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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

GERMAN

GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

Paper 8683/01

Speaking

General comments

There was a wide range of entry, from candidates who had a German-speaking parent or relative to candidates for whom German was a completely foreign language acquired at school. There were some very spontaneous, interesting topic discussions and general conversations. The candidates who performed best sounded as though they were taking part in a natural conversation, whereas there were some candidates who seemed to have over-rehearsed their topic and were awarded lower marks.

Teachers at Centres which have entered candidates for Speaking in the past seem now to be aware of the various requirements and regulations for this component, in particular the need for the candidate to ask the Examiner at least two questions in both the Topic conversation and the General conversation. On the whole, tests from these Centres were well examined and assessed.

There are two aspects, which need to be considered by new Centres:

- The candidate has to present the chosen topic for three minutes without interruption. The Examiner should intervene only if the candidate has obvious difficulty in continuing with the presentation. The Topic discussion should not commence, until the three minutes have elapsed.
- The candidate must ask at least two questions in the Topic Conversation and in the General conversation. The syllabus states: "Candidates are required to seek information and the opinions of the teacher." If the candidate fails to ask a question, no marks can be awarded under the heading "Seeking information and opinions". If only one question is asked, then the maximum mark is 3 out of 5. If no question is asked, then no mark can be awarded.

Individual Centre Reports will highlight any shortcomings.

Paper 8683/02

Reading and Writing

General comments

The level of difficulty of the paper was similar to last year's. Candidates performed in a similar way. There was evidence that some had improved their examination technique, but Centres will find in this report aspects of performance which still need attention.

Comments on specific questions

Erster Teil

Question 1

This year, candidates chose words which were inside the lines 1-9, as indicated in the rubric.

Answers to (a), (b) and (e) were those that were most frequently correct. Candidates had less success with (c) and (d).

(c) A few chose "führen" instead of *fordern*.

(d) Some wrote "bisher" and others "dabei" instead of *vielmehr*.

Question 2

Many candidates had difficulty in rephrasing the sentences with correct grammatical constructions.

- (a) A conditional was required here: *hätte* or *haben würde* or *haben könnte*, but it was often omitted in answers.
- (b) This question was usually answered correctly, as candidates had only to supply two words: *vorurteilsfrei prüfen*. It was also possible to express the concept *vorurteilsfrei* as *ohne Vorurteile*.
- (c) Candidates often omitted the necessary passive construction, or they put the verb *werden* in the wrong position in the sentence.
- (d) A number of candidates omitted to start their reply with *man* when writing: *(Westerwelle zufolge sollte) von der Bundesregierung eine entschlossene Einwanderungspolitik fordern*.
- (e) The comment made for (c) above also applies to this question.

Question 3

There were two reasons why candidates lost marks in this question: the failure to mention enough relevant points and the inability to express the answers with original wording instead of lifting them from the text. The rubric for **Questions 3 and 4** states: *ohne längere Satzteile direkt vom Text abzuschreiben*. Where the candidate merely copies the relevant part of the text, no mark is awarded. Candidates of average to less than average ability in the language need more practice in the art of finding synonyms to express concepts. Good candidates were still able to make most points and to gain 4 or 5 marks for language in this exercise.

- (a) Most candidates found the correct answer: *Sie sollte über Zuwanderung entscheiden*. However, some mentioned the need for a discussion or a decision but failed to say about what.
- (b) Candidates could choose five points from the available six here. Almost all candidates could express the idea:

Sie hat ihn scharf kritisiert/Sie hat darauf negativ reagiert/Sie war dagegen.

Of the following points, most candidates could make only one or two correctly:

Er ist/sei Stichwortgeber der Neonazis.

Er sollte sich mit den Opfern rechtsradikaler Angriffe solidarisieren.

Er erklärt die Ausländer zum eigentlichen Problem.

Schilys Unterscheidung in "gute" und "schlechte" Ausländer sei das Fundament des Rassismus/sei rassistisch.

Die Neonazis begründeten ihre Gewalttaten auf eine solche/ähnliche Unterscheidung.

- (c) Candidates could choose three points from the available four here. They were often able to express the ideas:

bis zu 400 Milliarden Mark würden fehlen,

weil zwei Drittel des Schwarzmarktumsatzes wieder in den Wirtschaftskreislauf/in die Wirtschaft zurückfließen.

The following points proved to be more elusive:

Es hätte fatale volkswirtschaftliche Konsequenzen/Folgen.

Es würde eine scharfe Rezession verursachen.

- (d) Many candidates were able to express two ideas correctly for full marks.
- (e) Only the best candidates achieved full marks here. The point which was most frequently omitted was: *Die Ausländer müssen verpflichtet werden, das Angebot zur Integration anzunehmen*.

Zweiter Teil**Question 4**

The general comment made for **Question 3** above also applies to this question.

- (a) There were fewer correct answers to this question (*mehrere Monate*) than were expected. Too many of candidates merely copied *mehrmonatigen* from the text.
- (b) The correct answer was 13, but other numbers from the text appeared on scripts: "2002 and 23".
- (c) Only two points were required from a possible three here. Most candidates were able to supply two. The correct point which few candidates mentioned was: *(Man beschuldigt die Fälscher) Schusswaffen/Munition besessen zu haben*.
- (d) The same comment applies here as to (c) above. The point which some candidates could not reword successfully from the text was: *Sie hätten Sozialhilfe mit Betrug/unberechtigterweise empfangen*.
- (e) There were four points to make in this answer. Few candidates could convey all of them satisfactorily. Many omitted to give an example of the criminal activity: *Sie müssen Diebe werden*.
- (f) Candidates had to make three points. The one which most overlooked was: *Ohne Schwarzarbeit könnte man 500.000 zusätzliche Arbeitsplätze in Deutschland schaffen*.
- (g) A number of candidates copied the text here instead of analysing the figures. They needed to express their answer e.g.: *Die Zahl der Fälle ist von 253 im Jahre 1998 bis 609 im letzten Jahr gestiegen*.

Question 5

The essential task is to summarise the two texts with original wording, according to the question set. Ten marks out of 20 are awarded for this aspect, as is stated on the question paper. Then the candidate is asked to give his or her own opinions on the issue for 5 marks. Indeed, some very able candidates express their own views whilst summarising the texts, in order to avoid repeating details.

It is important to organise the response like a mini-essay in order to fit everything in to the stipulated 140 words. The answer is cut off at around 150 words or at the end of the sentence after 140 words is reached, and no further marks can be awarded for the remainder. This year, only a few candidates wrote at great length and failed to mention enough points in their first 140 words.

Candidates who had understood the texts well were able to gain many content marks, and, in some cases, all 10 marks. A few summarised the passages very well but gave little personal response to the texts, thereby gaining only one or two marks out of 5.

Finally, 5 marks are awarded for language. For candidates who had properly planned their response to this question, language marks awarded here were broadly comparable to those awarded in **Questions 3 and 4**, as these candidates maintained their consistency. Some of those wrote too much paid less regard to accuracy. A few candidates appeared not to have devoted adequate time to this exercise and made more errors than they had in previous exercises.

Paper 8683/03

Essay

General comments

There was a marked preference among all candidates for the essay on the topic *Familie*. Second choice was equally divided between *Medien* and *Die Entwicklungsländer*. Then came *Gesundheit und Fitness*. No candidates opted for **Questions 1 and 2**. There was an exceptionally wide range of performance across the entry, from fluent, accurate and well-planned essays to brief and highly inaccurate offerings. It is clear that, for some candidates, writing a foreign language essay of this length on a serious topic is just too demanding. A list of the errors of the weaker candidates could serve little purpose in a report of this kind. Such a list would include all of basic German grammar. Amongst those candidates who write good but flawed German, one might point out the recurrence of errors such as a confusion between *weil* and *wegen* when wishing to find a German version for "because of"; the misuse of *man*, either in an extended piece (*man weiss, dass er nicht wählen kann*) or in oblique cases; common use of verbs such as *helfen* without a following dative. Other errors (frequently referred to in previous reports) occurred with the use of the comparative (*mehr frei* rather than *freier*), and in confusions between the usage of *bevor* and *vorher*.

As regards the mark given for Content, the main criticism of many essays is that they fail to construct an argument that sets out the issues and arrives at a conclusion. There is a tendency to rely on generalised statements which are not supported by evidence, or to give rather rambling anecdotes.

Comments on specific questions**Question 1 and Question 2**

No essays were submitted.

Question 3

Welche Gefahren hat das Fernsehen als Informationsmedium?

The main problem for candidates here was maintaining the focus on the question set. The essay required a point of view on TV as a medium of information. This was not intended to be an essay about the effects of TV on society at large, the low level of amusement or entertainment on offer, the prevalence of old films etc. Those candidates who did succeed in dealing with the issue of information commented on the possibility of political bias or of manipulation by various interested parties. Nobody chose to deal with other ways in which images may deceive, mislead or misrepresent. This was a good example of an essay title which candidates disregarded so that they could write the essay they expected on the harmful social aspects of TV.

Question 4

Was sind die größten Probleme für die Entwicklungsländer? Wie kann man zu diesen Problemen Lösungen finden?

Most candidates selected poverty as the principal problem, but also mentioned were health, corruption, the role of women and the problems caused by the emigration of young people. The phrasing of the question led candidates to write in rather general terms and some answers would have been improved if candidates had been more specific in naming countries. It was not surprising that candidates could not come up with very convincing solutions, since the problems are so daunting. Some essays touched on the issues of improved trade conditions but most often the solution proposed was to provide more cash and make sure it actually reached the people in need.

Question 5

«Gesundheit ist der größte Reichtum.» Sind Sie auch dieser Meinung?

The title produced some rather rambling essays. The idea of *Reichtum* was not fully understood or explained in this context.

Question 6

Aus welchen Gründen haben wohl die Leute in einigen Nationen immer weniger Kinder?

This was a popular title, producing some of the best essays. Candidates had views and information and ranged over a variety of issues, including improved contraception and the changing role of women in society. Candidates pointed to the egotism and selfishness of individuals in some advanced societies where children were seen as interfering with personal aspirations and *materieller Wohlstand*. On the other hand, some pointed out the higher value placed on the child in modern families (*Qualität nicht Quantität*). The decline of the extended family was noted, as was the declining role and influence of grandparents in children's upbringing. One candidate managed to argue that the fault all lay with the older generation for living too long. (*Die alten Menschen sind die schuldigsten...sie sterben nicht!!*). Besides the personal and social issues raised, reference was made to legal and political controls, such as exist in China.