/sie spielen Tennis.*

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COMPONENT 2 LISTENING

General Comments

On the whole pupils responded well to the demands of the paper. 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

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation

Q.1   Mostly well done. Some candidates failed to tick two boxes for b and c and a few ticked more than were required.

Q.2   This was answered correctly by most candidates.

Q.3   Mostly well answered. Some candidates wrote a description of the photos in the box instead of the letter. Some candidates failed to recognise the difference between positive and negative opinions.

Q.4   This question was answered well and showed the candidates' understanding of the topic.

Q.5   This was generally answered well. Some candidates misunderstood the reference to 'Firma' and gave 'film' in their response (5a). In answer to some of the individual questions (5c/e), too much information was noted. 5(e) was generally answered well, although there was a requirement for the candidates to give specific details e.g. 'smelly food'

Q.6   This was generally answered well, although in the first section, candidates responded with generic answers referencing 'plastic', rather than responding to the specific question.

Q.7   This question was answered well by most candidates.

Q.8   This was generally answered well. Some candidates responded with 25 Euros and were unable to identify 'man spart 20%' (8b). Some candidates were unable to recognise 'Preise' and understood 'prizes' instead (8c). Some candidates were unable to identify 'Schulgruppen' and responded with 'school pupils'.

Q.9   Generally, well-answered. Candidates gave two pieces of information for 9(a), despite showing a clear understanding of the spoken word in the responses given. Candidates were confused by the phrase 'eine Lehre machen' and responded with 'teaching'. Some candidates also misinterpreted 'mit Kindern arbeiten' and stated the person wanted children.

Higher Tier

Questions **1**, **2** and **3** as per the Foundation paper.

Q.4 Generally well-answered. Candidates found (c) difficult, as some were unable to draw the correct conclusions from what they heard.

Q.5 This was generally well-answered, with the candidates responding, with the correct number of ticks.

Q.6 Both sections were generally well answered, although some candidates were not clear enough with their answers. A number of the responses were not specific enough to be awarded the mark. e.g. 6(a), candidates noted 'packaging', but didn't give the context. Some candidates did not identify the reason for so much rubbish (6c) to be awarded the mark.

Q.7 Most candidates answered this question correctly, showing an understanding of the topic.

Q.8 Generally well-answered. Candidates weren't awarded marks if they did not give sufficient details e.g. 8(b)(iii) required the 'view was spectacular' not just the adjective. Candidates needed to listen carefully to the details and respond to the question, rather than noting the last thing they hear.

Q.9 This question was answered well, and the candidates were generally able to access the questions.

Summary of key points

- Candidates should use their time wisely by reading through their answers at the end and ensure that they have answered every question.
- Candidates should remember that by providing extended answers and giving too much information, they risk negating the correct answer and losing the mark.
- Candidates should read the rubric carefully, to avoid losing marks, e.g. by writing a word rather than a letter.
- If candidates cross out an answer, to avoid confusion, they should ensure that the examiner is able to identify the version to be marked. e.g. by redrawing the box if there is ambiguity.
- Candidates would benefit from reading the questions and identifying the interrogatives to give the type of response required.
- Candidates should consider their response to 'What is this report about?'
- Candidates could reinforce their learning of numbers.
- Candidates should listen to each section, in order to avoid identifying the wrong answer e.g. the first number they hear may not be the information required.

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COMPONENT 3 READING

General Comments

- Candidates were well prepared for Component 3 of the GCSE examination
- Candidates were generally entered for the appropriate Tier paper
- Both the Foundation and the Higher Tier papers were accessible to all candidates, as few questions were left completely blank this year.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation Tier

Q.1   Mostly well done. (iii) proved to be the most problematic in this first question. A small number of students were unable to understand *die neuen Schüler*, believing it was either the school bus, Year 9, the headteacher, or the cleaner who would be arriving at 7.45am.

Q.2   Mostly well done.

Q.3   Mostly well done.

Q.4   Mostly well done.

Q.5   Question (b) was the most challenging as most candidates failed to explain **why** young people need more money. In question (e) not all candidates were able to achieve the 2 marks available, as they did not give the two details required, as stated in the rubric.

Q.6   Question 6 was generally completed well, but (b) did prove to be difficult for some candidates. They did not grasp the fact that Max's father had said that his big ears enabled him to hear better. Some candidates had clearly not read the German sentence carefully enough, as they made wild suggestions such as the big ears were genetic, he'd look better with a hat on, or he gets them from his father. A surprising number of students confused *Geschichten* with *Geschichte,* suggesting Max liked historical stories*.*

Q.7   Although most candidates realised that the answer to (d) was connected to sport/PE, few failed to be specific enough in their response and say that schools needed to offer more sport/PE **lessons**. In (f) some candidates believed swimming pools could help as young people could have more exercise. That might well be the case, but it does not say this in the text, so such an answer cannot be awarded a mark. Answers must be based on actual information given in the text. In this case, the text clearly states that swimming pools must be cheaper.

Q.8 This question was generally done very well. In question (e), however, some candidates mistakenly thought that it was the Hertha Berlin footballers who had made the cake for Hertha. *Eisbärin* was also, on occasion, confused with an ice bar.

Q.9 The biggest error in this question was in (a) where the majority of candidates failed to grasp the point that Terry did not merely want to go to Berlin, she wanted to **spend** the summer there. A high percentage of candidates did not know the meaning of *Badeort*. A common incorrect response to the question *What did Terry not like going on a cruise?* was *the boat might sink*. Some candidates believed that it might be due to *sea sickness* or because *they were expensive*.

Q.10 Many candidates found the translation task, which was based on the sub-theme of Social Issues, challenging. The word *arm* was often not known. Some candidates were unable to translate the modal verbs *können* and *müssen* accurately. Even better candidates missed the perfect tense in Section 5.

Higher Tier

Questions **1** and **2** as per Foundation Questions **8** and **9**

Q.3 Mostly well done.

Q.4 Mostly well done.

Q.5 Mostly well done.

Q.6 Some candidates suggested *train* as an answer for (a)*.* This response was not awarded a mark, as it simply wasn't specific enough. In this instance, the underground or underground train was required to achieve the mark. Question (d) caused some candidates a problem, as they struggled to understand that the new section of the Berlin underground would benefit tourists, as it stops at many of Berlin's tourist attractions.

Q.7 Unfortunately, there are still many GCSE students who struggle with certain aspects of telling the time in German. Many still believed that *halb sieben* was *half past seven*.

Q.8 In this question many candidates did not know what *gute Noten* meant in English. (g) was undoubtedly the most difficult question here. Only the best candidates were able to explain that these children might not be able to earn their own living in the future because they did not achieve good qualifications when they left school.

Q.9 A high percentage of candidates found the translation task, which was based on the sub-theme of Career Plans, challenging. One of the biggest errors made by candidates was the translation of *also* as *also*. *Regelmäßig* was often not known. *später* was sometimes not translated at all, but simply ignored. The word *noch* was generally also ignored. Many candidates did not know the correct translation of the possessive adjective *ihre*. *die meisten* was, on occasion, translated as *most of the time.* Many candidates were also unable to express the word *möchten* accurately.

Summary of key points

- Candidates must ensure that their handwriting is legible, so that the examiner can read exactly what they have written
- If a candidate ticks more boxes in a multiple-choice question than are required, they will not be awarded a mark for that question.
- Candidates should read the question carefully and offer only one piece of information for each mark available.
- Candidates must base their answers on information they have read in the text. Sometimes candidates offer a response, which makes perfect sense, but the information has not actually been given in the text. Such answers will not be awarded a mark.
- Candidates, who answer in German, when an English response is required and vice versa, will not be awarded a mark for that question

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COMPONENT 4 WRITING

General Comments

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 where candidates significantly exceeded the suggested limits, linguistic accuracy tended to be compromised. As a result, candidates were not able to access the highest marks for "Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy".

As in previous years, missing "Umlauts" affected communication in some cases (*mochte/möchte; konnte/könnte; wurde/würde; war/wäre*; and *hatte/hätte).* Likewise, many candidates did not capitalise nouns.

The overwhelming majority of candidates were entered at the correct tier, especially at foundation tier. Some higher tier entries struggled with Q.2 and Q.3 (translation).

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation

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. Where verbs were inaccaurate, candidates could only achieve one of the two available marks, as this is considered a major error. This proved problematic for the many candidates who did not recognise that the nouns *Computerspiele* and *soziale Medien* were plural and therefore required a plural verb if the nouns were recycled in the answers. Most candidates were able to manipulate *dein/deine* into *mein/meine* although a few simply repeated the stimuli rendering an otherwise correct response only worthy of one of the two possible marks. Some candidates wrote more than the required simple full sentence. Writing a short sentence with an accurate verb will gain full marks. Candidates should therefore be discouraged from writing complex sentences for this question. Some candidates wrote a perfectly acceptable response but added extra information which was ambiguous and therefore only allowed them to achieve one of the two marks available.

Q.2   Most candidates followed the rubric by giving both information and opinions on all three bullet points listed. Where candidates omitted one or more of the bullet points, full marks for *Communication and Content* could not be awarded. The best answers were those that were set out clearly in three distinct paragraphs, addressing the three bullet points in simple and direct German. Some candidates, however, did include complex sentence structures and attempted a range of tenses. It should be pointed out, however, that the mark scheme for this question does not require the demonstration of a range of tenses or even linguistic perfection. The mark scheme within the top band for *Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy* states that responses should be "mainly clear" and may be "occasionally ambiguous".

Therefore, candidates who produced pertinent simple sentences with a good level of accuracy inevitably scored higher than those who attempted more complex structures. Some candidates misinterpreted *Lieblingsland* as a favourite place/area/town. The other two bullet points were open to a lot of interpretation and so many answers were worthy of credit.

Q.3   Of the three options, (C – *deine* Gegend) was by far the least popular. There were hardly any misunderstandings of the questions and candidates seemed well-briefed to answer the sub-questions in different tenses. With (A – Schule) many candidates used "*ich werde/möchte X bekommen*" to describe a future job. Many candidates annotated the rubric to remind themselves of the information that must be included and which tense was required by each bullet point. This was another example of good training for candidates by their teachers. There were a few examples where candidates wrote a paragraph on each of the three options. Where this happened, the first paragraph was deemed as their choice and subsequent paragraphs were considered not relevant to the task, limiting their available marks within *Communication and Content*.

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)   Many candidates used *ich gehe* instead of *ich fahre* and *nach* for *to*. *By car* caused issues for many candidates with a variety of prepositions used such as ***auf*** *dem Auto.*

(b)   *Buses* was not well-known. Many used the the English word from the question with some just capitalizing it. *Expensive* was unknown to some candidates, with a few confusing it with *köstlich*.

(c)   The construction of this question was not well-known by many candidates. Candidates should be encouraged to learn how to pose questions in the assessed language and *Wie findest du…?* is useful in many contexts. Where candidates used *denken,* many could not conjugate it correctly and the preposition *auf* for *of* was a common error.

(d)   There was a variety of spelling for *letzte Woche* (despite it being given in Q.3), word order was haphazard in many cases and auxiliary and past participle were often incorrect or in the wrong places. The word order (time/manner/place) was not well-known.

(e)   There was a variety of spellings for *nächstes* (again, given in Q.3) and some *Yahr* for *Jahr*. As with 4(a), *gehen* was often used instead of *fahren*. Not many could give the future tense correctly. It should be noted that the use of the present tense is acceptable with a future time frame. There were many examples of *wie* for *wir*, various misspellings of *werden* – *wirde/würde(n)/wurde(n)*. *Deutschland* was sometimes spelt incorrectly. *Zug* was not well known. As with 4(d), word order (time/manner/place) was generally incorrect.

Higher

Q.1   As with previous years, some of the issues of this crossover question experienced by foundation candidates, apply here too but higher-level candidates appeared to cope much better with the task in terms of accuracy and breadth of vocabulary and structures. Most candidates were able to address all aspects of the task.

Q.2   As a result of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, this year candidates were given a choice of three questions not two to cover all three broad themes. Generally speaking, there was an even spread of answers to these options, although C-*Karrierepläne* was slightly less favoured.

The best responses for this question used a breadth of vocabulary and the accurate use of a variety of grammatical structures. Many candidates at this tier could use past and future tenses (with varying degrees of accuracy), although fewer linked sentences with *weil*. Fewer still could demonstrate the use of *um . . . zu* or use more adventurous conjunctions such as *obwohl, da*. Word order was generally good with simple sentences, but compound sentences and tenses led to errors which one would expect to be avoided at the higher end of this level. As in previous years, candidates need practice in using the expression "*Spaß Machen*" correctly in a variety of tenses. Many translated this with interference from the English: "*das war Spaß*" etc. There were a few answers where the level of German was breathtaking and inspiring. These were an absolute joy to read.

   (a)   *Ferien*
            This question was generally answered well with many candidates giving additional but relevant information about their future holiday plans and ideal holidays. The instruction *erklär, wie wichtig* . . however, saw some candidates not attempting to justify their reasons.

   (b)   *Freundschaft*
            As with 2(a) the instruction *erklär, wie wichtig* . . did not always lead to candidates justifying their reasons. The description of the ideal partner often gave rise to descriptions of hair, eyes etc. that one would expect to see in a foundation tier response. There were however, some pleasing vocabulary items such as *verständnisvoll, geduldig*. A few candidates confused ideal partner with ideal friend.

   (c)   *Karrierepläne*
            Most candidates were able to give both pros and cons of working abroad, but far too many candidates used *bekommen* for *werden (ich werde/möchte ein(sic) Arzt bekommen)*.

Q.3   Centres should remind their candidates that this is a translation exercise and not a paraphrasing one. Candidates who paraphrase will preclude themselves from gaining full marks. However, this strategy will allow them to partially convey the message and therefore gain one for the first three sentences and two marks for the remaining two. At Higher Tier, the translation task will be between 50-55 words. Therefore, candidates can expect the five sentences to contain complex structures.

Sentence 1: Most candidates answered this well with many knowing *wichtig.*

Sentence 2: Many candidates failed to translate the preposition <u>to</u> *my favourite restaurant* or used ones such as *nach/auf* which rendered the sentence ambiguous. Some candidates used the incorrect auxiliary verb (*ich habe …gefahren/gegangen).*

Sentence 3: *Delicious* was generally well-known, with some candidates using *köstlich. Although* was also correctly translated by many. *Really* was sometimes omitted completely or replaced incorrectly with *sehr.*

Sentence 4: The first half of this sentence was generally well done but **only** *when* proved problematic for many. The use of *wenn* also led to some candidates to incorrectly use the subjunctive.

Sentence 5: This sentence proved difficult to many candidates in a number of ways. *Tomorrow* was often translated as *Morgens* or *(am) nächste(n) Tag.* Many did not invert the verb after the time phrase and as in previous parts of the paper, the time/manner/place word order was not widely applied. Some candidates recognised that this sentence required the use of *um …zu,* although it was not always accurately constructed. The word *film* also caused issues for some with candidates either giving the plural or omitting *a* from the sentence.

Summary of key points

- Candidates should be encouraged to write a short sentence with an accurate verb for Foundation Question 1.
- Candidates should be encouraged to plan their answers before committing to paper – especially Foundation Question 3 and Higher Question 1 and 2.
- For Foundation Question 3 and Higher Question 1 and 2, candidates should be encouraged to annotate the rubric to help them clarify the required content and tense of each bullet point.
- Candidates should organise their writing into paragraphs that clearly address the bullet points of the question.
- Candidates should be encouraged to write the word count at the end of each task.
- Candidates should clearly indicate which option they have chosen in Higher Question 2 by writing the task number and title to avoid examiner confusion.
- Centres should train their candidates to know that Higher Question 2 will have more than one choice but that they must only write about **ONE** of the options.