



# **GCSE Examiners' Report**

German GCSE Summer 2024

#### Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each component.

This report opens with a 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 then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.<sup>1</sup>

The information found in this report provides valuable 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 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/professi onal-learning/
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

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# **Executive Summary**

This year, candidates have demonstrated that they are familiar with the format of all four Components. The vast majority of candidates attempted all questions on all four Components and good attempts were made at all question types, not just multiple-choice questions in the receptive skills. On the whole, it was evident that candidates were entered for the appropriate tier.

Overall, Principal Examiners were pleased with the performance of candidates across the qualification. In particular, there is evidence of improvement in both the speaking and writing papers. Candidates, especially higher attaining candidates, ensured they gave only the required length of responses, minimising the tendency to self-penalise as in previous series. There was also improvement in role plays in the Speaking Assessment and on Q1 on the Foundation Writing paper, suggesting that centres have successfully adapted their approach in teaching for these questions that they need only write/say a short, relevant sentence including verbs to fulfil the requirements.

A recurring area for improvement year-on-year is knowledge of theme-specific vocabulary. Gaps in knowledge affected comprehension marks on the receptive skills of Listening and Reading and on occasion limited candidates' ability to extend their responses and reach the higher mark bands for Speaking and Writing.

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Candidates should be familiar with theme-specific vocabulary	Vocabulary list  Knowledge Organisers	Vocabulary list in the specification  Knowledge organisers to apply the vocabulary

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## **Component 1 Speaking**

## **Overview of the Component**

The speaking exam assesses candidate's speaking skills and consists of three parts: the role play, the photo card and the discussion. The candidates get a prescribed set of tasks from 1-9 for each task. Most candidates had been very well prepared and had been entered at the right level. Most centres were very good with the time keeping, making sure that the foundation tier exam did not exceed 9 minutes and that the higher tier exam did not exceed 12 minutes.

The candidates were well prepared this year and performed well. Most exams were well conducted.

In order to improve in future series:

- Candidates need to prepare for the role plays by just answering the task and not to embroider their answers
- The four questions in the photo card should not be treated like a mini conversation
- Candidates should learn to the essential question words
- The conversation is easier for the candidates when the questions are linked together.

# Comments on individual questions/sections

## **Role Play Foundation Tier**

Generally, the Role Plays were performed well, giving the weakest candidates the opportunity to gain a few points, giving just single word answers. Most candidates were able to ask questions.

Teachers should remember that they cannot change the wording of the questions, nor can they repeat the question after the candidate has given a wrong or half answer. The candidate's marks are likely to be affected if this is the case.

There were some tasks that the candidates found challenging due to lack of vocabulary knowledge:

- RP1 Seit wann wohnst du in der Stadt? This question proved to be challenging for most candidates.
- RP5 the word Geschenke was not well known
- RP6 Was ist dein Lieblingstag in der Schule? About half the candidates answered about their favourite subjects.
- RP8 Was recycelt deine Familie? This question was not very well answered.
- RP9 mit wem caused a few problems with candidates.

# **Role Play 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 Tier candidates, the Higher Tier candidates faced similar challenges with unknown words, phrases and question words.

The scene for Role Play 2 was often misunderstood and the candidates struggled with the first question.

- RP4 mit wem? caused a few problems with candidates.
- RP5 some candidates struggled with the question Was für Partymusik magst du?
- RP8 wie oft? Was not always recognised.

# **Photo Card Foundation and Higher Tier**

Most candidates were able to say a couple of sentences to describe the picture. The 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. One centre had taught the candidates the phrase: *das Foto erinnert mich an...* which provided more opportunities to respond to the photo. It was good to see that the candidates were able to conjugate the verb *tragen* accurately: *er/sie trägt*.

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.

- Card 2 Higher Tier some candidates found it difficult to respond to a question about winter holidays following on from a photo card depicting summertime.
- Card 3 Foundation Tier *Sind Autos ein Problem in deiner Stadt?* This was not often understood.
- Card 3 Higher Tier candidates were not often able to express the disadvantages of cycling in towns.

### **Conversation Foundation and Higher Tier**

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.

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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. There is a range of questions 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:

- Q1. This was answered well no areas to highlight.
- Q2. No areas to highlight.
- Q3. This question was generally answered well. Some candidates did not use the relevant letters, and some confused the positive and negative comments for section 2
- Q4. This question was answered well. there was some confusion with the time phrase mentioned some candidates answered with *einem Monat* instead of *einem Jahr*.
- Q5. Some candidates did not give sufficient detail for Section 1 (a). 'a big problem' does not summarise the conversation, which is about environmental problems. For section 2 (c) most candidates were able to identify travelling by bike as one of the correct answers.
- Q6. Most of section 1 was answered well. Many candidates answered Section 2 (d) incorrectly and wrote 'Marcus has never...eaten in a restaurant'. Candidates are encouraged to use context to make answers as accurate as possible. The rest of Section 2 was answered well.
- Q7. (a) No areas to highlight.
  - (b) Candidates lost marks on (b) which was worth 2 marks. Many candidates answered correctly with '1 million visitors', and a minority also gave 'arrive by train' or 'come from all over the world'. Candidates are encouraged to give answers which provide information relating to the question 'they visit the castle' is not sufficient information.
  - (c) No areas to highlight.

- (d) Some candidates wrote 'information' which does not give sufficient evidence of understanding. Candidates are advised to consider words out of context the word *Geschichte* has a general meaning, as well as referring to a school subject.
- Q8. (a) No areas to highlight.

Section 2: Successful candidates who knew topic specific vocabulary such as *Lebenslauf* and *Erfahrung* gained marks on this question.

Section 3: Many candidates answered correctly with the fact that work experience is not paid, and the experiences are often not relevant. Where candidates chose to write about tea or coffee, many lost marks because they did not understand the full meaning, and wrote about not being able to drink tea or coffee, rather than the fact that they **only** make tea and coffee as part of their duties. Here, candidates are advised to revise high frequency vocabulary such as *nur* as this changes the meaning of the answer.

- Q9. (a) No areas to highlight.
  - (b) More candidates identified 'read in bed' as the answer than the 'try audiobook' answer. Candidates are advised to practise identifying compound nouns such as *Hör-* and *Buch*, as well as the plural form *Bücher*.
  - (c) Some candidates did not give sufficient detail for this question, thus losing the mark if they wrote 'too expensive'. Candidates are advised to give context and sufficient detail, particularly at this point in the paper.
  - (d) Many candidates confused *Juni* with *Uni* which meant they were not awarded the mark. Candidates would benefit from revising pronunciation rules prior to this exam.

# **Higher Tier**

Questions 1, 2 and 3 are the same as questions 7, 8 and 9 on the foundation paper.

- Q4. Section 1: No areas to highlight.
  - Section 2: Some candidates confused two points as one, stating that 'politicians should create more jobs' this did not gain any marks. Candidates would benefit from practice in identifying two separate pieces of information in quick succession.
- Q5. No areas to highlight.
- Q6. No areas to highlight.
- Q7. (a) Some candidates lost marks due to confusion between 12 years ago and when he was 5. Candidates should listen for time markers, such as **vor** and **Jahre alt**, around the relevant numbers to ensure they gain marks.
  - (b) Some candidates lost marks and identified 'problems' in the wrong context. Candidates are advised to listen to the verb used before the cognate, especially when listening for the second time. This will ensure the answer is relevant and can gain the mark.
  - (c) No areas to highlight.
  - (d) Many candidates correctly identified froh and glücklich'.
- Q8. For the first section, many candidates identified 'they find learning difficult' as one correct answer. A few candidates gave insufficient detail such as 'missed school' which was not awarded a mark as the second reason.

For section 2, some candidates struggled to convey that parents sometimes wanted their children to repeat the school year, but that children did not want this. The successful candidates were able to answer this accurately. The other possible answers (2) were generally written by candidates.

For section 3, candidates generally answered well. Some candidates gave 'go to school in the holidays' as a response, which was not awarded the mark as it did not convey what was said.

- Q9. (a) No areas to highlight.
  - (b) Some candidates did not give sufficient information for this question, or merged two separate ideas such as 'she missed her friends in the North'. Candidates are advised to make sure they have not inferred too much when providing answers.
  - (c) This was generally answered well, with a good amount of detail provided. Some candidates did not give the plural answer 'art galleries', which was required.
  - (d) No areas to highlight.

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## **Component 3 Reading**

# **Overview of the Component**

Component 3 assesses AO3 (reading) and requires candidates to respond to a range of questions in English and German based on texts from a variety of contexts including adapted newspaper articles, advertisements and literary-type texts. The written extracts increase in length and complexity as the paper progresses. Candidates are also required to translate a short passage into English. The reading papers at both foundation and higher tier cover the full range of topics from the three broad themes.

Overall, candidates responded well to the demands of the paper, with the overwhelming majority of candidates entered at the appropriate tier.

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.

Candidates should avoid the use of pronouns in their answers as the ambiguity they cause often leads to marks being lost.

In the translation, candidates must read the task thoroughly to ensure that they translate every word. They should not treat it as a paraphrasing task, as this tends to result in details being missed.

In comparison to previous series, candidates fared slightly better in the summer 2024 paper.

#### **Foundation Tier**

- Q1. Most parts of this question were accessed well by candidates. Where possible, candidates should be encouraged not to use pronouns in their responses to avoid giving ambiguous responses. In part (b) (iii) some candidates did not recognise *frei* and gave answers using numbers they had seen in the text.
- Q2. This question was answered well by many candidates.
- Q3. Candidates understood the rubrics. The question was mostly well done, although *Dom* was not widely known.
- Q4. In part (b) many candidates did not make the link between *nur 5 Minuten…entfernt* from the text, and *in der Nähe* in the multiple-choice answers.
- Q5. Several parts of this question proved challenging. For part (a), very few candidates understood *ausschlafen*, although many were able to gain both marks from the other two possible answers available in the text (*keine Schule/Spaß haben*). *Mindestens*

- was often misinterpreted as "mindsets". Many candidates lost marks by their misinterpretation of *an einem Sontag im Monat* for "Sunday to Monday". The professions listed in part (c) caused issues for some candidates. *Krankenpfleger* was not widely recognised and *Polizisten* was often misunderstood for "politician".
- Q6. The first of the literary texts was reasonably well answered, except for the word *Herbst* which was not widely understood. As in question 1, some candidates lost marks in part (c) by using the possessive pronoun (*her* favourite month instead of the *mother's* favourite month) as this made the response ambiguous.
- Q7. Parts (b) and (d) were challenging for many candidates. In (d), many candidates did not provide the two verbs (buy and sell) in their responses, and there were many misinterpretations involving "online/internet shopping".
- Q8. (Q.1 Higher Tier) As the first crossover question with the higher tier paper, unsurprisingly, many foundation tier candidates found this question challenging. *Etwas süßes, Fahrer, Bildschirm* and *Unfall* were particularly problematic. Many candidates misunderstood why the snack van had cameras and sensors, stating that they were to prevent theft.
- Q9. (Q.2 Higher Tier) Again, foundation tier candidates found this more challenging than their higher tier counterparts. Many could not identify for part (b) that he did not know what job he would like to have. *Noten* was not well understood. Marks were lost in part (e) with ambiguous responses using the incorrect pronoun.
- Q10. In the translation, it is important for candidates to understand that every word needs to be translated. Marks were lost by omitting to translate *immer*, *zu*, *nur*, *gerne*, *leider*. Most candidates were able to answer the part about fruit and vegetables well and many identified the past tense in the final part of the translation.

# **Higher Tier**

- **Q**3. Mostly well done.
- Q4. Mostly well done.
- Q5. Nearly all candidates attempted this tick box question, with some achieving full marks.
- Q6. This question was challenging for many candidates. Particular issues were:
  - (a) Abendbrot not widely known. Many attempted to translate the title of the text to answer this question.
  - (c) Many candidates attempted to guess the answer.
  - (d) Some candidates gave responses relating to warm weather rather than warm food.
  - (e) Ernährung not well known and often confused for "experiences". Alltag was also not widely known.

- Q7. Parts (a) and (g) were generally well answered. However, the following words and phrases prevented many candidates from gaining marks in other parts of this question: *treffen wir uns/schütteln uns die Hände/Bank/fröhlich*. Once again, in part (h) ambiguity caused by use of pronouns lost marks for some candidates.
- Q8. This question was generally well handled, in particular parts (a), (c), (d) and (f). Whilst *unzerbrechlich* was rarely understood, candidates easily identified *billig* to gain the mark for (a). *Insel* was not recognised by all candidates for part (b). Part (e) was the most problematic, as key verbs were not identified.
- Q9. As already stated for the foundation tier translation, it is important that candidates translate every word. Omitting to translate words such as *auch, immer* and *viel* led to loss of marks. *Erstens* and *zweitens* caused issues for some. *Kennenlernen* was sometimes mistranslated as "learn". *Fließend* was not known by all candidates. Most candidates translated the section in the perfect tense well.

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## **Component 4 Writing**

## **Overview of the Component**

This component assesses candidates' ability to communicate in writing (AO4). It requires candidates to respond in German to a range of written tasks. Assessment in this component will also take account of knowledge of, and accurate application of, grammar and structures.

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.

In comparison to previous series, candidates fared slightly better in the summer 2024 paper.

## Comments on individual questions/sections

#### **Foundation Tier**

- Q1. This question was generally accessible for most candidates. The best responses used short, simple sentences with an accurate verb, reflecting good training by teachers in centres. The use of generic constructions such as *ich liebe/hasse* worked well even when the candidate had not fully understood the prompt. Candidates should be discouraged with this question from answering 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. Many candidates lost marks in their response to the prompt *Hausaufgaben* as they provided a singular verb, although some got around this issue with the use of *ich finde* ... A few candidates misinterpreted the prompt *Lehrer* and gave responses relating to what they were learning in school. Likewise, the prompt *Lieblingsfach* occasionally led to responses about candidates' favourite sport.
- Q2. Most candidates were able to give information and opinions about the first two bullet points (*Familie* and *Freunde*). A small number of candidates successfully used a tense to talk about past/future plans or activities with friends and family, even though this is not required for this question. The third bullet point however *Kleidung*, was not well understood by many candidates. Where this was the case, candidates either ignored the bullet point completely, precluding themselves from accessing the tops bands of the marks available for 'communication and content', or addressed the bullet point with one very generic sentence such as *ich finde Kleidung langweilig*. Where the latter happened, it was sometimes clear, that the candidate had not understood the meaning of the prompt. A small number of candidates attempted to construct sentences including *herausfinden* from the rubrics, which led to ambiguity and incoherence.

- Q3. The most popular choice for this question was option (c) (*Schulleben*), followed by (a) (*Transport*), with option (b) (*Lebensstil*) being to the least popular. A small number of candidates did not understand the rubrics of this question and attempted to address all three choices. Where this happened, candidates were not able to score well within the 'communication and content' section of the mark scheme. This question will always require candidates to demonstrate their ability to refer to past, present and future events. However, many foundation tier candidates were not able to accurately form the future and/or past tense. Responses often used quite simplistic vocabulary and grammatical structures, with limited complex structures. Knowledge of accurate word order was often insecure. Candidates should be encouraged to write a separate paragraph to clearly demonstrate their response for each bullet point. Whilst the rubric allows candidates to give further information that is relevant to the task, they should be discouraged from writing generic introductions and endings that have been learnt off by heart, as these tend to detract rather than enhance a performance.
  - (a) Reise was not always well understood. Different modes of transport sometimes not well known.
  - (b) Whilst this was the least popular choices, where it was chosen, it was generally answered reasonably well.
  - (c) Not all candidates were able to accurately write about their daily routine in school. Some candidates wrote more generally about the school canteen as opposed to what they were going to eat there next week.
- Q4. Most candidates attempted all the sentences in the translation question but were often hindered by their lack of vocabulary. The formation of the question in (c) once again, was problematic for many candidates. Constructions of the perfect and future tenses in (d) and (e) were not always well known.
  - (a) No areas to highlight.
  - (b) No areas to highlight.
  - (c) Despite this being a common construction tested in the translation paper, many candidates were unfamiliar with *Wie findest du ....?*
  - (d) benutzen not well known. Many candidates could not accurately form the perfect tense.
  - (e) Future tense generally handled better than the perfect in (d).

# **Higher Tier**

- Q1. As one would expect, the crossover question was generally handled much more confidently and securely by higher tier candidates than by their foundation tier counterparts. There was evidence of use of some very impressive and varied vocabulary. The formation of different tenses and complex grammatical structures were often secure and accurately used. Some candidates, however, did not address all three bullet points or confused the final bullet point by writing about school trips rather than how they would travel to school.
- Q2. As with FT Q.3, a small number of candidates did not understand the rubrics of this question and attempted to write about tasks from all three choices. Where this happened, candidates were not able to score well within the 'communication and content' section of the mark scheme. Candidates who planned their essays tended to write more structured pieces and scored well. These candidates often used mnemonics to help them to remember to use a variety of complex grammatical structures. The first bullet point in this question is generally best responded to using impersonal language. As some candidates attempted to reach the word count for this question, the accuracy of their grammar tended to be less secure.
  - (a) Some candidates provided good responses to this option, giving in-depth explanations of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and were able to discuss their own recent health activities and future intentions.
  - (b) Candidates generally responded well to the two bullet points and often included additional but relevant information such as details about their dream or past holidays. Some candidates missed the idea of summer holidays with friends and wrote more generically about summer holidays, thus limiting their marks for 'communication and content'.
  - (c) Some candidates only wrote about their own part-time job as opposed to the importance of them for teenagers. A few candidates did not understand *Taschengeld*.
- Q3. At Higher Tier, the translation task will be between 50-55 words. Therefore, candidates can expect the five sentences to contain complex structures. The assessment also tested candidates' ability to write in a variety of tenses.
  - (a) Nearly all candidates did not know the word for 'pupils' and used *Studenten* instead leading to a loss of marks.
  - (b) Many candidates did not know the modal verb *müssen* and where it was used, many made word order errors.
  - (c) The word 'unfair' was not widely known. Most candidates however, used correct word order after *weil* in the second clause of this sentence.
  - (d) The words for 'lunch' and 'canteen' caused issues for some candidates. The formation of the perfect tense was not always accurate and word issue errors were not uncommon.
  - (e) Surprisingly at higher tier, not all candidates knew the word for 'Wednesday'. Many candidates accurately applied the time, manner, place word order rule accurately.

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