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# AS LEVEL GERMAN

7661/2 Paper 2 (Writing)  
Report on the Examination

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7661  
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## Section A

Students were required to translate five sentences from English into German. The short reading passage contained some of the vocabulary and structures needed. This year the sub-theme was *Mode und Image* under the heading of *Youth Culture*.

Very few students left blanks in the translation and the level of completion was some evidence of the accessibility of the paper. The exercise proved to be a discriminator with marks distributed across the whole range.

A successful translation is one which addresses each element of the sentence without omissions and uses correct spellings and capitalisation.

- 1.1 In this question *commercial aspects* caused some difficulty, possibly because the phrase needed some manipulation of the stimulus text. Other answers did not mention *sehr* before *kleine Rolle*. *In der Vergangenheit* and *In vergangenen Jahren* were accepted for *in past times*. This shows the need for careful reading of both the reading passage and the wording of each question.
- 1.2 Many students translated *On the day before Christmas* with *Am Heiligabend* or *Am Heiligen Abend* and both were, of course, accepted. A handful of responses offered *schminken* rather than *schmücken* but this rendering was not credited. Again, there was a strong hint of the correct verb in the reading passage.
- 1.3 This proved to be the most challenging of the five sentences. Perhaps surprisingly, many students did not substitute *Im* for *In* with the month of the year. Students needed to recognise the gender of *Adventskranz* to get the correct translation of *with its candles*. There were many unsuccessful attempts at translating this sentence.
- 1.4 On the whole this was very well done with plenty of answers gaining higher marks. Those who presented *an die biblische Geschichte* were given full credit for *the biblical background*, although *Hintergrund* was in the short text.
- 1.5 Similarly, the majority of students scored well on the last sentence. There were some particularly impressive renditions, including *Natürlich gilt Weihnachten als eine der beliebtesten Traditionen in ganz Deutschland*. This mature and natural response was extremely pleasing to see.

## Section B

Students were given the choice of two questions on each of ten literary texts. Only one answer was required.

In Section B relatively few texts were selected by schools and colleges. By far the most popular choices were *Der Besuch der alten Dame* and *Der Vorleser*. After each question there are four *Stichpunkte*, which are meant to be a guide to help students to plan their response. It is up to the individual to use them or not, but they do give useful pointers to possible content.

There was no doubt that students were well acquainted with the play *Der Besuch der alten Dame*. In Question 4.2 many students identified the corruption of the important citizens of Gullen and were

especially critical of the role played by the mayor. The highest scoring responses showed thorough knowledge of the roles played by leading members of the community. The answers were written fluently and in correct language. Personal reaction to characters' behaviour enhanced the interpretation.

In *Der Vorleser* Michael attracted a good deal of sympathy from students who considered him to be manipulated by a much older and experienced woman. This relationship impacted on his whole life and this fact was widely acknowledged by respondents. Some students thought that Michael was partly responsible for his own fate as he allowed himself to be dominated and because he was too naïve to realise what was happening. There were some very thoughtful and insightful comments on this text.

### Section C

Students were given the choice of two questions on each of six films. Only one answer was required.

Two films accounted for the majority of responses, *Goodbye Lenin!* and *Das Leben der Anderen*. Answers did not rely on pre-learned material as much as they have done in the past and it was clear that students had sound knowledge of events in the films.

*Goodbye Lenin!* attracted responses on both questions and almost in equal numbers. In Question 12.1 the most impressive essays pointed out that the film was indeed entertaining, but one in which Becker had something important to say. Question 12.2 elicited some very good responses. Different reactions by different generations were highlighted with full explanation of the reasons. Essays in the higher mark band for both questions contained personal comment and justification.

The depth of knowledge of *Das Leben der Anderen* was equally striking. In Question 13.1 Hempf was universally condemned for his arrogant self-promotion and students noted that he was the only character in the film not to change. Even after his shocking treatment of Christa-Maria he refuses to accept any fault or criticism; he just carries on with his life and his unpleasant and superior approach to people. The work of the Stasi in Question 13.2 depicted a powerful and manipulative organisation. Students gave plenty of examples of how they attempted to control lives through spreading fear and threatening individuals. The short time it took to bug Dreymann's flat proved how used they were in carrying out such operations and this was noted by students.

For both Sections B and C, it is worth pointing out what makes a good essay. An outstanding piece of work will stay focused on the title. It will be concise and relevant, making points and supporting them by example. Concise essays can easily gain access to the higher bands of marks. There is no need to repeat points made as they will already have been given credit. Direct quotation will strengthen support for a point made, but it must be accurate. Personal reaction and commentary will enhance the response.

For AO3 students need to be confident in the language they use to ensure accuracy. There is no need to be over-adventurous. The most common and noticeable errors – which often confuse and impede comprehension – include distinguishing between *bekommen* / *werden*, *töten* / *sterben*, *fühlen* / *sich fühlen*, *Recht haben* / *richtig*, *streng* / *stark*, *überall* / *Im Großen und Ganzen*, *das* / *dass*.

Some students still have a tendency to anglicise statements – *die er trifft mit; und sie sprechen von es*. This can be easily avoided by rewording the phrase or sentence, even if it means using simpler German. In addition, if students can also confidently use the past participles of a selected number of strong verbs, then the AO3 mark can be improved.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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