

GCSE
German
8668/WF

Report on the examination

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General Comments

The vast majority of students who sat this paper were entered at the correct level and it was pleasing to see that most students were able to make some attempt at all questions. As always, handwriting was occasionally an issue, either because it was so small that it was impossible to read or because it was almost illegible. Whilst examiners will try their best to read a student's handwriting, credit cannot be given where a word is not clear.

The mean mark on the paper was just over 31/50 (just over 62% of the total mark).

Question 1

This question requires students to write four sentences about a photograph, in this case of a group of people enjoying a birthday party outdoors and was easily accessible to most students. As always, answers centred largely on the people in the photograph, and many students had been well trained to describe the people and location in simple German that nevertheless communicated clearly.

The spelling of *Mädchen* caused problems once again with both *Menschen* and *Manchen* commonly seen. Whilst *Menschen* could often be credited as being a general comment, *Manchen* clearly could not. *Feier* caused similar difficulties, due to confusion with *Ferien*. *Geburtstag* was, however, widely known, and misspellings here were less likely to cause ambiguity. It was, however, pleasing to see some less well-known vocabulary such as *Luftballons* used effectively.

Whilst many students opted to start each sentence with 'Ich sehe...', yet again, disappointingly, sentences starting with *gibt es* were regularly seen and sometimes used to start every answer. *Sein* + infinitive (the invented present continuous) was also occasionally an issue, but instances of *der ist* were less common than in previous years.

As always, students are advised to keep their answers simple rather than attempting longer sentences with a greater margin for error and are advised to be aware of the mark scheme for this question. An attempt at a verb is needed for 2 marks and a minimum of two words are required to score at least one point; however, most students seemed to be aware of this and the response to this question was pleasing.

Approximately 74% of students scored full marks on this question, which represents a marked improvement on the same question in 2024.

Question 2

It was clear that most students understood the bullet points for this question and were able to make a reasonable attempt, although a number of students did not achieve bullet 2 *Fernsehen*

or missed it out completely. *Sport* was well handled, and most students were able to make some comment about *Internet*, although comments about a mobile phone alone without any reference to the internet could not be credited. There was potentially some overlap between responses to *Fernsehen* and *Kino*, but provided two separate examples were given, this was credited.

As always, a few students were misled by the scene setting rubric and referred to *meine österreichische Freundin/mein Freund/dein/du* throughout. This was quite rare, and examiners are well trained to give credit for anything that could be considered relevant to the candidate themselves, but occasionally this was just not possible.

This was clearly an area students had much to write about and many had been well trained to answer with a range of phrases to express opinions that would fit most questions, thus demonstrating 'a variety of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures' which is required for a mark in the top band for Quality of language. Students should, however, guard against illogical sentences such as *Fernsehen ist interessant aber langweilig*, where it is clear that the student has not understood what they are writing. Once again, simple responses were often the most successful.

Over 40% achieved the top mark band for covering all bullet points on Content, scoring either 9 or 10 marks, and over 50% did so for Quality of language, again an improvement in 2024. It was pleasing to see that only a small number of students provided a minimal response to the bullet points.

Question 3

Most students were able to make a confident start on the translations and a majority were able to attempt at least part of each sentence. Students should be encouraged to do this, as each sentence is broken up into at least two parts on the mark scheme.

Many students scored on both elements of the first sentence, although *sehr* caused some problems. In the second sentence *Hausaufgaben* was generally well known but students sometimes lost a mark here by translating 'does' with *hat*. A variety of variations on *jeden Abend* were accepted and this was generally well done.

Most students were able to score some marks on the third sentence but are reminded to ensure they have attempted to translate all elements of the sentence as omitting a word (e.g. *oft*) prevents the award of a mark. *Fußball* was regularly seen for *Fußball* and the spelling of *Ferien* was often confused with *feiern*. It was, however, pleasing, to see that many students are now able to produce the plural of *Freund* and the perennial problem of masculine and feminine singular forms being offered instead was seen far less frequently.

Perhaps surprisingly, 'next' caused lots of problems on sentence four, with both English spellings and confusion with the German word *Nacht* seen regularly but not accepted. As in previous years, a correct infinitive was not required after a modal verb, but few students were able to successfully translate 'I want'. Also surprising was that many were apparently unfamiliar with *Biologie* but were able to spell the more complex *Naturwissenschaften*, which, however,

could not be credited. It is expected that students sitting a German examination would know the word *Deutsch*, but again spelling, whilst not required to be perfect, proved a challenge. *Am Sonntag* was less well-known than anticipated on sentence 5, and few students were able to produce the verb *kochen* and even fewer could form the past tense. Variations on *Kuchen* were very commonly seen and could not be accepted.

Students need to be aware that the incorrect person of a verb is an error on this question and that different persons of the verb will be tested.

Just over 50% of students scored 3 or above for Conveying key messages and around 47% for Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures. The most frequently achieved mark on both sets of criteria was 3. This is considerably lower than in 2024 and is possibly a result of a very low success rate on sentence 5.

Question 4

The overlap questions proved accessible to most with option 4.2 Your Town and Region proving the most popular (66%) at Foundation tier.

On the overlap questions, students are urged to read the bullet points carefully before making their choice and to ensure they understand exactly what is required. All too frequently answers in the correct tense could not be credited as the bullet point had not been covered.

On both questions students found the bullet points eliciting a reference to a past or future time frame the most challenging, sometimes responding in the present tense about a past event (with or without a past time marker), although many students managed at least one correct past tense. Omission of the auxiliary verb continues to be a problem. Formation of the future tense also continues to be problematic with the omission of umlauts on *würde* and *möchte* commonly seen. Although these were accepted with an infinitive for coverage of the bullet point, they could not be credited as a successful attempt at a future tense and opposing tenses e.g. *Ich möchte... gewohnt* could not be credited at all. A future tense with *werden* is not required here, indeed a future time marker with present tense satisfies the requirement, and many students were able to express their future intentions in a variety of different ways.

Students are also best advised to restrict their answers to 90 words as requested, and not to attempt to write about things outside their capabilities in German. Where messages break down, either by use of English or simply German that fails to communicate, marks for Content are unlikely to exceed 4/10 and for marks in the top two bands a minimum of 2 opinions are required. For quality of language, references to all three-time frames are required for marks in the top band and there must be some attempts to use complex structures.

Question 4.1 (Money)

Most students who chose this option were able to respond fairly successfully to the first bullet point about how they get money, although surprisingly few referred to pocket money, referring more often to part time jobs or some grand professions, which were, of course, perfectly acceptable. Those who attempted to write about receiving money from parents/relatives often

struggled to express themselves adequately. There were, however, some good opinions about the pros and cons of working.

Examiners were surprised by students' choice of favourite shop, with a large number choosing supermarkets, and bakeries also featuring quite highly. An unforeseen issue was the use of '*schäft*' or '*schaft*' without the '*ge*' in naming a type of shop (presumably students confused this with the past tense), but it was agreed to accept this provided there was a reference to *Lieblingsgeschäft* elsewhere in the sentence.

Bullet points 3 & 4 both contained the word '*was*', and whilst most students were able to name something they had bought for bullet point 3, bullet point 4 was less successful with a significant number of students failing to state what they would do with their money, focussing instead on future career/study plans. A generous view was taken on both bullet points if there was reference to something which could have been bought, such as a meal or holiday.

Performance on this question was lower than on option 2, with just over 7% of students attaining top band marks for Content and 16% achieving top band marks for Quality of language, but this is a considerable improvement on the equivalent question in 2024.

Question 4.2 (Your Town and Region)

Many students who chose this option did not distinguish between the first two bullet points and wrote in general about their town or region. In most cases there was sufficient detail for examiners to credit both bullet points, but some positive aspect did need to be mentioned for bullet point 1. Some students struggled to manipulate '*die positiven Aspekte*' in their responses, but many were able to write about friendly people etc. Negative comments alone could not be accepted.

Bullet point 3 was generally well understood, but on bullet point 4 students often did not read the word *wohnen* in the question and wrote about future travel plans instead. Those who did recognise *wo du wohnen willst* often struggled to manipulate this in their response. Others managed to successfully express the future tense, but struggled with appropriate prepositions and sentences such as '*Ich möchte nach Deutschland wohnen*' were not uncommonly seen.

Performance on this question was, however, pleasing, with just over 12% of students attaining top band marks for Content and 20% achieving top band marks for Quality of language, again a marked improvement in 2024.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.