GCE A Level Examiners' Report

German

A Level

Summer 2026

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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.[1]

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/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 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the 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 and PRS (eduqas.co.uk)

[1] ***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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Exam Results Analysis	Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
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Contents

	Page
Executive summary	5
Component 1	6
Component 2	9
Component 3	13
Supporting you – useful contacts and links	18

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Executive Summary

Overall, this year, candidates have performed very well across all three components. Principal Examiners were pleased with the attention to detail given to responses this year. Once again, it was pleasant to see the breadth of candidate engagement with the material for Component 3 and different insights into the prescribed works. Visiting Examiners were also very impressed with the range of IRP topics and the research conducted by candidates. In future series, it will be key for candidates to be prepared to respond to any questions on all topics, throughout Component 2, especially in the translation questions and in the Card element of Component 1, where knowledge of topic-specific vocabulary is essential. Centres and candidates should be commended for their preparation and performance this year.

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GCE GERMAN

GCE A level

Summer 2026

COMPONENT 1: SPEAKING

Overview of the Component

- Component 1 assesses the oral ability of candidates, and all AOs are assessed at various points in the exam. AO1 tests the ability to interact, understand speech and respond. AO2 tests the ability to respond to written text on the stimulus card and to research done for the independent research project. AO3 assesses the accuracy of language, linguistic range and variety and pronunciation and intonation. AO4 tests knowledge and insight into aspects of German culture and the ability to argue and support viewpoints. Please note that A03 is not assessed on the two-minute presentation, although, weak language may well affect communication and therefore the AO4 mark.

- For the IRP – Part 1 - candidates choose their own area of interest. As in 2025, there was a very interesting range of topics covered in the Independent Research Project (IRP). The IRP is a feature that makes the modern language A level sit very well with any combination of other A levels. Themes researched reflect candidates' other interests and A Level choices, e.g. History, Economics, Music and Sport. The independent nature of this study task is excellent preparation for university, and most candidates rise very well to the challenge. The stimulus card - Part 2 - can relate to any one of the 12 themes on the syllabus. Several candidates expressed disappointment with the cards allocated, which underlines the fact that they need to be prepared to speak on **ANY** of the 12 themes.

- The standard of German was generally high, and candidates were in the main very well prepared. A high level of quality German teaching is evident in candidates' ability to talk convincingly, especially about their IRP topic. The majority of candidates appeared confident and relaxed and very few performances were significantly affected by nerves.

- As in 2025, there were a lot of "A" and "A*" level performances, with very few D and E level candidates. The high performers did include some native or near native speakers, but there were also a large number of candidates with no native speaker background, who demonstrated an excellent level of German.

Comments on individual questions/sections

PART 1: IRP and Discussion

A good IRP presentation lays out the research findings, making it obvious from what is said that a wide variety of research has been undertaken. The best presentations involved not just reading internet sites but also watching documentaries, interviews or film. There were excellent presentations on a wide range of topics, including Kaiser Wilhelm II, the effect of electric cars on the German car industry and the Arminius monument. It is always refreshing when a candidate finds a topic about which the examiner knows nothing! It is good practice to refer to a couple of sources by name, but it is not necessary and indeed there is not enough time to do this with every source. Examiners can tell whether research has been done! It is important to choose a topic that is rooted in German culture. Some candidates

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chose to talk about a film or book; this is only appropriate if it gives them insight into German culture and society. It is difficult to achieve this with a story like “In der Strafkonie” or a film such as “Die fetten Jahre sind vorbei”, whereas a candidate who talked about the depiction of the Stasi in “Das Leben der Anderen” was able to successfully relate it to the culture of East Germany. The IRP pro forma needs to cite approximately five sources in German. A very small number of candidates cited predominantly English sources; they may of course read some English material for background, but they MUST mainly use and cite German sources for their research, as this will feed into their language as well as their knowledge.

The choice of the IRP topic and title - usually a question works best - is crucial, and this is the one area where teachers can and should give advice. A small number of candidates would have benefitted from more advice. Overlapping on a theme from the syllabus is certainly possible, but it is important that a particular angle is chosen. For example, an IRP about life in the former East Germany suggests knowledge based on classwork rather than independent research. The topic should demonstrate independent research, which is best shown by communicating information and ideas which are not “in the public domain”, i.e. not what every German teacher and student already knows. With a handful of candidates the opposite was the case: they chose a topic in which they were very interested, for example mental health in Germany,but struggled to communicate their ideas in German. The IRP should give candidates an opportunity to fulfil the demands of the Task 1b mark scheme, especially AO4, i.e. to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the culture and society of German-speaking countries and to argue ideas and points of view, with relevant evidence. So the topic needs to include “issues” and allow opportunity for argument and controversy.

The best IRP presentations and discussions avoid narration and express insight and analysis of their topic. This is challenging for A Level candidates, but many were very successful. There is a big difference, for example, between citing facts and figures about the Weimar Republik, and expressing considered views as to **why** it was successful or unsuccessful. Indeed, some candidates rather overdid the statistics; they show that research has been done, but don’t demonstrate insight or understanding. It is also worth commenting here that a few candidates repeatedly referred to sources during the discussion; this is not necessary, as AO2 is not assessed in this section.

Most candidates knew their topic well and had plenty of meaningful things to say in the discussion. There were a very small number who had put all their effort into the presentation and had little more to say in the discussion, repeating points already made, but these were a small minority. This seemed to happen more often with candidates who had chosen to research a person, for example a German scientist. Also, if there is nothing controversial about the person, it is difficult to score highly on AO4. On any topic, candidates need to ensure there is enough to talk about. They can’t just repeat in the discussion what they have said in their presentation. It is worth remembering that the discussion is worth 30 marks and the presentation is only worth 10, so thorough preparation is needed.

PART 2: STIMULUS CARD

Most candidates handled the stimulus card well and demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the sub-theme covered in the discussion. The best candidates interacted well with the examiner and were able to answer in detail and always relate their answers to the culture of Germany or German-speaking countries. They had obviously prepared “German” examples and information on the topic. They were also able to ask relevant questions which fed into and advanced the conversation. The AO3 mark for Task 2 was often one band lower than for Task 1b, presumably because candidates had prepared more thoroughly for their IRP.

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A small number of candidates lacked the knowledge of things German and/or the vocabulary to talk about the topic. A few candidates ended up talking about situations in the UK, which are not relevant to the mark scheme. There are two main areas where some candidates could improve:

- the questions. Questions should always be “AO4” questions, i.e. relate to the theme, and shouldn’t be personal e.g. *Bist du nach Ostdeutschland gefahren?* It was noticeable that a lot of candidates asked personal questions this year. It is a good idea to think of possible questions in the preparation time, but candidates should be able to adjust those questions and think on their feet if “their” questions have already been covered in the conversation so far, rather than clinging to a question that is no longer appropriate. A few candidates just “batted back” questions the examiner had asked, which did not demonstrate their own ability. A good strategy is to ask at least one question early in the exam, after the first compulsory question has been answered.
- AO2. For full marks, candidates have to demonstrate “full understanding of the stimulus material”. These are easy marks to get and can be prepared in the preparation time, but some candidates – often the very good ones – go straight on to their own thoughts and ideas and so forfeit some of the AO2 marks. To demonstrate full understanding, they should not read out the text but explain it in their own words.

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GERMAN

GCE A level

Summer 2026

COMPONENT 2 – LISTENING, READING AND TRANSLATION

Overview of the Component

The stimulus material was in German, based on the two themes at A-level about social issues and trends and political, intellectual and artistic culture.

Section A: Listening Questions which included multiple choice, gap-fill answers, summary/assimilation style questions and comprehension questions in German.

Section B: Reading Questions based on texts provided in a supplementary reading folder which included true/false statements, multiple choice, gap-fill answers, summary/assimilation style questions and comprehension questions and answers in German. Both sections were testing skills in AO1 and AO2 and could achieve 60 marks.

Section C: Translation testing AO2 and AO3 skills: Two unseen passages: one from German into English and one from English into German which were both divided into 20 sections with a maximum achievement mark of 40.
100 marks maximum in total.

This component caused no major problems for most candidates. In section A and B, candidates achieved very high marks, whereas the translations seemed to be slightly more challenging. This year many candidates managed the translations into English (question 9) better than into German (question 10). This was a shift from last year's exam where most candidates manged both translations equally well. Only very few candidates omitted whole sentences which had a major impact on their marks. It is important for the candidates to be aware that it is better to write some words rather than nothing, even if they are not sure.

The main difficulty in the translation into English was in section 16: 'nur selten wird das Engagement von Freiwilligen', which was translated by most candidates as: 'the engagement of the volunteers' This is a close, 'false friend' translation which does not capture the meaning of commitment or involvement.

In question 10, section 20, the word 'bloodshed' was not known by most. Closely linked translations such as 'Blut, Gewalt, Blutverlust, Tod' were accepted. It was surprising that a number of candidates did not seem as familiar with vocabulary around the unification of Germany as expected. As a general feedback, candidates need to be careful to pay attention the tenses, modal verbs, plurals and conjunctions.

Most candidates had been very well prepared and have shown particularly good listening and reading skills.

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Comments on individual questions/sections

Q.1: the candidates listened to a podcast about Ibrahim Bah, a refugee living in Germany. Most were able to summarise the key sentences matching the pointers. They did not need to write full sentences, some however, did. If two details are required, the candidate needs to be careful to include these and pay attention to positive/negative sentences. ‘er durfte NICHT arbeiten und Deutsch lernen.’ Point 5 and 6 were sometimes confused, but that was acceptable as the answers were very close.

Q.2: Identifying the correct words, was nearly always correct.

Q.3: Matching the beginning of the sentence with the correct end in listening task 2, was managed well by most candidates. Sentence 5 had 2 possible endings: ‘Jugendliche könnten um Unterstützung…d: von Verwandten oder Feunden fragen or i: bei den Prüfungen bitten. Both were accepted.

Q.4: A listening comprehension task, an interview with an influencer in Austria, was handled similarly well. Many alternative answers were accepted, especially in question 4, 6,8.
In 4: ‚es gibt lange Arbeitszeiten, ein Video braucht 1-3 Stunden, man muss 2-3 Videos pro tag posten, ein Videoplan ist sehr lang‘. 8: ‚man kann reisen, man bekommt viel Geld, man bekommt Produkte gratis, man kann ein tolles Leben haben‘. If the answer was too brief, such as , es ist einfach’, this was not accepted.

Q.5: The reading text ‘Wie Melodien im Wind’ with true and false answers, was managed very well by most candidates. The corrections were not always clear: (b) ‚sie musste im Internat bleiben‘, or ‚‘sie musste zu Hause bleiben‘, or ‚ihre Freunde sind im Ausland‘ was acceptable.

Q.6: Finding synonym words in the text was nearly always correct. (e) kaputt machen – beschädigen or zerstören is correct. For (f) Nachbarschaft- Umgebung, Dorfbewohner was acceptable , but not Stadt.

Q.7: the reading extract ‘Osterbrunnen’ with multiple choice questions provided no problems and full marks were nearly always awarded.

Q.8: The answers about the reading text 3 “Probleme von Sintis in Trier” were largely very successful. For Q1, there were many alternatives acceptable such as ‚Schimpfwörter, schlechte Wörter, Zigeuner, an die Tür geschmiert.‘
Q3 could have two different answers such as: ‘der Hund hat gebellt,or ‘sie hat ein Motorrad gehört‘
In Q6 the candidate should be aware that if the answer requires two details that they should write two different details in full sentences. (sie werden im Garten beschimpft, sie werden mit Flaschen und Steinen beworfen, der Sohn wird von Fahrradfahrern beleidigt, sie leben in Schrecken...‘).
No marks were awarded if complete sections were lifted from the text.
Minor errors in spelling and grammar which do not affect the meaning were tolerated.

Q.9: The translation into English was very well managed by most candidates. As the content of the translation was an area of study of the A-level syllabus: ‘immigration and refugees’, the candidates were familiar with the vocabulary. If the candidate slightly misspelled a word and there was no ambiguity, the mark was awarded.

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The main challenges in the 20 sections were:

1. ‘Bilder’ is plural and should be translated as such: pictures, images. Paintings which could be a correct translation in a different context was not accepted.
2. ‘gingen um die ganze Welt‘: frequently ‚ganze‘/whole was left out. Variations of ‚gingen‘ were accepted such as ‘circulated, travelled, spread’. However, it needed to be in past tense.

3 to 6 were unambiguous.

7. ‘Notunterkünfte’: ‘Not ‘was not always recognised as ‘emergency’ but ‘not’.
8. ‘in der ganzen Stadt: throughout,whole’. Town was not accepted as Munich needs to be recognised as a city.
9. ‘lange bevor: long before or way before’- no issues here in the translation.
10. ‘’Land Bayern: here there were several difficulties encountered. Correct is ‘state /federal state/ county of Bavaria’. Some used the German name Bayern which was not acceptable, neither is ‘country or region’.
12. different variations were accepted for ‘gemeistert’: managed, tackled, mastered, had under control, took over, took into their own hands.
14. ‘Krieg und Gewalt’: some candidates used the conjunction ‘or’ here which is not correct.
15. ‘gelungenes Willkommen’: several variations for ‘gelungen’ were accepted here: ‘warm, happy, hearty, worthy, successful, fitting’.
16. this was the main challenge in Q9: ‘Engagement von Feiwilligen’. Many candidates wrote ‘engagement’, a literal transferal or false friend. This is usually used referring to a romantic relationship and does not capture the meaning such as involvement, commitment, dedication. Only a few candidates understood this.
17. ‘gewürdigt’ was a challenge here and different options were accepted, such as ‘rewarded, recognised, appreciated, valued, praised’.

18-20 did not pose any difficulties for most.

Q.10: The translation into German was more difficult for most candidates. Again, the topic area ought to be well prepared within the syllabus about German reunification.

A few candidates excelled with excellent translations into German with an authentic tone.

If the candidate slightly misspelled a word and there was no ambiguity, the mark was awarded.

The main challenges in the 20 sections were:

1. ‘happened’ is past tense and needs to be translated either as imperfect or past perfect: passierte or ist passiert.
2. ‘that changed’: is a relative sentence and needs to have the structure ‘das die deutsche Geschichte veränderte’. Some candidates missed out ‘für immer’.
3. ‘at a press conference’: the preposition could vary from ‘auf, bei, an’.
4. there were more difficulties in the translation of ‘ruling party’ and ‘announced’. Variations were accepted: ‘Regierungspartei, führende Partei, Hauptpartei, grösste Partei‘ and‘ kündigte..an, erklärte, verlautete, Bescheid gegeben‘. But ‚hat gesagt‘ was too weak for the meaning of ‘announced ‘.
5. ‘ab sofort’ had different translations accepted: pötzlich, sofort, jetzt. ‘could’ needs to be in the correct tense: ‘könnten’.
8. ‘streamed’ was a challenge to many candidates. ‘kamen’ or ‘sind gegangen’ was not accepted.
10. ‚overwhelmed‘ was translated correctly by some candidates as ‘überfordert’ but not ‘überwältigt’. ‘Border official’ should have been a familiar vocabulary, but some candidates opted for new inventions such as ‘Grenzoffizielle, Grenzbewacher, offizielle Leute’, which was also accepted.
11. ‘barriers’ is plural and needed to be recognised as such.

12-15 posed little difficulty

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16. ‘miracle’ was not always known as ‘Wunder’, but alternatives such as ‘Traum, unerwartetes Geschenk, Unglaubliches’ were accepted.
18. ‘division of Germany’ should have been a term every candidate should know, but some did not recognise this as ‘Teilung Deutschlands’
20. this was the most challenging section in Q10: ‘bloodshed’ was tackled by many with alternatives such as ‘ohne Blut, Gewalt, Blutverlust, Blutverschwendung, Tod’.

In summary, the candidates did very well in section A and B. In section C, it appeared that the marks achieved in question 9 were higher than those in question 10. Sometimes there was a big discrepancy of candidates achieving 14/15 marks and Q9 and only 4/5 in Q10. The reasons for this are not clear but generally analysed, the candidates find a translation into English easier than into German where they need to pay particular attention to the German grammar. It is assumed that the candidates are equally familiar with both topic areas of ‘refugee crisis’ and’ reunification’, as they are part of the German A-level syllabus. In general, candidates must pay attention to the tenses, plurals and the difference between the conjunction ‘dass’ and the article ‘das’.

The practice of proof reading and avoiding anglicised phrases needs to be emphasised. Candidates should be encouraged to attempt all questions.

A pleasing result overall for most candidates but the translation into German appeared slightly more difficult than last year’s Q10.

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GERMAN

GCE A level

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COMPONENT 3 - WRITING

Overview of the Component

Often referred to as the essay paper, this component assesses candidates' ability to analyse and respond to literature and/or film based on set works. For the exam itself candidates need to write two 300-word essays. For each work there is a choice of two questions.
As in previous years centres generally chose to teach a written work and a film. The most popular works studied on the written works side were Schlink's novel *Der Vorleser*, and Dürrenmatt's play *Der Besuch der alten Dame* (n.b. these are available as a film/ performances to view, which can be a useful aid to teaching. However, these cannot replace the originals as directors often adapt texts for screen performance) and on the film side, Becker's *Good Bye, Lenin!*
All of these works are very accessible to students as they deal with ideas which are relevant to A level students in an interesting and entertaining way.

The essays are marked according to two assessment objectives:
A03 – Candidates need to manipulate language accurately, using a wide range of lexis, grammatical structures and idiom, doing so in an appropriate style. A neat summary of this is: grammar, lexis and style.
To do well for this AO, candidates should pay particular attention to verbs (formation and positioning).
A04 – Candidates need to show knowledge and understanding and respond critically and analytically to a literary work or film. This means making points with reference to the work studied in line with the question selected, supporting the points by using evidence and forming all of this into a discussion/argument. A neat summary of this is: ideas.
To do well for this AO, candidates need to demonstrate that they can not only have relevant knowledge of the works but go beyond this to discuss/analyse issues arising.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Overall students produced many "high quality" essays, and they were clearly able to respond to the films and written works in line with the set questions. This would indicate good teaching and preparation for this quite testing part of the exam, on the part of teachers. I also sense that candidates had done a lot of their own thinking and research on aspects of these works which would potentially come up in what can be seen as an unpredictable paper.
I am always interested to see what candidates bring up, as every new cohort has new perspectives. An interesting insight for me this year must be in connection with an essay written on the film *Good Bye, Lenin!* where candidates were asked to comment on the significance of a key relationship. One candidate pointed out how Alex and Lara's relationship mirrored a relationship presented early on in the film of two dolly figures who got "married" in space – one from East Germany and one from Russia. This is something which hadn't occurred to me, despite years of teaching this wonderful film.

Teachers may find the following points useful in preparing candidates for Component 3 in future series, based on issues which came up this year. I will divide my comments into two sections, reflecting the attainment objectives:

Linguistic observations (these relate more to A03)

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To gain a high score for accuracy, the most important element in any sentence or clause is the verb. Verbs need to be correctly formed and positioned, and I would strongly advise teachers to make this a specific focus throughout the course as this grammatical point is vital for this and other components. Of course, cases, genders, adjectival endings etc are all important, but if these are incorrectly formulated, communication is usually not impeded. This is not true for verbs. Verbs are a specific focus in marking for A03, and lack of accuracy often brings a mark down. As the paper required two essays, mark loss could potentially be doubled. On the other hand, correct use of verbs, including the use of different moods, often attracted higher marks.

My advice to candidates is to write in a semi-formal style. Writing is not at all the same as speaking and needs to be even clearer. An exam marker has no opportunity to ask for clarification, so the message has to be conveyed “first time”. Using full sentences greatly increases clarity (i.e. with at least one verb).

Accurate punctuation also helps make the candidate’s message clearer. It may sound pedantic, but incorrect and inconsistent capitalisation and use of commas can obscure what the candidate wanted to say. In a similar way omission (or even erroneous inclusion) of vowel modification may change what a candidate intended to convey (e.g. “warst” instead of “wärst”). Candidates should also pay attention to the correct use of “konnte” or “könnte”, and other common verbs.

Comparative and superlative forms of adjectives need particular attention. Many essays involved comparison of different characters, scenes etc. and candidates need to take care in forming these.

There were several small but significant errors which came up this year, which I will list:

Korrumpiert but Korruption;

“dass” instead of “das”;

lügen an/ belügen;

sowohl .... als auch..... (not beide)

All of the above bullet points could be minimized if candidates spent around 10 minutes checking their language, once “finished” writing. These 10 minutes should be seen as an essential part of composing the essays, and not an optional extra.

General observations (these relate more to A04)

Many essays showed evidence of good planning. This was clear from the structure of the essays. Some really flowed from an introduction to the main body and then a conclusion. I would recommend that the introduction should be no longer than 30 words and would suggest the same for the conclusion. Although structure does not feature explicitly in the mark scheme, it is implied.

I would furthermore suggest candidates spend 10 minutes selecting the question they want to address, and then write a plan, including the ideas they want to use, and the language they will include (e.g. a “wenn” conditional clause).

Having a plan helps keep the essay relevant, which is a key way to gain a better mark.

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Many candidates used structuring phrases successfully as paragraph starters e.g „Erstens möchte ich über …. schreiben"; „Zweitens….." „Drittens….." As each essay is marked separately, these paragraph starters can be used in both essays (and not lose marks for lack of range).

Candidates would also be advised roughly to stick to the advisory 300-word length. Often essays exceeding this number tended to become irrelevant or repetitive, so candidates rarely did themselves a favour by writing more. The time spent doing so might have been better spent in planning and checking.

Teachers may find the following points useful in preparing candidates for Component 3 in future series based on issues which came up this year:

Comments on individual questions

Q.1 Franz Kafka Die Verwandlung

Of this essay pair, most candidates chose to write about the positive aspects of Gregor's transformation (option b). Despite the strange physical metamorphosis Gregor underwent, there were positive effects, both for him and his family. Candidates were well able to identify, and comment on them. Many candidates were also able to incorporate historical and social details, where relevant, and bring Gregor's transformation into a broader context.

The other essay on the drei Zimmerherren was also tackled well, with candidates noting their physical and psychological significance and how they affected the relationships within the Samsa household. Candidates also made interesting comments on their anonymity and composite nature, and how identity was a key idea in this story.

Q.2 Karin König Ich fühl mich so fifty-fifty

In this short novel, the main character Sabine was subject to many changes, and this could be seen as a story about her growing up. Candidates especially wrote insightful essays on option a) about the personal changes she went through and the implications of these changes for her relationships and for her life in general. Many essays also successfully wove historical and social details into their written work.

The other option was more to do with the author's writing technique, and what effect the use of letters had in the novel. Although fewer candidates opted for this, they still identified some interesting things e.g. that the narrative perspective changed from Sabine's to that of the letter writer, meaning the book wasn't entirely "subjective".

Q.3 Friedrich Dürrenmatt Der Besuch der alten Dame

A great number of candidates studied this play and of these the vast majority wrote about the extent to which justice could be bought in the context of the play, and the significance of the Bürgermeister's words in this connection (option a). Candidates wrote often fascinating essays about whether justice (or revenge) was bought in the play, and the implications for the town of Güllen. They also commented on hypocrisy and how quickly the inhabitants of Güllen, including the Bürgermeister, turned against Alfred Ill. Many candidates referred to when and where the author was writing about, as this clearly had a bearing on the play's message(s). Some very insightful essays also dealt with the implications for capitalist society.

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Q.4 - no areas to highlight.

Q.5 - no areas to highlight.

Q.6 Bernhard Schlink Der Vorleser

This remains a popular book. The bulk of candidates opted for b), where they had to comment on the power dynamics in Michael and Hanna's relationship. Some of the best essays identified how and why these changed throughout the novel. They were also able to tie this changing relationship in with the situation in post-war Germany, illustrating that the two characters could be viewed as representatives of different generations with different views of and relationships with Nazi Germany.

Although not as popular, option a) was a question about Michael's narrative perspective. Some candidates had obviously thought carefully about this and were able to write about the extent to which Michael was reliable as a narrator, and its implications.

Q.7 Wolfgang Becker Good Bye, Lenin!

Both essay options attracted similar numbers of responses, although option a), about Lara and Alex's relationship was chosen more often. Some candidates wrote mainly about Lara's character (reflecting a previously set question, perhaps), but not so much about the relationship, which of course involves two characters. This underlies the point that candidates must answer the set question. There is latitude on how the question is interpreted, and credit is awarded for different takes of the question. Focussing however exclusively on one part of a relationship cannot be seen as answering the whole question. On the other hand, some high scoring candidates were able to comment on how their relationship developed and its significance both within the film and more broadly.

The other essay title was a comparison of the two parties we see in this film. There was much to write about, but higher scoring essays dealt very briefly with more superficial observations (e.g. both parties had guests) allowing more time and space to devote to commenting on the significance of the similarities and differences for post Wende Germany.

There were also some interesting comments on the scale, the tone and the music in each party.

Q.8 - Dennis Gansel Die Welle

Although not one of the more popular films, Die Welle has much food for thought and is generally enjoyed and appreciated by A level students. Most candidates who wrote essays on this film chose to write about the role of courage or lack thereof in this film (i.e. option b). The essays showed that candidates had clearly thought about this and were able to apply this to characters within the film, and comment more generally on the importance of standing up for what is right, despite peer pressure.

Q.9 - Hans Weingartner Die fetten Jahre sind vorbei

Most of the candidates who studied this film chose to comment on the message left behind by Jan, Jule and Peter in their flat, which was option b). Change was a key idea in this film and was indeed what the Edukator group was fighting for. Some of the best essays made connections between this message and change within characters like Hardenberg, and indeed the three younger characters. Some candidates even managed to go beyond the film and talk about how we should all change.

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Q.10 Florian Henckel von Donnersmark Das Leben der Anderen

Although commenting on a leitmotif might sound a bit daunting, equal numbers of candidates opted for this question as did for the other option. Candidates were able to comment with insight on the various instances of cleanliness and the need to get and be “clean” in a physical (e.g. Christa-Maria Sieland in the shower), psychological and political way. Many candidates showed good understanding of this idea within the context of the film and within East German society.

The other option (b) was to do with Dreyman’s visit to the former government centre where, in a key scene he finds out about the Stasi’s observation of him and crucially about his “guardian angel” HGW XX/7. This led to many fascinating essays on the significance of the scene itself and implications for the rest of the story.

Q.11 - no areas to highlight.

Q.12 - no areas to highlight.

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