



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2020

Pearson Edexcel International A Level
In German (WGN02)
Understanding and Written Response

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Examiner's Report: Paper 2, Understanding and Written Response
Introduction

WGN02 01 is a unit from the current iAL German specification which does not supersede a previous one.

External assessment: written examination

Availability: January and June

First assessment: June 2017

Total marks: 90

Weighting: 69.2% of the total iAS raw marks

34.6% of the total iAL marks

Examination time: 2 hours 30 minutes

Assessment across Unit WGN02 01 relates to the following General Topic Areas:

General Topic Area	Sub topics
Youth matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family relationships and friendships• Peer pressure and role models• Music and fashion• Technology and communication
Lifestyle, health and fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food and diet• Sport and exercise• Health issues• Urban and rural life
Environment and travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tourism, travel and transport• Natural disasters and weather• Climate change and its impact• Energy, pollution and recycling
Education and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education systems and types of schooling• Pupil/student life

- Volunteering and internships
- Jobs and unemployment

Assessment

The assessment for this unit has three sections.

Section A: Listening (20 marks)

Candidates listen to a range of authentic recorded TL (Target Language) material and retrieve and convey information given in the recording by responding to a range of TL questions.

Candidates need to show understanding of both the general sense and specific details conveyed. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and short answers in the target language.

Section B: Reading and Grammar (30 marks)

Candidates read authentic TL printed materials and retrieve and convey information by responding to a range of TL test types. The questions elicit both non-verbal responses and TL answers.

Questions are linked to a range of reading comprehension exercises.

Candidates also need to understand and manipulate grammatical structures in the TL by selecting the most appropriate word form to fit a gap.

Section C: Essay (40 marks)

Candidates write a 240-280 word essay in the TL, in response to a TL stimulus and four related bullet points. The assessment rewards effective communication of information as well as quality of language.

General comments

The examiners marking on the unit would like to thank centres for the effort they put in to ensure the assessments run smoothly for their candidates and to allow them to reach their full potential. We appreciate very much the hard work that goes into preparing candidates for examinations and we seek to reward this whenever possible.

The cohort numbered some 120 candidates which represents an encouraging increase in the size of the candidature on the January 2019 numbers, and which comprised performances across the ability range.

Questions 4, 6 and 7 require short answers in German. Candidates should answer as far as possible in their own words, and candidates are doing so increasingly effectively. Candidates should avoid wholesale copying of large chunks of the stimulus text. This does not demonstrate understanding.

As in previous sessions, candidates need to be aware that questions 4, 6 and 7 contain some question parts which require higher level cognitive skills, such as judgement or inference. Candidates need to answer the part directly, and may well not earn credit for mere transcription.

However, lifting judiciously from passages, if targeted, can receive full credit.

Section A: Listening

Q1 Multiple Choice

Candidates had four options A, B, C, or D for each part (the correct response, and three distractors). Q1 was about pupils' journeys to school. Many candidates accessed all four marks, but (b) and (c) were less successful than (a) and (d). *hinfallen* and *gefallen* may have been challenging in (b), and less successful candidates perhaps failed to comprehend *Streit* and *Staus*.

Q2 Multiple Choice

Candidates considered four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). The format of Q1 and Q2 is identical. Q2 is about music in Leipzig and across the candidature, there was excellent performance in (a) and (b). (c) and (d) were more often correct than Q1b and Q1c but were the two less successful parts of Q2.

In Q2c, there needed to be attention to the adverbial qualification, and vocabulary *fehlerfrei* and *unerfahren* could benefit from a moment's consideration, so that candidates might better appreciate the sense of the constituent parts of the options.

In Q2d, the verbs seemed to cause some candidates to be less successful, and *fördern* and *vertreten*, along with the adjective *mittelmäßig*, were more challenging items of vocabulary. Candidates who were able to gain some of the overall gist of the passage were best equipped to choose the correct responses.

Q3 Summary completion

Candidates complete the summary, selecting from a pool of eight items. There was a mixture of parts of speech, and candidates who scored well could use the grammatical context of the gap, at least to discount a number of options. Less successful candidates offered responses which were not only incorrect but were grammatically impossible. Thus in Q3c, 'international danger' would be plausible, but *international* did not have a feminine singular ending, so could not be correct. *übertriebene* is not correct, but candidates who selected it were perhaps at least using grammatical knowledge to enhance their performance.

Q3a There were only a handful of incorrect response to this part. A few candidates proffered the grammatically possible *nur selten*.

Q3b This part was also very successful, and most candidates hesitated between a feminine or plural noun.

Q3c This part was the least successful in the question, and incorrect responses sometimes did not heed grammatical accuracy. *bundesweit* and

international would have made some sense in the context but did not fit grammatically. Fortunately, most candidates were still successful here.

Q3d Over three-quarters of candidates gained the 1 mark on offer in this part, and incorrect responses were varied. It is of note that where there were responses which did not earn the 1 mark, it was quite frequently because candidates offered no response. Where they select the response from a pool, it is definitely always worth avoiding leaving gaps.

Q4 Short Answer Questions

This question sought short, target language responses. Each part is worth 1 or 2 marks. Q4 is about an Olympic skier and her attitude to her celebrity status. Communication is key, and provided that this is achieved, grammatical errors do not cause the rejection of an answer. Candidates averaged over half marks on this question, and there were some extremely high-scoring and perfect-scoring candidates. Most candidates attempted the great majority of parts. Lifts from the passage which were apparently not understood were among the more frequent causes of credit being withheld.

Q4a is a 2-mark part, and in all such parts, examiners awarded marks discretely. The key notions were that Laura was an Olympic winner, and that there more people have been watching the Olympics. One mark was frequent here. Where candidates acquired no credit, they often did not identify Laura as a winner, or recognise the increasing popularity of the Olympics, in which she featured so admirably.

Laura will nicht bekannt werden is the ideal information in Q4b, but rejected responses sometimes referred back to her Olympic success.

Q4c offered the opportunity for discrete scoring, so the two notions needed were that Laura disapproves of doping, so was a co-signatory of the team letter of denunciation, but equally that she has either trained hard or wants to win. *Das deutsche Team hat einen Brief geschrieben* did not score, unless there was the idea of *Protestbrief*.

Candidates who gained the 1 mark on offer in Q4d inferred the fact that though it might be expected that Laura had has enough of the mountains and their snow, she was actually going back to them. *Ich erhole mich in den Bergen* was thus acceptable, as were ideas of returning to the snow.

In Q4e, candidates were successful with the single word *Respekt* since it communicates sufficiently Thomas' attitude to Laura's mountain rescue work. The adjective *respektvoll* was acceptably close to an attitude to score, too.

As in Q4e, Q4f could be successful with a single word *überrascht*. This is an example of a part where there was regularly excessive lifting, and candidates who transcribed at length that rescued people did not recognise Laura at first sometimes added incorrect elements before the correct

element, or never conveyed the element of surprise, so did not score in this part. A succinct but targeted response provided credit in many instances.

Section B: Reading and Grammar

Q5 Multiple Choice Questions

Candidates chose from four options: A, B, C, or D for each item within the question (the correct response, and three distractors). Most candidates were successful in gaining high credit from the 5 marks on offer in this question which discussed an environment project. Some two-thirds of candidates gained the 1 mark in (a), with others perhaps confusing *die ganze Zeit* with *die meiste Zeit*. As in previous non-verbal questions, a careful consideration of the passage will facilitate candidates in the selection of the correct response from the three distractors. (b) and (c) were especially well-handled, and in (d) and (e), only about twenty candidates were not successful. *Brasilien* wrong-footed a number of candidates in (d), and *erkennen* and *kennen lernen* were possible causes of confusion in (e).

Q6 Short Answer Questions

This question required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence in German. Each part was worth 1 or 2 marks, and most candidates accessed all but 1 mark on offer. Candidates who gained full credit abounded. The question was about the life of Philip, an erstwhile footballer who became a wheelchair user.

In Q6a, many candidates scored because *Krankheit* or *Gefühle* were sufficient to gain 1 mark. *seine Fans* was the most common incorrect response, but they were not the motivation for Philip's composition.

Q6b was also successful for many candidates, because any plausible opinion which was *positive*, even implicitly, gained credit. Acceptable alternatives mentioned the scale of success *30 000 Zuschauer* or the fact that *Leute sind berührt*, which was rendered in a number of acceptably synonymous ways.

Candidates gained credit in Q6c if they conveyed the notion that Philip had come to play football or to participate in football trials. This could be communicated with reference to the *Bundesliga*. *Er war ein ghanaischer Fußball-Nationalspieler* might well be true but failed to reveal the reason for his coming to Germany.

Virtually all candidates gained some credit in Q6d, and as *im Unfallkrankenhaus Hamburg* earned a global 2 marks, full credit was frequent. The main causes of lost credit were the offering of *Dschungel* on its own, for this is too vague, or the repetition of one location, such as *im Krankenhaus und in der Klinik*. *nicht ausschließlich im geschützten Raum der Klinik* is oblique, so did not score. This is an example of where examiners have unfortunately to reject an untargeted lift.

Q7 Short Answer Questions

This question required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence, rather like in Q6. Each part was worth 1 or 2 marks. This question was about the school system, as is Q8. Candidates gained on average about two-thirds of the available marks.

Q7a This part required candidates to target the notion that Adrian could attend a *Gymnasium* if he wished, or that parents tend to choose *Gymnasien* for intelligent children. *Er besucht nicht ein Gymnasium* does not score, because it does not convey either the choice or possibility element.

Many candidates gained at least 1 mark in Q7b. This success was increased by the fact that a manipulated lift was targeted: *kann die Leistungsstufe selbst aussuchen*.

Q7c was a successful part for many candidates, and while *steigend* was enough to gain 1 mark, lifts involving *verdreifacht* were effective. Synonyms were acceptable, too, such as *immer mehr Gemeinschaftschulen*.

Many candidates were not successful in Q7d and as *woher* seemed not to be understood, they sometimes proposed information from Q7e. *Schulstreit* was a single word response which earned the 1 mark on offered, but it eluded many.

Unfortunately, candidates could not earn credit in Q7d for information which belonged in Q7e and *die Zahlen senken* or *die Zahl der Realschulen sank seit 2007* were both acceptable, the latter being just about a targeted lift.

Many candidates were able to score in Q7f because a targeted lift was again possible: *die Schüler auf diese neue Welt vorbereiten*. However, information on skills from Q7g gained no credit in this part, sadly, and if proposed before the correct information, consistent with the order of elements rule, caused a loss of credit.

In Q7g, a single word such as *Kreativität* or *Teamwork* gained 1 mark. The lift *im selbst zusammengestellten Teams arbeiten* seems to convey the notion of a *Fähigkeit*, so scored.

Candidates found Q7h the most challenging part, for it required a judgement and a justification. So that 1 mark, rather than only 0 or 2 marks were available, the second element alone could score, if there was some indication, not that the *Evangelische Schule* is better than *Gymnasien* but that it is *genauso effektiv*. The judgement idea needed some qualification of *erfolgreich*, such as *sehr erfolgreich*. A plausible judgement and justification could score, but simple repetition of *erfolgreich* from the question does not show analysis of the degree of success.

Question 8

This question about the school system in Germany, was successful for many candidates, as in the January 2019 session, and candidates earned more than 7 marks on average. (c) underwent a number of erroneous changes, and candidates should remember that not all parts

of the question necessarily need to manipulation. (h) with the dative ending without an article was challenging, and the relative pronoun in the dative plural in (i) was not often correct. (f) required a superlative with an ending and a number of candidates did not render it felicitously. We are highlighting the least well accessed four parts, and candidates were generally successful in the other six.

Section C: Writing

Q9 Essay

This section requires candidates to write an essay based on a short, written stimulus. The recommended length for the essay is 240-280 words, though examiners mark the full response, whatever its length; they do not count the words when marking the essay. It is perfectly possible for an essay of 240-280 to gain full marks and candidates should avoid writing essays which are excessively long. There is no automatic penalty for responses shorter than the recommended length.

Consistent with previous sessions, there were a significant number of very good or excellent responses to this question, which was about fashion and young people. Such responses addressed all of the four bullet points and developed them relevantly. They couched responses in varied, sophisticated and accurate, if not faultless, language. Conversely, but happily more infrequently, less effective responses, as also evidenced in previous sessions, might have omitted one or more bullet points, treated some bullet points so unevenly as to almost ignore others, or misunderstood part or all of a bullet point. Language was sometimes not secure in basic main clauses syntax, and endings and word order were on occasion flawed to the extent that communication was seriously compromised. There might also have been a lack of range and complexity, with repetition of ideas and constructions impeding access to the higher markbands.

Many candidates were successful in their treatment of bullet 1, but not all addressed the *sollten* aspect, and just discussed whether young people spend a lot on fashion or not. Less successful responses ignored the *Mode* element, and treated expenditure in general. This is an instance where checking the precise terms of the bullet point is important. Discussions could profitably be on either side or both sides of the argument: some candidates deemed fashion profligate, others saw it as desirable for social acceptance, still others regarded fashion as a necessity for projecting a suitable image of oneself.

Some candidates conflated bullets 1 and 2, and this could result in full credit or repetition alike. *ausdrücken* proved challenging for some candidates, and there was confusion with *Druck* and school stress generally. The pressure to conform to fashion trends was able to score in bullet 1 on occasions, though it did mean that some candidates did not address *ausdrücken* felicitously. The most successful candidates focused on *inwieweit* and suggested that while fashion is a part of self-expression, one's actions and other traits are relevant, too. Misguided responses stated baldly that school uniform inhibited the choice of

fashion, so, as in January 2019, the treatment was of the general topic area rather than of the bullet directly.

Many candidates were successful, at least to some extent, in bullet 3. There were a number of oblique references, but provided that some *wirtschaftlich* angle was acknowledged, there could be full credit. Bullet 4 was mixed into bullet 3 responses at times, but this could also be successful: for instance, employment of large numbers of low-skilled workers would be of economic significance, but paying these workers a decent wage, or boycotting companies who pay derisory wages would be ways of *die negativen Aspekte bekämpfen*. There were many ways of addressing bullets 3 and 4 fully, and economic arguments included employment, sales figures, Saturday jobs and developing world job provision. There was an inspired range of bullet 4 responses, such as shunning exploitative companies, recycling clothing, avoiding fashion labels which promote excessively thin or fat body images, and writing letters to have friends, politicians and local councils change attitudes, laws and advertising. Less successful candidates were sometimes solipsistic and ignored wider ways of combatting negative practices more widely. Others strayed into general commentary, for example, of the environment, without linking it to the fashion industry, so the climate getting hotter is not *per se* of pertinence here, but buying locally sourced clothing and materials for fashionwear to save transportation is relevant.

Paper Summary

Based on candidates' performance on this paper, we offer the following advice:

- A careful reading of each part, with attention to the specific question words is important. The angle of the question needs attention.
- Manipulation is often required and lifting from the passage is only successful if the correct information is directly given.
- Particular care is necessary in the lifting passages, where inattentive and perhaps uncomprehending transcription does not always lead to comprehensible responses.
- All German offered needs to communicate unambiguously in the comprehension questions.
- Examiners assess the skills of deduction and inference in this specification, and candidates will not find all the required information presented explicitly in the passages.
- The order of elements rule means that examiners only consider as many elements as there are marks available for that part.
- Candidates should offer succinct and direct responses.

- In Q9, candidates should address all four bullet points fully.

Grade Boundaries

There has been much work on the comparability of the speaking units for French, German and Spanish. Senior examiners continue to work closely together to ensure that they apply the common marking guidelines consistently across the three languages. It is possible to find grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, on the website via this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>