Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2021

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Subsidiary Level
In German (WGN02/01)
Unit 2: Understanding and Written Response

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

Introduction

External assessment: written examination
Availability: January and June
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	- Family relationships and friendships - Peer pressure and role models - Music and fashion - Technology and communication
Lifestyle, health and fitness	- Food and diet - Sport and exercise - Health issues - Urban and rural life
Environment and travel	- Tourism, travel and transport - Natural disasters and weather - Climate change and its impact - Energy, pollution and recycling
Education and employment	- 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

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 as 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 may well not earn credit for mere transcription. However, lifting judiciously from passages, provided it answers the question, can receive full credit.

Question 9 requires an essay in German in response to a stimulus where candidates should address all four bullet points. Candidates generally performed well in this question.

Section A: Listening

Q1 Multiple Choice

Candidates had four options A, B, C, or D for each part (the correct response, and three distractors). Many candidates accessed all four marks, but (b) and (d) were less successful than (a) and (c).

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 was about solar energy farms. This was generally accessible to the vast majority of candidates.

Q3 Summary completion

This question requires candidates to listen to a short passage and then complete a summary text, selecting from a pool of eight items.

Q3a There were only a handful of incorrect responses to this part. In a few cases candidates left it blank.

Q3b This part was answered very successfully.

Q3c This part was the least successful in the question, and incorrect responses sometimes did not heed grammatical accuracy. For example, a few candidates offered *entwickelt*.

Q3d Again, most candidates were able to answer this correctly. 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. Candidates should be reminded that where they select the response from a pool, it is definitely always worth selecting one and avoiding gaps.

Q4 Short Answer Questions

This question sought short, target language responses. Each part is worth 1 or 2 marks. Q4 was about veganism.

Communication is key, and provided that this is achieved, grammatical errors and spelling errors - provided there is no ambiguity - do not cause the rejection of an answer.

Q4a required candidates to say that the stereotypical view that more women than men are vegan is incorrect. However, a response that both men and women were vegan, was also accepted. This led to most candidates gaining the one mark available.

Q4b was extremely accessible and all candidates who wrote a response were able to achieve at least one of the two marks available here. *Restaurant* and *Supermarkt* clearly flagged up where candidates needed to look for the response in the text. Examiners did insist on *Supermarkt* in the response though, as opposed to *Geschäft* or *Lebensmittelhandlung*.

Q4c required the candidates to outline the two speakers' opposing views to people who are so called 'trend vegans'. There were two difficulties with the responses here: it had to be clear who held what view and it was not sufficient to say that Frau Professor Kofler considered it to be a trend, as this was given in the question. Candidates had to convey that she had a negative view of such people.

Q4d The response required was that chicken from the *Biohof* involves less CO2 than asparagus. Examiners also accepted that the asparagus had to be flown in from Africa and references to the cost or emissions involved, although it was sufficient to give the response that the asparagus came from Africa. Less successful candidates gave the response *industriel verarbeitet,* but this was not correct as it referred to tofu or other meat substitutes.

Q4e Many candidates were able to achieve the two marks here. It was not sufficient to say that sugar is unhealthy. Candidates need to refer to 'in large amounts' in order to access the mark. Equally, for the second part of the response, candidates had to mention a lack of, or too little vitamin B12. Examiners also accepted the reply that a vegan lifestyle could lead to depression, but the concept of 'could' had to be present.

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).

This question presented challenges to the less successful candidates. Whilst some were able to give the correct response to (d) there was a fair number of entries where candidates scored no marks for this question. More successful candidates usually answered (b), (d) and (e) correctly.

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 gained full credit on this question. The question was about a heavy snowfall in a ski resort and proved very accessible, even to moderately successful candidates.

In Q6a candidates needed to give the response *Kunstschnee,* and this one-word answer was sufficient.

Q6b required the two details that the extreme weather had been forecast by scientists for a long time. Many candidates gave all this information on the first line of the response sheet and then gave irrelevant information on the second line. This still scored two marks as examiners mark the first response in its entirety.

Some candidates gave the response *frustrierend* for Q6c and this was not accepted. By far the majority of candidates gave the correct *frustriert* or *enttäuscht*.

There were many possible correct responses to Q6d. So long as candidates conveyed that the residents were concerned about the stability of their roofs or houses, they were awarded the mark.

Q7 Short Answer Questions

This question requires responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence, as in Q6, but the demand is higher. Each part is worth 1 or 2 marks. This question was about a beach party on the island of Sylt.

 Q7(a) was well done by the majority of candidates.

Some candidates offered *im Stadtzentrum* or *in der Fußgängerzone* for 7(b), both of which were incorrect. Centres should remind candidates that *'Wo genau'* requires candidates to really examine the text especially closely.

There were a lot of incorrect answers for 7(c) with candidates giving the information which was needed for the next question. What was required was the fact that Christoph had an expectation of relatively low numbers to attend, but that this number was greatly exceeded. (*Tausende kamen*.)

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, 7(d) was the question which was most often answered correctly. Candidates were able to either offer that Christoph was given a job, or that he was invited for an interview.

What examiners were looking for in response to 7(e) was that the police did not know how many young people would attend the party, nor did they know whether to request reinforcements. This earned the full two marks. Some candidates offered '*ob sie spontan teilnehmen würden*', which unfortunately could not be accepted as it was not clear who the 'sie' were. In addition, the key point was how many youngsters might participate, not whether they would do so spontaneously or not, so there had to be reference to this.

In response to 7(f) it was important that candidates said that the webpage was the mayor's only source of information.

Both 7(g) and 7(h) were generally answered correctly by all candidates apart from a few less successful candidates.

Question 8

This question was successful for many candidates, as in the January 2019 session, and candidates earned more than 7 marks on average. A fair number of candidates could not be awarded the mark for (g) as they misspelled *kamen* with double m.

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 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, however they are self-penalising as a short response will not, for example, allow candidates to show 'a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures.

There were a number of very strong responses to this question, from candidates with a high level of language skill who organised coherent responses which addressed all four bullet points and communicated ideas logically. Candidates came up with imaginative responses in order to address the final bullet point about how the government could support rural locations. There were some very passionate cases made for the life in cities.

The best responses tend to address each bullet point with a separate paragraph. This ensures that candidates have indeed answered all parts of the question and is thus good practice. Some less successful candidates omitted the first bullet point about why young people want to move away from the countryside, focussing instead purely on the perceived advantages of city life.

The third bullet point about the possible problems arising from people moving away from the countryside was the one most frequently omitted. One unfortunate candidate misread *Landflucht* as *Landluft* and wrote a paragraph about the perils of the air in the countryside. Many candidates offered a thoughtful analysis of the impact of large numbers of people moving away from the countryside, which impressed the examiners.

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. I*nwiefern* will usually require a response which examines both sides of the question.

- Manipulation is often required and lifting from the passage is only successful if the correct information is directly given.

- All German offered needs to communicate unambiguously in the comprehension questions. It must be clear who personal pronouns refer to.

- 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.

- Candidates should offer succinct and direct responses.

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

Concluding Remark

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, especially in what has been a challenging year, and we seek to reward this whenever possible.

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