



GCSE
German

8668/LF Paper 1 Listening Foundation Tier

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

This was the fifth time that this GCSE examination was taken by a full cohort of students and examiners were very pleased to see the progress that they had made in their German studies. The Listening examination differentiated well between lower-attaining and higher-attaining students but there was plenty of evidence to suggest that much of the exam was within the reach of most of them and that they understood what they had heard and were able to respond successfully to the comprehension questions set on the spoken material.

The mean mark on the paper was just over 26/40 (just over 65% of the total mark), an increase of over 3 marks when compared with the 2023 examination. This suggests that this year's examination was more accessible than the examination in 2023, but also that students responded very positively to the challenges that the examination posed. Handwriting was generally legible, but it could sometimes be very small and difficult to read, as in previous years. There was very little evidence of students leaving questions unanswered, but there were again some examples of poor English spelling; in most cases, thankfully, comprehension of their answers was not affected.

Questions 1 – 2

These two questions were a very gentle start to the examination with the overwhelming majority of students getting both marks here. In this specification, it is not permitted to test single lexical items in isolation, which means that there will always be a distractor or a negative in the question, but students have clearly been very well trained by their teachers to listen for these distractors and then to discount them. The vocabulary used here was very straightforward and students clearly recognised the negative *nicht* before the wrong answer in both questions.

Questions 3 – 5

Questions requiring verbal answers often have a lower success rate than non-verbal questions, and so it was heartening to see that students had responded well to this suite of questions. Question 3 targeted the word *Eltern* and over 85% of students knew it. The relatively rare incorrect answers usually gave 'grandparents' or one parent only. Question 4 had a very similar success rate with many students recognising *letzte Woche*; this was more commonly seen than 'for her birthday', which was also correct. Students who wrote 'last weekend' were not awarded the mark, however. Question 5 was the least successful question in this section, because the word *simsen* was less well known. Many students wrote 'phone / called / rang / chat with' and this was not acceptable; nor was 'contacted', as this was considered too vague to be creditworthy.

Question 6

Question 6.1 was answered correctly by over 70% of students who understood what *ungesund* meant. Answers which were too specific (eg. 'they eat unhealthily', 'they are obese') were not credited. Question 6.2 identified the stronger students. The correct answers were that young people do not do enough sport and do not eat enough fruit. Some students did not pick up on the nuances in the German here and simply wrote that they do not do sport and they do not eat fruit. Examiners did not accept these answers because they do not reflect the detailed listening needed here for success. Unfortunately, some students thought *Obst* meant 'vegetables', or they contaminated their answers by writing 'fruit and vegetables'. As in previous years, a right answer presented with a wrong answer will always be wrong.

Questions 7 – 9

Question 7 was not very well answered. It was disappointing that only about 35% of students were able to link *spielen*, *Mannschaft* and *gewinnen* to the answer ‘football’; the vocabulary is certainly straightforward and none of the other answers could possibly refer to playing in a team and winning, but the step required from this vocabulary to the answer was too much for some. Questions 8 and 9 were much more successful with three-quarters of students getting them right. Some of the vocabulary in Question 8 (*Zeichnen*, *malen*, *Bilder*) was not that straightforward, but *kreativ* was helpful. It was pleasing to see that *freiwillig* in Question 9 did not pose too many problems either. These items were designed to be of medium demand and success rates were therefore pleasing.

Questions 10 – 14

There was a very good response to these questions which were aimed at the higher grades on the Foundation Tier paper. These questions were overlap questions and therefore they also appeared on the Higher Tier paper. It was pleasing to see each question having a success rate of at least 70%.

Question 10 was successfully answered by over 75% of students who clearly understood *Nebenjob* and *Auto* and were able to discount option F which also mentioned cars. Question 11 was the least successful of this suite of five questions, but still with over 70% of students getting it correct; *Ausbildung* is a more challenging item of vocabulary and *Reisebüro* might have led some students to choose option C (going travelling) rather than the correct answer. Question 12 saw three-quarters of students getting the mark; they clearly understood the more challenging item of vocabulary *Autowerkstatt* and also sidestepped the potential confusion in the word *Chef*, which is often misunderstood to refer to somebody working in a restaurant. This was very pleasing. Question 13 was the most successful in this section with over 90% of students scoring the mark here. The key items of vocabulary were *Krankenschwester* and *Kindergarten* and these clearly pointed to the idea of working in a caring profession. Question 14 was answered correctly by nearly 80% of students and they had no difficulty in understanding the concept of *viel Geld verdienen* and *reich sein*.

The key to success on this type of question is a clear understanding of the key vocabulary in each section and an ability to discount the distractors in the options on the question paper. Students are clearly being well trained by their teachers to do this.

Question 15

Question 15.1 was answered successfully by just over 55% of the students. It was a little disappointing that more of them could not give an acceptable translation of *Landschaft*, even though examiners allowed a generous range of renderings here. There was also some evidence of guesswork.

Question 15.2 was much better done with over 85% being successful, perhaps because there were two possible ways to score the mark. The answer ‘boring’ was much more common, probably because the word *langweilig* is very well known. Some students also understood that the bus into town is too expensive, and the best students tended to offer both answers. Regrettably, some students wrote that the bus in town was too expensive, but this was rejected – it is not what the German text means. Again, there were some guesses, but far fewer than in 15.1.

Question 16

This was a lower-demand item and part 1 proved very accessible to many Foundation Tier students with over 90% of them recognising *Komödien* and scoring a mark. Question 16.2 was less successful, however, with just over half of students getting this correct. The key word here was *entspannend* and clearly many students did not know that this means ‘relaxing’. Perhaps they mistook it for *spannend* (‘exciting’) although the other two options do not contain that word – option B (‘for entertainment’) was almost as commonly given as the correct answer – maybe students linked excitement and entertainment together.

Question 17

This was another low-demand item with a high success rate – over 75%. However, the inclusion of the number *fünf* clearly led some students astray – they had to listen carefully to work out that Luis wants to get married in five years’ time, when he is 30. Students who got this question wrong need more practice in detailed listening skills.

Question 18

There was a strong response to these questions which were targeted at medium-demand. Over 95% of students were able to identify that English is Zeynep’s worst subject at school and reject French and German in which she gets good marks. Part 2 was a little less successful with just under three-quarters of students getting the mark here. This was slightly surprising given that the vocabulary (*ich muss mit dem Lehrer sprechen*) is reasonably straightforward.

Question 19

This was a higher-demand verbal response item, and students’ answers were generally pleasing. In Question 19.1, the key idea was that tourism creates jobs in hotels and restaurants. Nearly 70% of students were able to state this (naming at least one of hotels and restaurants – examiners did not insist on both); incorrect answers usually missed out the idea of jobs and simply stated that tourism means that there are hotels and/or restaurants or that tourism is good for hotels and/or restaurants.

Question 19.2 was less well answered, although nearly 55% of students got it right. Not many students opted to give a translation of *nicht sehr höflich* for their answers, and of those who did, very few realised that it means that tourists can be impolite or rude, with many thinking that it meant ‘unhelpful’. Far more students focused on *nicht umweltfreundlich*, but a surprising number did not know what this means or heard only *freundlich* and wrote (incorrectly) that tourists are not friendly. Given the inclusion of the environment as a topic in this specification, it was surprising that *umweltfreundlich* was not better known.

Questions 20 – 21

These two questions were overlap questions and so they also appeared on the Higher Tier paper. Students are very familiar with this format by now, and they know that the questions test their ability to understand different time frames and to listen for detail. These questions are aimed at higher-attaining Foundation Tier students and are designed to be more challenging.

Question 20 had a reasonably good success rate with about one-quarter of students scoring both marks and another 40% scoring one mark. Many students were able to write that yesterday Oskar had used

social media to chat with his grandparents, although a singular grandparent and other family members were sometimes seen. It was the more able students who were able to convey the answer for Today – that Oskar is posting photos of his new dog. Some students wrote that he was taking photos or that he was looking at photos but did not get across the key idea of posting or sharing them. Plural ‘dogs’ was not credited, and some students heard *neu(en)* and thought it meant ‘nine’ – again, this was rejected.

Question 21 was much more challenging with fewer than 1% of all Foundation Tier students scoring both marks. About one-eighth of them scored one mark, but over three-quarters failed to score. The German for Today was clearly challenging for most Foundation Tier students – *heute folgt mir ein Junge online, aber ich mag ihn nicht* was only rarely understood and adequately expressed in English. There were lots of incorrect answers suggesting that Isabella was talking to a boy online when in fact she was trying to ignore somebody who was annoying her online by following her; references to ‘young people’ were also rejected, as students had not understood that ‘ein Junge’ must be a singular boy. There was plenty of evidence of guesswork here. The problem in the future was potential addiction to the internet and it was surprising that *süchtig* was not better known. Again, there was ample evidence of students guessing an answer incorrectly.

Question 22

This longer piece of German was targeted at higher-achieving Foundation Tier students, and it was pleasing to see a reasonably good success rate, especially with some of the more challenging vocabulary that this question contained. Question 22.1 had the lowest success rate in this section with just over a quarter of students getting it right; all three options were mentioned, and students had to listen carefully to reject the two actions that had been tried in the past but no longer done. *Recycelt* was clearly a very strong distractor for many students. *Solarzellen* was not as well-known as it should have been, but maybe it sounds further from the English than it looks on paper. Part 2 of this question was answered correctly by just over half of the students; the difficulties here centred around the verb *verkaufen* (to sell) which is often confused with its opposite *kaufen* (to buy), and the fact that he uses public transport every day, so not occasionally. Many students chose the answer referring to buying an electric car when in fact Mohammed has just sold his car. Part 3 had a very similar success rate to Part 2; again, all three options were mentioned in the text and students had to reject the two advantages and choose the correct disadvantage.

Question 23

The first question in Section B was a selection style question where students had to choose the four correct answers from eight possibilities. The passage heard was a longer one and the options were all mentioned, some as types of sport that Noah liked and some as types of sport that he did not like. Students responded very positively to this question which in essence tested vocabulary to express opinions. Very impressively, almost 60% scored all four marks, over 25% scored three marks and over 10% scored two marks. Very few students scored one or zero marks. There were a few instances where students had not attempted to complete all the boxes or where they had written the same answer more than once.

Question 24

Part 1 of this question was very well answered with over 80% of students realising that Annika does not get on well with her uncle; the characteristics used to describe her father and brother are positive ones.

Question 24.2 was less well answered with about half the students getting this correct. Although many students correctly identified that she did not get on well with her uncle, they were less successful in identifying why. They had more trouble in moving from the verb form *er nervt mich* to the adjectival *er ist nervig*. Some heard *humorvoll* and chose *humorlos* which is the opposite in meaning, and some were distracted by the phrase *mit vielen Freunden* and chose *unfreundlich* as the answer.

Question 25

The final question on this Foundation Tier paper differentiated well between students with just over 30% getting the first part right but over 55% getting the second part correct. In part 1, students had to understand that Johanna could not be working with old people (option A) anymore, as the home had closed; she was working with homeless people (*Menschen, die auf der Straße leben*). Perhaps the vocabulary item in the options grid (*Obdachlosen*) was challenging for some students. More students heard *Katze* in part 2 and opted for *mit Tieren* as their answer, but some were distracted by *ein neues Zuhause* and chose option C, working with homeless people. It was pleasing to see a good level of success on this more challenging Foundation Tier item in Section B.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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