

OCR Report to Centres

June 2013

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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F711/01, 02, 03 Speaking (AS)

General Comments

The majority of teacher/examiners conducted the speaking test well and established a friendly atmosphere conducive to good performance. In general, both role-plays and topic discussions were timed correctly. More centres than before uploaded recordings and in some cases also paper documentation to the Repository.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A (Role play)

The four role-plays contained material of varying degrees of difficulty and were tackled enthusiastically by many.

As in previous sessions, role-plays were most effective when:

- teacher/examiners
 - had a thorough knowledge of the Examiner's Sheet and the Candidate's Sheet;
 - encouraged candidates to supply information from the stimulus material by using open questions;
 - did not supply the information which candidates were intended to supply;
 - listened carefully and elicited further information, if they became aware that candidates had omitted parts of the stimulus material;
 - reacted to candidate responses and suggested further stimuli designed to extract more information;
 - used the correct form of address;
 - followed up the final two bullet point questions with *warum*, giving candidates the opportunity to be inventive and imaginative;
- candidates
 - changed the word order and/or verb ending in the initial two questions;
 - conveyed the stimulus material systematically and chronologically;
 - took the initiative and used their imagination to invent;
 - reacted spontaneously to questions rather than read out notes made in the preparation stage.

Role play A: Scrabble

The two initial questions caused few problems. Successful candidates understood that they were supposed to be suggesting a board game to the examiner. Those who supplied the details scored highly on Grid A, which is marked according to the 15 Key Points. Most centres are now aware that a brief summary of the text will not suffice to gain high marks on this grid. Successful candidates were able to convey information from the text such as: all over the world / correct numbers and years / world championships / without looking / letters (*Buchstabe* given as a *Hilfsvokabel*) placed on board / correct letters A and Z / next player has a turn / crossword puzzle / position of letters important. The final two bullet points were accessible and allowed most candidates to respond to questions asking about their own attitude to board games and computer games.

Role play B: The Tarka Trail, Devon

Most candidates responded well to this visitor attraction and asked the initial two questions competently. Successful candidates recognised the need to use the *Sie* form as suggested by the teacher/examiner (*Ich glaube, Sie haben ein paar Fragen an mich*). Candidates who performed well provided details such as: easy flat trail / follows old railway line / famous from novel / along the way / new information boards / views of coast / regular buses / leave bike at another station / technical assistance / renovated carriages. The final two extension bullet points, asking whether the candidate had already done the trail and whether walking or cycling was better, proved to be no hurdle and were done well.

Role play C: Veggibox

This role-play, concerning home deliveries by a fictitious company, proved accessible. Most candidates understood the basic situation and the initial two questions, although the pronunciation of *Hauslieferungen von Ökoprodukten* was not always successful. Some teacher/examiners recognised the details some candidates had omitted and by skilful questioning were able to encourage them to provide these details, thereby enabling access to higher marks on Grid A. Successful candidates were able to express: supplies tasty or organic vegetables / what is delivered changes with seasons / direct to door / interesting recipes for you to try / leave empty box for collection and reuse / they'll solve problem / can cancel at any time / you can change depending on needs. Candidates may not in fact know specific vocabulary such as "cancel" and "comments", but resourceful candidates can manipulate language they know to convey the meaning and solve these problems.

The final bullet points asked candidates if they use home deliveries and whether vegetarianism is a good idea. These produced a broad spread of responses.

Role play D: Rumpo

An invented eReader was the subject of the final role-play and most candidates responded with enthusiasm. The two initial questions posed few difficulties. Well-performing candidates supplied details such as: new way of reading / electronic alternative / latest technology / world of word to reader / weighs almost nothing / download and start reading / stores 1200 books / long-lasting battery / turns pages quickly / free classics / goes into pocket or bag / ready to use at any free moment. The final bullet points, asking candidates whether they like reading and how best to communicate with other people, produced a mixture of responses.

Section B (Topic discussion)

Most centres are now aware that it is a requirement of the specification that topics must relate to the AS topic list. The majority of topics offered by candidates were appropriate and some topic discussions were very impressive. Many candidates prepared themselves well for this part of the examination, and successful conversations took place, with spontaneous interchanges of ideas between teacher/examiner and candidate. The best candidates were able to expand on their topics very well and had a range of opinions. Some topics, such as those with a high factual content but with limited scope for development of ideas/opinions, can limit marks on Grid D. Teachers should encourage candidates to select a topic which is relevant to a German-speaking country, which interests them, and which they can research in depth. The headings on the Oral Topic Form should be different aspects relating to the same topic and interconnected. topics should not be too wide-ranging, as they then lack depth.

Grid D (Ideas, Opinions, Relevance) awards a maximum of ten marks for the ability to convey ideas and opinions, supported by factual information referring to a German-speaking country. Those candidates with the ability to converse at a high level and with personal views on the issues can score high marks on this grid.

Grid E1 (Fluency, Spontaneity, Responsiveness) has a maximum of ten marks for the ability to use German naturally, fluently and genuinely spontaneously. Those candidates who are in charge of the conversation and can “keep the momentum going” are likely to achieve a mark of at least 7-8. The headings outlined on the Oral Topic Form should be followed in chronological order. Candidates are not penalised if a heading is omitted, as long as the conversation has been successful. The recommended length of the discussion is nine to ten minutes. Centres should be aware that overlong discussions do not bring candidates any advantages, as assessment stops after ten minutes.

Spontaneity is vital. One of the many crucial roles of teacher/examiners is to react to statements made by candidates and to challenge statements or ask for further clarification. Those candidates who can respond spontaneously and fluently to such interventions score highly on this grid. Good teacher/examiners encourage many genuine and spontaneous interchanges. These happen in a natural way when discussions have not been over-rehearsed. Contrived situations, where expected questions lead to expected answers, do not bring high rewards in this grid and at this level. Teacher/examiners are not expected to script their questions.

Grid C1 (Quality of language) awards up to 5 marks for a combination of accuracy and range. Candidates who mostly offer accurate basics but little ambitious language are restricted to a mark of 2/5. Those offering more ambitious structures in accurate German are rewarded with higher marks.

Grid G (Pronunciation and intonation) (5 marks) rewards candidates with good German pronunciation and intonation.

Recordings can be submitted in various formats, the preferred one being mp3, which is often excellent in terms of quality of audibility.

F712 German: Listening, Reading and Writing 1

General Comments

The examination paper produced a full range of responses and a wide distribution of marks. The format of the examination is now familiar and most candidates have been well-prepared, so there were few instances of candidates misinterpreting the rubric or failing to attempt questions. There was little evidence that candidates had had insufficient time to complete the paper.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A – Listening and Writing

Task 1

This task was about wild camping; candidates had to select the correct answer from a choice of three. It required careful listening but a pleasing number of candidates achieved full or nearly full marks. Questions most frequently answered incorrectly were (c) and (e).

Task 2

The second listening text was about gambling addiction amongst young people. Most candidates are familiar with the word *süchtig*, so making the connection to *spielsüchtig* seemed to cause no problems and most candidates gained the first mark. (e) and (j) were almost always correctly identified but candidates seemed to be less familiar with *zahlreiche*, *weiblich* and *vergeblich* as items of vocabulary and sometimes seemed to be placing them at random. The answers to (d) (e) (h) and (i) were common words but all had genuine distracters which required attention to the content of the interview to place correctly. This task discriminated well between candidates.

Task 3

Answering questions in English is generally well done and most candidates scored high marks on this text about lift sharing. Marks were lost by those who gave insufficient information: despite the rubric 'Give **full** details' in (b), many candidates failed to include 'at least' and 'almost' and failed to gain the marks. Some candidates had understood the gist of the conversation but failed to express their answers clearly enough to merit a mark: this was sometimes the case in (f) when explaining how the costs were divided. Numbers still cause a problem for some but thankfully a small minority. In (g) *ankommen* was frequently translated as going or coming which did not render the sense of the German. A surprising number of candidates were unfamiliar with *übermorgen*.

Task 4

Most candidates were capable of communicating the content of this email, although some lost marks unnecessarily through omitting elements of a message. The tradition of recycling vocabulary from the previous listening text was continued. Candidates were expected to pick up *Mitfahrgelegenheit* for point 2 or failing that *Fahrt* or *Reise*. In point 4 various words were accepted for suitcase. In point 5, marks were lost by candidates who were unable to ask 'what time?' and to find a correct way of expressing 'leave'. *Abfahren* and *ankommen* caused difficulties in this and the previous task. In point 7, *im voraus* was expected but *vor* and *bevor* communicated the message, but if used incorrectly was taken into account in the mark for language. A simple and effective way of expressing point 8 was *wenn wir in Hamburg ankommen*.

Most candidates had at least an adequate command of German. Candidates needed to get possessives, prepositions, case endings and genders correct. There were mixtures of *du* and *Sie* within the same email and either was acceptable in this context as long as there was consistency. Word order was generally quite sound.

Section B – Reading and Writing

Task 5

This task was divided into two parts. In the first part (identifying the 6 correct statements) most candidates achieved 4 or 5 of the 6 available marks. (c) was most often incorrectly ticked. In the second part candidates had to pick out a word from the last paragraph of the text which was a synonym for the word in the task. This was generally well done especially by candidates who observed the rubric which required das genaue Wort.

Task 6

Many candidates got the gist of the text and were able to attempt an answer to all the questions. Most candidates are now aware that the questions are designed to prevent them from lifting answers directly from the text and that they are required to manipulate the language of the text rather than to use entirely different vocabulary.

Careful reading of the questions and the text is necessary in order to give precise and direct answers: in (d), for example, it was necessary to express how she got on with the others (*sie findet sie ...*, *sie kommt gut mit ...*, *sie versteht sich gut mit ...* or just simply *gut*) but not *nett und lustig*.

In (b) some candidates overlooked *Badezimmer* in the question and lost a mark by putting comfortable bed as the advantage.

In (f) some candidates had to get the exact proportions of the school but some saw *groß* and jumped to the wrong conclusion.

In (g) candidates were required to manipulate *die Mofafahrt* into *mit dem Mofa*. (h) and (i) were generally correct. (j) required candidates to manipulate *seit* to *vor*.

Loben was a challenging item of vocabulary, which was also required in the answer. It was not widely understood but some realised it should be included and gained the mark.

The Quality of Language was generally sufficient to convey the meaning with manipulation of 1st to 3rd person with verb endings, pronouns and possessives.

Task 7

7(a)

Most candidates understood the gist of the text well. There were 12 points in the Mark Scheme and candidates needed to convey ten to get full marks. The points that candidates most often did not pick up were: Facebook being like a hobby for Leonie and recognizing the mood of the person on the other end of the phone (there was some misunderstanding of *Stimmung* as *Stimme*).

7(b)

This question was well within the experience of all the candidates and they had no difficulty expressing opinions on the subject of communication. Many were able to gain the full 20 marks for Content because they had plenty of good ideas. The best responses were from candidates who considered all methods of communication, not just technological ones, and not all were unreservedly in favour of the most modern means of communication.

Some candidates limited themselves to Facebook and the telephone, the means of communication mentioned in 7a, others wrote about their favourite way of communicating and a few lost marks by getting sidetracked into giving the advantages and disadvantages of the internet which were not relevant to the title.

This task is about giving and justifying opinions, so it is important to respond to the question in the title. A few moments taken before starting writing, to think about how to present ideas in a logical way and to avoid repetition are well worthwhile. There are no marks for structure, so a long preamble about advantages and disadvantages and a conclusion going over all the points again do not gain extra marks.

Many candidates express themselves quite fluently and have an extensive vocabulary but they also need to produce accurate German. So attention to verb / subject agreements, irregular but commonly used verbs, gender, case and plural forms is important. Equally important is legible handwriting.

The Accuracy and Range grids in the Mark Scheme are identical for AS and A2 but the e important and *Meiner Meinung nach, ich finde, dass* are perfectly appropriate ways of doing this. Occasionally substituting *da* or *denn* for *weil* provides variety in justifications and the confident use of subordinating conjunctions like *obwohl, damit, wenn* etc can be considered as complex language at this level.

F713/01, 02, 03 Speaking (A2)

General Comments

Most candidates were correctly entered at this level and a very high standard was again evident. Many recordings were of very good quality, both on the Repository and on CD. It is important to complete a Working Mark Sheet for each candidate, and these should be sent by post with the attendance register or uploaded onto the Repository.

The subject matter for the texts can be drawn from either the AS or A2 topic areas and this year Text C was taken from the AS sub-topic area Education and Training. Both Text A and Text B were on A2 topics, die *Energie-Wende* and *Ostalgie*, which were also very popular choices for the topic conversation, as has been the case in the last two years. All three texts led to some very interesting discussions.

Centres should note that there is no randomisation sheet and any text can be used for any candidate, unless they are doing the same topic as their conversation topic. Some centres were, for example, unable to offer Text A or Text B to those candidates who had already chosen to talk about those popular topics. This situation is to be expected, however, as the majority of texts tend to be based on the A2 topic list.

The timing of the tests was mostly good and there were relatively few that were too short or excessively long. The optimum timings are six minutes on the text and twelve on the topic, though it should be borne in mind that the text discussion is worth half the total marks and, therefore, should not be cut short in any way. The suggested questions for the teacher/examiner are possible ways of eliciting the required information, but they can be phrased in any way. It is nearly always essential to probe for information or view points by formulating additional follow-up questions. This makes the discussion sound far more natural and spontaneous, and it ensures that no important information is omitted, or that vague or even incorrect responses are queried.

Evaluative questions to “stretch and challenge” candidates are suggested, though as with all the questions, they do not have to be used and can be replaced by something similarly, less, or more demanding, according to the candidate’s ability. An example of such a question was: *Glauben Sie, dass politische Veränderungen einen Einfluss auf unser tägliches Leben haben?* Sometimes the “stretch and challenge” is incorporated within the text, often in the last paragraph, such as the rather unusual reference to *Kokosnüsse* in the final paragraph of Text C. Candidates who can explain such similes and who can develop and justify their own ideas or interpretations, may well be targeting a mark from the top box of Grid K on the mark scheme, Understanding of and Response to Text.

Fewer candidates are relying on pre-prepared and memorised material for their topic conversation.

It should sound like a conversation, as the name suggests, and if fluency is obviously mainly confined to pre-learned material, which sounds more like written German than natural spoken language, a high mark for Spontaneity on Grid E2 is unlikely, and often pronunciation and intonation suffer too. It is similarly recommended that candidates are encouraged to talk freely during the text discussion and not to rely on reading out notes they may have written during the preparation period. A candidate reading out written notes cannot really be considered to be “responding to the examiner” sufficiently well to gain a high mark on Grid L (Understanding of and Response to Examiner”).

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A: Texts A, B and C

Text A: *Atomenergie – Nein Danke?*

It was not necessary to have background knowledge of the German government's energy policies to achieve high marks on grid K (Understanding of and Response to Text), though many candidates clearly did, it being a popular area of study, and many were able to give an excellent summary of the first paragraph. The last line of the paragraph proved difficult to explain, however, and the whole paragraph offered good differentiation between candidates, as some could explain the various changes of policy quite lucidly, whilst others got into a muddle, or had misunderstood some aspects. For example, *ein paar* was sometimes taken to mean "two", and *beschlossen* was taken to mean *geschlossen*. Some candidates thought the *Blockade* referred to Tschernobyl, although the catastrophe there was not mentioned in the text. Some had a problem attempting the correct pronunciation of *Blockade*, *Katastrophe* and *Pipeline*, only the latter being correctly pronounced as in English. Two good probing follow-up questions from teacher/examiners, designed to get more detail from ambitious candidates were: *Wovor hatte man Angst?*, referring to the earlier decision by Angela Merkel to abort the abandonment of nuclear power, and *Inwiefern?*, often a good interjection at this level, to get a clearer message from a candidate who had been content simply to read out the final sentence of the paragraph.

The remaining three paragraphs offered fewer difficulties, and most candidates relished the contrasting views of Lukas and Hanna, siding with one or the other almost equally.

It was important to understand the subjunctive in *wären ums Leben gekommen* because there was otherwise the temptation to believe that people *had* died at Fukushima. It is not necessary always to find synonyms when summarising a text, but a few successful ones always make a good impression. *Wenn etwas Schreckliches passiert* was a good attempt at describing, or avoiding, the word *Katastrophe*. The general issues were exceptionally well covered in this text, as candidates seemed to have a clear point of view, which they were willing to express, and nearly all seemed very well informed on the whole topic.

Text B: *Mein 1990*

It was not necessary to have studied the specific period of history in detail to talk successfully about this text, as only the information provided in the text itself was required and the discussion topics in the General Issues were intended to be very broad. Many teacher/examiners asked their candidates for their reaction immediately upon discussing the unexpected result of the opinion poll mentioned in the first paragraph. This is a perfectly acceptable technique, rather than waiting until the whole text has been covered. The only problem with combining text coverage and opinion as a regular examining technique is that it might not be noticed that a certain part of the text has been ignored, if the general discussion becomes too enthusiastic. The most important thing of all for high marks on Grid K is coverage of all four paragraphs. The ideas and justifications offered in addition can then in many cases take the marks up into the top band on the mark scheme. If a paragraph is omitted, the mark on K is inevitably lower. Fortunately, this was an extremely rare event on any of the texts this year.

Some candidates seemed not to realise that paragraphs two, three and four were all about Christian Koch. Some unnecessarily added their own views and additional facts concerning this period of history, whilst not mentioning some key points of the text. There was some confusion as to what had been the case before the *Wende* and what happened afterwards. Maybe because *liest vor* was not known, it was not always realised that the words in italics were the 11 year-old Christian's own words, quoted in the paper and read out loud by him years later. Some did not explain successfully what his comment about *zwei Fremdsprachen* meant. The very last sentence of the text seemed to be difficult. There were some successful synonyms offered, and

some less successful, such as *halb* for *die Hälfte*, which is grammatically incorrect. Among some excellent paraphrases or synonyms heard were: *niemand war gestresst*, *die Unternehmen im Osten waren weniger konkurrenzfähig*, *man hatte nie Hunger*, and *begeistert* for *optimistisch*.

The second general question: *Ist heute wirklich alles besser als früher?* was not necessarily intended to refer just to Germany. It is acceptable, indeed preferable, to widen the discussion at this point to cover issues the candidate may have more direct experience of. It is only the topics chosen by the candidates themselves to discuss in the following conversation that must be based in a German-speaking context. The “stretch and challenge” question about political influence on daily life did indeed prove challenging but *Bist du politisch engagiert?* was an effective alternative. Other good general questions heard were: *Was ist besser, Freiheit oder vom Staat versorgt zu werden?* *Wie wichtig ist es, in einer Demokratie zu leben?* and *Heute gibt es Länder, wo es immer noch keine Reisefreiheit gibt. Wie finden Sie das?*

Text C: Das PPP

Although this text was taken from the AS specification, it perhaps held a few more difficulties than might have been expected. Nevertheless, the text itself and the issues arising from it were discussed in a very interesting and lively fashion by many candidates. Many candidates were able to tackle the first paragraph effectively, though there was a slight tendency to spend too long on this part of the text. *Abgeschlossen* and *Berufsausbildung* did not appear to be well known or were not often explained, and there were some problems in saying the ages of the participants in the scheme. Some good synonyms offered included *unterstützt* for *finanziert* and *Regierungen* for *Bundestag* and *Kongress*. Some candidates added interesting comments on the small numbers involved in the PPP, such as: *ein selektiver Prozess!* and *Fremdsprachen sollten nicht nur für die Elite sein*.

The second paragraph offered candidates an opportunity to explain the significance of *gestoßen* and *am zweisprachigen Gymnasium*. It is recommended every year that the names of people and places in texts be practised during the preparation period. *Mosheim* caused more problems than expected, but most realised the two syllables divided as *Mos-* and *-heim*, as few German words have the ‘sh’ combination. *Ames*, being an English or American surname, was not really expected to cause difficulty but often did. In the final paragraph, the essential point about the lack of a requirement to speak a foreign language before being accepted for a place on the scheme was not always mentioned or commented upon. A good probing question to elicit this information was: *Muss man Englisch und Deutsch können, um teilzunehmen?*

The opportunity for differentiation of candidates offered by the simile at the end of the text has been mentioned already in the General Comments, and it was exceptionally well done by many candidates. The many and varied interpretations heard included the excellent: *wenn man lange genug wartet, kann man entdecken, wie nett die Deutschen eigentlich sind*.

In the discussion of general issues some interesting suggestions were made, such as extending the scheme to include different countries. Some thought the scheme rather elitist and wondered why only people with good grades were selected, others expressed admiration for such a scheme and the desire to participate in something similar in the future.

General Conversation

The most important feature of this part of the test is the fact that it is called a topic *conversation* and is not a presentation with discussion. It should be spontaneous and not rehearsed to too great an extent, and certainly not pre-learned or presented as mini-monologues in essentially “written German”. The latter approach is fortunately not employed by many centres since it does not lead to high marks. The conversation should have some pace, but the candidate can

certainly pause for reflection and even say *das ist eine schwierige / interessante Frage* before offering some thoughts. Natural interaction between the two participants in the conversation is the main thing. Many of the conversations heard this year were extremely informative and interesting.

The most popular topics were:

Jugendkriminalität

Arbeitslosigkeit

Integration

Die Energie-Wende (also covered by Text A)

Die Wiedervereinigung (also covered by Text B)

Some unusual and successful topics this year included:

Hundertwasser

Genforschung im Max Planck Institut

die Beziehungen Deutschland/China

Einfluss des deutschen Films auf Hollywood

Gewaltprävention durch Sport

Schillers "Wilhelm Tell"

Ist "der Tod in Venedig" relevant für den modernen Leser?

das Massaker in München

Deutschlands niedrige Geburtenrate

Warum erlebt Deutschland die Wirtschaftskrise nicht (mehr)?

die alliierte Besatzung Deutschlands

Hans Fallada

"die Wolke"

Der Wiederaufbau Berlins nach dem 2. Weltkrieg

Zweig's "Schachnovelle"

F714 Listening, Reading and Writing 2

General Comments

There was a wide spread of marks, and it was impressive that some candidates, and not all first language speakers, gained almost full marks. Candidates generally appeared to find the examination accessible and had been entered appropriately at this level. Almost all candidates completed the majority of the paper. The only rubric infringement, thankfully very rare, was to answer questions in the wrong language in the second listening task. This usually only affected two or three questions.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A: Listening and Writing

Task 1

All candidates completed this task and there was a wide range of marks. Few candidates failed to gain marks for (c) and most gained the mark for (f) but the response to other questions was more mixed. With statistics, candidates need to remember that a full answer is necessary. For example an answer of “3%” to question (d) gained no marks as it was meaningless and in question (a) reference to the time-scale was also an essential detail. Some candidates lost the mark for (g) by stating that ‘unemployment’ in the Netherlands is the lowest in Europe, rather than ‘youth unemployment’ – just one word but an important one. There were also vocabulary items that differentiated between candidates, such as *Vertrag* in (b) and *Erziehung* in (e).

Task 2

Again, this task discriminated well. The topic appeared accessible to all candidates as it was about a computer game.

Answers (a) and (b)(i) were generally answered correctly, but (b)(ii) caused some difficulties. Apart from the strange spellings of *Länge* and *Grenze* (the spelling of which candidates could actually find in question (g) if they were uncertain) the word *einst* was often transcribed wrongly. The main difficulty in (c) was the word *fliehen* but most candidates gained the mark. Question (e) discriminated well, partly because *Befürworter* and *beitragen* were not always known by candidates.

In general, candidates who transcribed without understanding had only partial success, such as in (g). *Schießen* was generally understood, perhaps as a common feature of computer games, and answers to (h) and (k)(i) often gained the mark despite the omission of *auf*. (k)(ii) proved more difficult as candidates tried to transcribe without understanding, including adding a version of *führen* at the end which rendered the answer meaningless. Question (l) also discriminated well, the transcription *Die waren sehr weit weg und das hier ist uns Deutschen sehr nah* not answering the question.

Quality of Language

The quality of language mark was affected if answers were not syntactically correct, and were not accurately transcribed. The demand in some questions was to produce an accurate simple sentence answer. There were also opportunities to use modal verbs with infinitives, subordinate clauses with correct word order, a subjunctive, to show an understanding of cases and to use *schießen auf* +accusative. Candidates rose well to the challenge. Well-trained candidates thought more carefully about their pronouns.

Section B: Reading and Writing

Text 1: Windkraft auf hoher See

From the number of candidates who went on to demonstrate knowledge of wind power and energy questions in their essays, this was clearly a familiar topic to many candidates.

With reading tasks it is always important to ensure that the information is taken from the correct paragraph of the text.

Tasks 3 and 4

These were non-verbal tasks, completed by all. It was common for candidates to lose at least 1 mark out of the 8 but many gained at least half the marks.

Task 5

This produced a mixed response, discriminating very effectively, with marks ranging from 0 to 7. Candidates needed to read the text carefully and manipulate the language to make the sentences read correctly. The most challenging answer was (e) which was designed as a stretch and challenge question.

Task 6

Again there was a wide spread of marks. Direct answers to questions were needed and marks were lost if phrases, that did not quite fit, were lifted from the text. A question phrased .. *Was machen...?* requires an active present tense verb in the response, so marks were lost in (c) if candidates did not produce this. The verb *entstehen* was perhaps not known and caused confusion here.

For (d), no mark was given for *müssen nicht* in the answer. The mark for (e) was gained by almost all. Question (f) was often left unanswered because of the two stumbling blocks: *worüber* (the question words *worauf*, *worin* etc. always causing difficulty) and then *einig*. Marks for (h) and (i) were not given if the answer was not in the correct tense.

Text 2: Studenten helfen Einwandererkindern

Task 7

Not all candidates realised that they must be precise in covering everything in the text and it was a pity when candidates lost marks by giving a freely embroidered résumé. This tended to be the case predominantly with first language speakers who perhaps had not had the same training as the majority of candidates. Marks were high for this task as the vocabulary and syntax was straightforward. Marking was, therefore, strict over missing elements, such as *oft*, *daher*, *vor allem* and *sogar* and also an erratic use of capital letters and spelling. The main vocabulary gaps were *gedacht* and, surprisingly, *Asyl*. *Einen Elternteil* was often not simply expressed as 'a parent'.

Task 8

There was a wide spread of marks. Again careful reading of the beginning of the sentence was necessary for candidates to produce a complete sentence that made sense. For (b) most realised that the word *Defizit* was not required in the answer and for (e) *Kompetenz*. The majority of candidates gained the marks for (c) and (d), although some thought *Abitur*

synonymous with *Abschluss* and some, perhaps influenced by the second listening topic, wrote *Abschuss*. Some candidates courageously, but erroneously, invented the verb *mentoren* for (f).

Task 9

Questions (a) and (b) were answered well, although candidates lost marks through not using active verbs for (a); also the word *selbstverständlich* sometimes caused problems, possibly thought by some to mean 'self-confident'. In general candidates found the questions straightforward. Occasionally there was some confusion in answers when candidates wrongly used *Studenten* to mean schoolchildren.

Task 10

This was done best by candidates who saw clearly that there is a contrast between what is happening now and what is planned for the future.

Quality of Language

The most common mark for quality of language was 3. Candidates who gained a higher mark demonstrated the ability to answer questions fully and directly and to use complex language when required.

Section C: Writing

Questions 11-18

The most popular titles by far were Q11 and Q13 and many of these essays were done well. There were responses to all the other questions, which, in general, were less successful. The exception was Q18 which also produced some good responses.

As always, candidates who took time to plan their essay did better and were able to structure and control their essay more convincingly. A lack of planning can lead to rambling and a lack of coherence.

There were some excessively long essays, which tended to gain fewer marks because of the lack of coherence and possibly fewer marks for language as well because of lack of time for checking. There still seems to be a mistaken belief on the part of some candidates that the more they write the better.

Although there were a few candidates with low language marks for the most part the level of language was encouraging, with many candidates showing the ability to use complex language to express themselves comprehensibly, if not always absolutely accurately. There were many candidates who had clearly covered their topics thoroughly in class and had really learnt the topic-specific language diligently.

Q11

This was very popular. There was no correct or expected answer to the question and candidates were able to choose either one group or several. The best were able to select, structure and analyse their material well, sometimes gaining full content marks. Others had many facts and figures, about immigration for instance, but did not always address the question carefully enough. Many candidates considered immigrants to be the most disadvantaged group but it was only the better candidates who were able to make the distinction between discrimination and disadvantage, which might be living in poverty, poor housing, homelessness, lower educational success, lower chances of employment etc. Some candidates distinguished between different groups of immigrants. Some made sweeping generalisations about foreigners and needed more specific details. Predictably the most common group of foreigners mentioned was Turks and some of the information here was rather dated and not relevant. Groups other than immigrants

mentioned tended to be the young, the unemployed, the old and women. Some, predominantly those who had not planned their essay in advance, decided to write about every minority group they could think of.

Q12

All candidates who did this question gained at least a few content marks for being a policeman/woman and for being shocked about something, but several ignored the fact that it was supposed to be an event at a demonstration that shocked them, or perhaps did not understand the word 'Demonstration'. However, there were one or two good responses, one about Gorleben, for example and one about the minaret controversy in Switzerland.

Q13

A large number of candidates did this question. Although some candidates reverted in parts to pre-learnt material which half fitted the question, the majority read the question carefully and made a good attempt to answer it. Some candidates treated it as purely hypothetical and did not include factual information to back up their answers but many had adequate or good knowledge of German environmental initiatives. Generally they tended to concentrate on the government's efforts to promote renewables and their energy policies. Some had very good knowledge of this, although there was also some guesswork about. For the individual there was a lot about recycling, often very generalised, about different colour bins, which appears rather dated, about public transport and *Passivhäuser*.

Q14

There were no really successful responses to this question. Some ignored the *Flugblatt* element completely and wrote a discursive essay instead. Others made a half-hearted attempt at it. The amount of factual knowledge displayed was disappointing, as a good answer here requires a little knowledge of a German town in which to root it and something more concrete than a generalised mention of *Fahrradwege*, the need to use less polluting cars and the need to use the bus more.

Q15

A number of candidates decided to write on this, and they were predominantly first language speakers. The essays were mostly quite well argued although only rarely with any specific references to Germany. There were one or two that did root their essay in Germany by giving accurate information about the number of young people with mobiles and the average age to have one for the first time, plus the amount of time people spend on-line. Generally, the conclusion was that technology helps rather than hinders communication. The language marks for these essays was often high, but high marks were not given at times because of illegible handwriting.

Q16

This was not a popular title. Candidates who chose this tended to concentrate on an individual scientist rather than the notion of German scientists in general, but this was a legitimate approach. Those who had some knowledge of the topic tended to write good essays. Some candidates should have chosen a different title as they did not know enough about any German scientists and thought that Dutch, American or Israeli scientists were suitable for the task.

Q17

A small number of candidates answered this question. The problem for candidates was keeping an eye on the title and not lapsing into narrative or something more general about themes. Works chosen included 'Goodbye, Lenin', '*Das Leben der Anderen*', Brecht, Mozart (ignoring the fact that the question asked about a work rather than an author), das '*Dreigroschenoper*', '*Die Welle*' and '*Die Wolke*'. The quality of answers was variable.

Q18

Those who chose this question usually knew something about the figure they had chosen and there were one or two outstanding essays. Personalities chosen included Merkel, Bismarck and Hitler.

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