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# GCSE GERMAN

8668/LF: Listening Foundation  
Report on the Examination

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## General Comments

This was the third time that this GCSE examination has been taken by a full cohort of students and it was good to be able to see the progress made by learners despite the difficulties of the pandemic years. Once again the Listening examination differentiated well between students but there was plenty of evidence that many of them understood a good deal of what they heard and were able to respond successfully to the questions that were set on the spoken material. The mean mark on the paper was approximately 21.5/40 (around 56% of the total mark), a significant decrease on the performance seen in 2019, the last time when a large number of students took a comparable exam.

This examination was clearly more challenging in places than those of previous series, but it is clear too that loss of teaching and learning during the pandemic played a part in the lower level of performance seen in 2022. Handwriting was generally legible, although it could be very small and difficult to read at times. There was little evidence of students leaving questions unanswered but some students' English spelling was poor; fortunately in most cases comprehension of their answers was not affected.

## Questions 1 – 2

These questions were designed to be a gentle introduction to the examination, and a very large majority of students responded correctly to them. 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 (*nicht, kein*) present, and students should be trained to listen carefully for them and then to discount them as a possible answer.

## Questions 3 – 5

Question 3 was not well answered with many students unable to give an acceptable translation of *Einfamilienhaus*. Answers such as 'one-family house' were not accepted as they were considered to be ambiguous. Only answers which clearly indicated a detached or free-standing house were accepted. Some students wrote the correct answer but then contaminated their answer with an incorrect one; as the mark scheme makes clear, a correct and an incorrect answer written together will not be credited. Just over one-third of students were successful here.

Question 4 also met with mixed success with many students translating the word *neben* as 'near'. This was not accepted as it was too vague and the correct answer of 'next to the bathroom' was surprisingly only given by approximately one-third of students. Question 5 had a higher success rate with just under two-thirds of students answering correctly, although there were incorrect references to the town or the village, suggesting that these students had not understood the word *Straße*.

## Question 6

Question 6.1 was very well answered with a large majority of students understanding *Nordwestdeutschland* and giving the answer 'North West'. Students who simply wrote 'North' or 'West' were few in number, but their answers were incorrect. Many students were able to discount the distractor *November* in question 6.2 and give the correct answer 'February', although there were many variations on the correct spelling of the word. Anything that was recognisable was accepted. The answer 'November to February' was sometimes seen, and this was not accepted,

as it combined a correct answer with an incorrect one. Question 6.3 was not answered well with many incorrect responses seen. It was clear that *bunte Kleidung* was not understood by many students and a good deal of guesswork was taking place; there were many references to ‘floats’, ‘processions’, ‘fancy dress / costumes’ and ‘bunting’. Some students understood *Kleidung* but failed to translate *bunt* in an acceptable manner; this word was beyond all but the strongest students and less than 10% of them scored here.

### Questions 7 – 9

These questions were a straightforward test of vocabulary with the answer mentioned by each speaker and some context around the job also given. They were designed to be accessible to a majority of students, and it was therefore pleasing that over 60% of students were successful in Question 7; *Bauarbeiter* was clearly reasonably well known. In Question 8, *LKW-Fahrerin* was less accessible, surprisingly, with fewer than 30% of students choosing the correct answer. Question 9 was somewhere in the middle (approximately 45% of students got this item correct) with *Friseur*, *Mode* and *kreativ* pointing strongly at the answer ‘hairstylist’.

### Questions 10 – 14

There was a reasonable response to these questions which were aimed at the higher grades on the Foundation Tier paper. These were overlap questions and therefore they also appeared on the Higher Tier paper.

Question 10 was successfully answered by just over 40% of students. The words *Zeugnis* and *Notendruck* and knowledge of the German school grading system should have pointed students to option F. Question 11 was answered more successfully with a success rate of almost 60% of students. The key words here were *krank*, *fehlen* and *wiederholen*. Question 12 was correctly answered by just over 40% of students, with *Fächer*, *Abitur* and *wählen* being the keys to a successful answer.

Question 13 tested understanding of *Ganztagsschule*, *müde* and *einschlafen* and this proved to be reasonably accessible with over 45% of students answering correctly. Question 14 had a very similar success rate, perhaps because the phrase *mein Freund* pointed clearly at option B.

### Question 15

Question 15.1 was very well answered with a large majority of students (approximately 85%) recognising *jeden Tag* and giving the correct translation. There was a more mixed response to question 15.2 with around 45% of students getting this question correct. The main reason for lack of success was an answer that was not detailed enough, usually involving students writing ‘he has a job’ or ‘he works’ without reference to ‘on Saturday(s)’. Some students gave the wrong day or time and some students wrote an answer such as ‘he is busy on Saturdays’ which was too vague. As always, students should be trained to give as much detail as they can in their answers to verbal-response questions.

### Questions 16 – 18

These multiple-choice non-verbal response questions tested straightforward vocabulary such as places, colours, clothing and types of music and on the whole they were well answered. Question 16 was answered correctly by a large majority of students and question 17 by almost two-thirds of students. As in the first questions on this paper, there were distractors which students had to

discount, but they seem to have posed no real difficulties for many students. Question 18 was very well done with very nearly all students giving the correct answer; the answer was found at the end of the utterance and this sometimes helps less able students to focus on it.

### Question 19

Question 19.1 was well answered with almost 80% of students getting it correct, even though the verb *sich langweilen* was used rather than the more familiar *langweilig*. Question 19.2 was less successfully answered (a little under 60% got this correct) and it is surprising that the word *Geschäfte* was not understood by more students.

### Question 20

There was a reasonable number of correct responses to Question 20.1 which was testing students' ability to listen for detail. There were two possible answers, but the majority chose not to give what was perhaps the more straightforward of them, that he was (quite) shy; perhaps these students did not understand *schüchtern*. The alternative answer, that it is better to have a few good friends rather than lots of them, had to be rendered sufficiently clearly to be creditworthy. Some incorrect answers referred to having just one friend, or that it is hard to find good friends, or that he is anti-social. Some students had clearly only understood part of the message and wrote that he had lots of good friends. Only answers that made it clear that it was his preference to have a few good friends were credited. Just under 40% of students gained a mark here. Question

20.2 targeted the word *unternehmungslustig*. Acceptable answers indicated that she was (very) active or adventurous or liked to do lots of activities. Some students wrote that she had lots of friends so that she could do lots of activities, getting the answer the wrong way round, and some heard only *lustig* and indicated that she was funny. Although this was a challenging question for some students, very nearly half of them gained the mark.

### Questions 21 – 22

These two questions were overlap questions and they also appeared on the Higher Tier paper. Nearly 60% of students managed to score at least 1 mark on Question 21 but 2 marks was seen less often (about a quarter of students got both marks). Some students picked up the idea of saving or using less water and others preferred to state that he was taking a shower or not taking a bath. A small number of students got the answer the wrong way round and suggested that he was having a bath not a shower. The second part of this question was quite challenging for some students. The idea of going on holiday but not by plane was not interpreted well by some. Quite a few students mentioned that he was not flying but missed out the reference to a holiday; going abroad or travelling were not precise enough to gain the credit. There were also some generalities or guesses amongst the answers seen, such as 'recycling plastic bottles'. This type of question rewards students who have a clear understanding of what they have heard and are able to give the necessary level of detail in response.

The first part of Question 22 was answered quite well with many students making reference to not using plastic in the canteen or dining hall. Although there were various misspellings of 'canteen', these were accepted if it was clear what students meant. Those students who did not refer to the canteen or who wrote answers referring to using less plastic in the canteen or not buying items wrapped in plastic in the canteen were not successful. There were far fewer successful answers to the second part of the question with not many students understanding that alternative energies were discussed or talked about; many students who understood the idea of alternative or

renewable energies spoiled their answers by writing that they were using them. There was also a good deal of guesswork in evidence here. Only around 5% of students gained both marks here, nearly always because of a wrong answer in the second part. Over half of the students managed to score 1 mark.

### Question 23

Question 23.1 was answered correctly only by about 10% of students, presumably by those who understood the word *süchtig*. There were some strong distractors here and students had to listen to the whole utterance to get to the correct answer. Question 23.2 also contained some distractors but this question was answered more successfully – over 40% of the students got this mark. Success hinged on students' understanding of *Meinungen teilen* and their discounting of the word *Posts*. Question 23.3 was the most successful part of this question (nearly 90% of students got it right), as the vocabulary was less challenging and the answer clearly signposted, with the alternative answers obviously negated.

### Question 24

This was the first question in Section B. It 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 activities the speaker wanted to do and some as activities that she rejected. There were few students who scored all four marks (about one in eight). Cumulatively, over half of all students scored at least 3 marks; over 85% of them scored at least two marks and very nearly all students managed at least one mark here. 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 25

This question dealt with the more challenging topic of social issues and less able students found the material that they heard more difficult. The German used in the questions is deliberately kept as simple as possible, so that students are not prevented from accessing the questions. Very nearly half of all students were successful in Question 25.1 but less than a quarter of them were successful in Question 25.2 with the jump from *medizinische Hilfe* to *Arzt* being a difficult concept for many students.

### Question 26

The final question on this paper also differentiated well between Foundation Tier students with stronger students able to understand *Tierheim*, *Migranten* and *Altenheim*, all challenging items of vocabulary. In Question 26.1 students had to reject *Tierheim* because the speaker used to work there; about 45% of them got it correct. Less than one-quarter of them were successful in Question 26.2, in all likelihood because of the strong distractor found in the word *Kinder*.

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

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