



Pearson

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Subsidiary
In German (WGN01) Unit 1: Spoken Expression
and Response

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Introduction

This is an 8–10 minute assessment in two sections that total 40 marks with 15 minutes' preparation time.

In advance of the examination, the student chooses two of the four specified general topic areas (GTA) to prepare.

The GTAs are:

- Youth matters
- Lifestyle, health and fitness
- Environment and travel
- Education and employment.

A randomisation grid informs the teacher which of the two chosen areas will be tested. The student is told this immediately before the preparation time begins.

Section A requires students to respond to four Pearson-set questions on a stimulus related to one of the student's chosen general topic areas (GTA).

Section B requires the teacher/examiner to engage the student in a discussion that, although still relating to the same GTA and its linked subtopics, moves away from the main focus of the stimulus.

Stimulus cards are provided by Edexcel for each area. These form the assessment for section A. Before starting the examination, the students have 15 minutes to prepare with the stimulus card provided. They may make notes of up to one side of A4 in this time, which they may refer to during the examination.

In Part A, the student is asked 4 questions relating to the stimulus card which are set by Edexcel. These questions are mandatory and may be repeated, but for the purpose of fair assessment across all centres, they **must not be re-phrased**. The first two questions relate specifically to information in the stimulus material, the second two relate to aspects of the subtopic, upon which the stimulus text is based.

For question 1, it is expected that the student will manipulate the wording of the text in order to arrive at a complete answer to the question. A lift of information from the stimulus text will not provide sufficient information to answer the question completely. This question targets information in the first paragraph of the stimulus text. There are three possible elements to the answer to question 1 and students should try to include as many elements as they are able.

For question 2, it is expected that the student will find the answer in the second paragraph. It will be necessary to manipulate the language found in the stimulus text to arrive at a complete answer.

For questions 3 and 4 it is expected that the student will give answers, which are as full and as detailed as they are able, drawing on the research that they undertook on the GTA, in preparation for the examination.

The students' understanding of this stimulus specific topic area is marked out of 4. The four marks are not directly allocated as one mark per question. The statement in the mark grid, which best matches the entire performance of section A, will dictate the mark awarded.

In Part B, the teacher examiner must initiate a discussion about the general topic area chosen by the randomisation grid. The teacher examiner must move away from the subtopic of the stimulus card to more general discussion of the topic area and its linked subtopics. The subtopics of each area are stated in the specification. The students must attempt to show a clear understanding of the chosen topic, and use the research they completed in advance of the examination in order to do this.

The student's knowledge and understanding of the general topic area is marked out of a total of 10. The marks of 5 for Quality of Language (Accuracy), 5 for Quality of Language (Range of Lexis) and 16 for Response apply to the test as a whole.

It is important that the full test last at least eight minutes. If the test is too short, examiners follow the conventions stated in the marking guidance which is available to centres as part of the mark schemes via the Edexcel website. The examiner will stop assessing tests beyond ten minutes, and will base their judgements on the performance offered up to the time limit.

Choice of GTA

The most popular combination of topic areas chosen by students was Youth Matters and Lifestyle, Health and Fitness. Therefore, these two topics were tested almost equally as often. Environment and travel was tested more frequently than Education and employment, however, both of these topics were chosen far less frequently by students in comparison to Youth Matters and Lifestyle, Health and Fitness.

Application on the Marking Criteria

Understanding Stimulus Specific A02

To arrive at a mark, examiners consider primarily the mark band descriptions, rather than the number of "correct" answers. A response would attain full marks if the student correctly identified all elements to questions 1 and 2, sufficiently manipulating the language in the stimulus text to directly answer the question. For example, in Youth Matters card 1, there would be manipulation of the pronoun "ich" to the third person in the answer to question 1.

The student would also provide developed, justified answers to questions 3 and 4, which considered more than one implication and used examples to illustrate answers.

Quality of Language – Accuracy

To access three or more marks, students need to show accuracy in basic principles, such as subject / verb agreements, tense formation and word order. At three marks, communication may be impeded at times, either due to pronunciation issues, or grammatical errors. To access full marks, communication must be clear at all times, and the student will demonstrate the ability to pronounce German well enough to be understood without undue difficulty. There may be minor errors in case agreements and complex structures, as well as the occasional major error, but these will be outweighed by a generally accurate response.

Quality of Language – Range of Lexis

To assess the performance in this area, the grammar list in the specification is considered, and examiners listen for a wide range of specified structures in order to award the higher marks. In addition to this, the GTA is important, as examiners are standardised to listen for, and reward, a range of **topic specific** lexis.

Spontaneity and Development

Students are assessed here on the ability to communicate spontaneously in speech. Spontaneous use of language occurs when students use their knowledge of structures, lexis and the GTA and apply it appropriately in response to questions. The discussion should develop naturally, and build on the answers to previous questions. It should not be a list of pre-determined questions devised in advance of the examination. Development is considered as the ability to explain, exemplify and illustrate points, and draw conclusions.

Knowledge and Understanding – General Topic Area

It is expected that students will undertake preparatory work in their two chosen topic areas in advance of the examination. There must be evidence of knowledge and understanding, beyond what is considered general knowledge and awareness, in order to satisfy the criteria for the highest marks in this section. Good or excellent knowledge and understanding can be demonstrated by referring to independent research that has taken place in preparation for the examination. Knowledge which is based entirely within the student's personal experiences is not sufficient to satisfy the terms "many" or a "wealth" of ideas, stated in the mark grid.

Specific Comments on Stimulus Card tasks

Youth Matters cards 1A/B

Q4 on card 1A showed that students understood the word "Druck" well, but

Q4 card 1B which contained the word "wünschenswert" was not as well known. Students who addressed the full implications of "inwiefern" tended to score more highly.

Youth Matters cards 2A/B

Q1 – Many students only offered one idea from the text in response to this question, but most students were able to offer an answer to the rest of the questions.

Lifestyle, Health and Fitness cards 1A/B

Q3 - The distinctions between Trendsportarten and traditionelle Sportarten were often not made clear by students. "Besser als" on card 3B often did not result in the comparison that it was trying to illicit.

Lifestyle, Health and Fitness cards 2A/B

Q1 invited quite detailed answers from most students, but question 2 often prompted answers that had missed the meaning off the text.

Q3 on card 2A showed that most students could explain why traditional food is important, but missed the personal element in the question.

Environment and Travel Cards 1A/B

Q4 highlighted that "Restmüll" was not a widely known lexis, whilst the rest of the question appeared to be well understood.

Environment and Travel Cards 2A/B

These cards appeared to be well understood by students, both the texts and the accompanying questions.

Education and Employment cards 1A/B

The few students that attempted this task showed that the word "Gleichaltrige," was not well known.

Education and Employment cards 2A/B

There were no significant patterns noticed with this stimulus card.

Summary

For subsequent series, the following points should be noted.

- Rephrasing questions for section A will render a student's response as void, as it may give an unfair advantage.
- Question 1 on the stimulus card refers to the first paragraph only and will have 3 possible elements for the answer, which must be communicated by the student in his or her own words, in order to be considered a full answer. Question 2 will relate to the second paragraph, and the student must manipulate the language from the text in order to answer the question. Questions 3 and 4 must be developed in order to be considered as complete answers.
- Pronunciation is an important aspect of the accuracy mark, and centres should encourage their students to develop their pronunciation skills, in order not to impede communication.
- Knowledge and Understanding of the GTA must show evidence of research into the topics chosen. General knowledge, or personal experiences alone, will not demonstrate "many" or a "wealth" of ideas, which are pre-requisites for marks of 7 or higher.
- The question words on the stimulus card are important – for example – "inwiefern" must have an answer which address this particular question word, and comparison questions must show an ability to compare in the answer.
- Topic specific lexis and the specified grammar contents are important considerations when awarding marks for Quality of Language – Range of Lexis.

Centres should consider the words used in this session's stimulus cards, and address any gaps in their students' knowledge.

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