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GCSE

**GERMAN**

8668/WF: Writing Foundation  
Report on the Examination

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## General Comments

The question papers at both Foundation and Higher tier included an additional option in Foundation Question 4/Higher Question 1 and in Higher Question 2 to offer increased choice for students who had suffered immense disruption to their learning. This had a significant impact both on student and teacher reactions to the question papers, and to the quality of work which students were able to produce, given a broader range of topic areas.

### Question 1

The picture stimulus of a sunny seaside scene encouraged statements about summer holidays, weather and the surroundings. Comments about likely beach activities and clothing were also credited. Most students found this topic well within their grasp and scored well. There was rather less use of 'der ist' and of the continuous present, and almost all students had enough to say to complete four sentences fairly competently. There were fewer very weak responses, and fewer which resorted to the use of English or where no answers were attempted.

There were some issues with *Boat/Boat'*, and the English version was given some reward, as not to do so on the basis of a spelling variation would have been needlessly severe. Many students commented on the weather, the temperature, the sea, the beach, people swimming, sailing and playing games and some referred to the trees, the number of people they could see and the houses. Some students still used 'gibt es' and 'der ist', but fewer than usual lost marks in this way.

Only very occasionally did students revert to English, and the advice would be to say what they are able to say rather than attempt to refer to things they can see but for which they don't know the required key word (*Rocken/Kliffs/Bisch*). Around 66% achieved full marks on this task and zero scores were relatively rare.

### Question 2

The bullet points for Foundation question 2 on technology were accessible to the vast majority, and most managed to give a sound response. Examiners noted that even less able students had something to write which gained marks. There were fewer than usual, but still some references to 'dein Handy'.

50% achieved the top mark band for covering all bullet points on Content, scoring either 9 or 10 marks, and around 60% did so for Quality of Language. Fewer than 3% of students managed only a minimal response to the bullet points. Some students wrote far more than was required for this short response, and would be well advised to save their time and energy for the more demanding overlap question.

### Question 3

The translation question was a mix of safe ground and challenge and differentiated well across the range of ability, as it is designed to do. The high demand elements proved testing and 'part time job' was managed by few students. Other areas which students found challenging were 'we live', 'go camping' and the past tense in the last task.

A fairly high number of students did not seem to notice the past tense and often responded in the present time frame. The vocabulary items 'shop' and 'today' caused more difficulty than had been anticipated. Overall, however, students seemed to cope better with this task than in previous series.

The performance statistics show that the most frequently achieved mark on both sets of criteria was 2, with 1% returning 0 scores for Key Messages and 1.5% for language/vocabulary/structure. A little under 40% scored 3 or above for Key Messages and only around 33% for the second set of criteria suggesting that the translation continues to be a task that students find challenging.

#### **Question 4.1**

With the Ofqual requirement for an additional option, the overlap questions provided a broader than usual choice for students. Pleasingly, Options 1 and 2 produced no misunderstanding of the tasks set.

Sport proved the most popular option at both tiers and was answered by around half the entry. Many Higher tier responses were detailed and accurate accounts which achieved the top mark band (59% of those who chose this option).

Issues arose on BP4 where *ich mochte* appeared more often than was desirable. Others found alternative ways of expressing future plans. In Bullet point 3 some students talked about having watched a sporting event, and this was accepted. The fact that the mark scheme did not insist on the *Sportzentrum* being mentioned in the response helped students who simply stated which sport they had played recently. Some did not mention a specific sport they would like to do in the future, and so did not achieve Bullet point4.

#### **Question 4.2**

This option (house/home) was the least popular choice at both tiers, but most students who chose it dealt effectively with house type or description and used opinions well to respond to Bullet point2, often giving far more information than was required. The past tense Bullet point3 was also generally handled well, perhaps because students had prepared speaking test answers which they could use in response. Bullet point did not always elicit a future tense, with a few responses entirely in the present time frame.

At Foundation tier, this option produced the highest percentage of students attaining top band marks (18%) with 12% achieving it in 4.1 and 16% in 4.3. The same was true at Higher tier (64%), with 59% at 1.1 and 57% at 1.3.

#### **Question 4.3**

This option was often well done at both tiers. The element which caused the greatest challenge was bullet point 4, (whether they would like to work in a school). This bullet point was on occasion misread/misinterpreted. Some students, particularly at Foundation tier, did not read the question sufficiently carefully and made the assumption that it would relate simply to their future studies. Such answers could not be rewarded.

There were some issues with the misuse of *bekommen* for *werden*, and overall the future tense was probably less well handled than was the past tense.

However, students at Higher tier usually dealt with this more successfully, either by agreeing '*Ja, ich möchte in (m)eine(r) Schule (später) arbeiten*', or by rejecting the suggestion. Many Higher tier responses were far longer than they needed to be. On occasion this paid off in terms of detail and the opportunity to show off a good range of vocabulary and structures, but for some, the response tended to lose direction, drift into irrelevance and to become more prone to error. In general, students would be better advised not to exceed the suggested number of words by an excessive amount, and to maintain their focus on the task.

### **Concluding remarks**

This paper was accessible to the full range of students. The increased optionality undoubtedly put students in a stronger position to show what they could do in selected areas across the specification and it is hoped candidates will feel rewarded with the results they achieve.

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

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