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FOREIGN LANGUAGE GERMAN

<p>Paper 0525/01</p>

<p>Listening</p>

General comments

There was a wide range of achievement this year, but most candidates did reasonably well.

The first two sections of the examination presented few significant problems. Virtually full marks were scored in **Section 1**. In **Section 2**, nearly all candidates scored well in the first exercise; in the second exercise a problem started to appear, which was to be even more significant for some in **Section 3**, namely careless reading of the questions and an apparent inability to answer questions in the target language. Matching letters or ticking *JA/NEIN* answers proved less of a problem for the weaker candidates. Here, a sizeable number of candidates produced excellent responses, which resulted in perfect or near perfect scores.

A small number of scripts had virtually illegible handwriting, a problem which needs to be addressed by Centres as a matter of urgency. A further problem was that a small number of candidates wrote in pencil or ink of a different colour to that stipulated in the rubric, which made marking these Papers more difficult.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Erste Aufgabe

These questions presented few difficulties. Some errors were made with the times in **Question 1** and the school subjects in **Question 4**.

Correct Answers: **Question 1:** B, **Question 2:** A, **Question 3:** C, **Question 4:** A, **Question 5:** B, **Question 6:** D, **Question 7:** A and **Question 8:** B.

Zweite Aufgabe

Question 9

As a result of some confusion between the English and German alphabets, some candidates misspelled Tahlig's name with Tahleg.

Question 10

Anglicised versions of *Fieber* (e.g. *Feber* (sic) or plain 'fever') and *Er ist schlecht* were not accepted.

Question 11

There were various attempts at spelling *Eier*, but only those that worked phonetically and did not create another word were accepted.

Question 12

The day was usually given correctly, but some candidates failed to produce the correct time by writing 10:30 for *halb zehn*.

Question 13

Some candidates misread the sentence answering with either *Aspirin* or just the word *zwei*.

Question 14

The numbers were usually correct, but difficult to decipher at times.

Correct answers: **Question 9:** *Tahlig*, **Question 10:** *Fieber/Übelkeit, ihm ist schlecht/er fühlt sich nicht wohl*, **Question 11:** *Eier/Ei*, **Question 12:** *Freitag, 9:30/halb zehn*, **Question 13:** *zweimal* and **Question 14:** *20 31 04*.

Section 2

Erste Aufgabe

In most cases, these questions were answered well. Any problems usually occurred in answers to **Questions 17, 18, 20** or **22**.

Correct answers: **Question 15:** *nein*, **Question 16:** *nein*, **Question 17:** *ja*, **Question 18:** *ja*, **Question 19:** *nein*, **Question 20:** *ja*, **Question 21:** *ja* and **Question 22:** *ja*.

Zweite Aufgabe

The general misuse of the possessive pronoun, although fairly widespread, was not penalised.

Question 23

As the question specifies, the answer needs to be precise; *vor ein paar Jahren* was not enough to score, nor were just the numbers *14* or *3*. *Mit 14* was accepted. A surprising number of candidates did not achieve the correct answer here.

Question 24

The English spelling of *Onkel* was not accepted.

Question 25

Reasonable versions of *Nachbar* were accepted here.

Question 26

This question was usually answered correctly.

Question 27

Some incorrect spellings of *kindisch* were accepted.

Question 28

Some candidates found it difficult to express in German the notion that computers make *some* aspects of work easier to deal with.

Question 29

This question was usually answered correctly.

Question 30

The notions that Michael has retained his old friends and still goes out a lot were usually expressed with sufficient accuracy to score.

Correct answers: **Question 23:** *mit 14/vor drei Jahren*, **Question 24:** *von seinem Onkel/als Geburtstagsgeschenk*, **Question 25:** *von einem Nachbarn*, **Question 26:** *seine ganze Freizeit*, **Question 27:** *Zeitverschwendung/kindisch*, **Question 28:** *Der Computer kann manche/bestimmte Arbeiten leichter machen*, **Question 29:** *Lernprogramme für Vokabeln/Mathe* and **Question 30:** *Nein, denn er hat noch immer viele Freunde/geht viel aus*.

Section 3

Erste Aufgabe

These questions were generally tackled well, with no discernible pattern in any of the mistakes that did appear.

Correct answers: **Question 31: C, Question 32: B, Question 33: D, Question 34: A, Question 35: A and Question 36: B.**

Zweite Aufgabe

This last exercise is always the most challenging, and is aimed at testing candidates attempting to achieve grades higher than C. A fair number of candidates produced excellent marks in this section, but there were also a number of candidates who appeared to have misread the questions or were unable to express their answers in the target language.

Question 37

Virtually answered correctly by all those who attempted the question.

Question 38

Some incorrect spellings of *kriminell* were accepted.

Question 39

This proved to be the most difficult question of all. Required were the answers: *auf die eigene Zukunft* and *auf die Gesellschaft*. A lot of answers referred to *Ladendiebstahl, Straftaten, Jugendkriminalität* etc. Here, neither the question nor the text seemed to be well understood.

Question 40

The required answer was simply: *Sie ist niedriger* or an equivalent. Also accepted was *von 122 auf 70*.

Question 41

The correct answer was: *Wenn schwierige Schüler nicht im Unterricht erscheinen*. There was a wide variety of incorrect answers.

Question 42

A number of candidates thought that teachers should be stricter, or make lessons more relaxing (*entspannend*). However, *mehr interessant* was accepted here.

Question 43

Some candidates apparently did not understand that *Wie vergleicht...* meant that candidates had to listen out for a comparison; a number of wrong answers stated that the police and psychologists worked well together.

Question 44

It was not enough to write that parents wrote letters. The notion of praise for the positive response/action was essential here.

Question 45

voll mit and other versions of this were not enough to score on their own. The idea that the teachers worked supportively (*sie arbeiteten voll mit*) needed to be mentioned here.

Correct answers: **Question 37:** *seit 2 Jahren*, **Question 38:** *bis Jugendliche kriminell werden*, **Question 39 (a):** *auf die Gesellschaft*, **(b)** *auf die eigenen Zukunftschancen*, **Question 4:** *sie sind niedriger/von 122 auf 70 gesunken*, **Question 41:** *wenn schwierige Schüler nicht zur Schule kommen*, **Question 42:** *sie sollen den Unterricht spannend machen, damit Schüler dahin gehen*, **Question 43:** *Die Sprache der Polizisten ist wirksamer/die Polizisten sind wirksamer*, **Question 44:** *lobend/sie begrüßen die Initiative* and **Question 45:** *sie machen voll mit/positiv*.

Paper 0525/02

Reading and Directed Writing

General comments

In general, candidates were well prepared for this examination, scoring well in all sections.

Somewhat surprisingly, a number of candidates who scored well in **Sections 1** and **2** seemed to have been discouraged from tackling **Section 3**, thus automatically losing out on the chance to score higher marks which other candidates on similar scores in **Sections 1** and **2** managed to obtain. As this examination is marked positively, possible failure in **Section 3** would not endanger the marks already obtained in **Sections 1** and **2**.

Comments on specific questions**Section 1***Erste Aufgabe*

Most candidates scored full marks. Any problems that did occur tended to centre on **Question 2**, where B was sometimes given as the answer.

Correct answers: **Question 1:** D; **Question 2:** A; **Question 3:** A; **Question 4:** A and **Question 5:** B.

Zweite Aufgabe

This exercise was virtually always answered correctly. A tiny number of candidates gave peoples' names instead of the corresponding letters. If this use was consistent, they still received credit for their correct answers.

Correct answers: **Question 6:** E; **Question 7:** B; **Question 8:** A; **Question 9:** F and **Question 10:** D.

Dritte Aufgabe

Candidates coped very well with this exercise. The few mistakes that did occur tended to do so with **Questions 11** and **12**.

Correct answers: **Question 11:** *Ja*; **Question 12:** *Nein*; **Question 13:** *Nein*; **Question 14:** *Nein* and **Question 15:** *Ja*.

*Vierte Aufgabe***Frage 16**

Most candidates scored maximum marks here. A total of 5 marks was available for Communication and Accuracy. To achieve all 3 marks for communication, candidates had to address each picture/stimulus in the rubric. To obtain the maximum of 2 marks for accuracy, most verbs had to be conjugated correctly, but minor errors with adjectival endings, wrong genders and/or prepositions etc. were tolerated. To obtain 1 mark for accuracy, some appropriate usage had to be shown. If there were no examples of appropriate usage or no marks for communication, the candidate would fail to score.

Candidates were not penalised for writing in note form.

Section 2*Erste Aufgabe*

On the whole, most candidates did well here. The most common omissions from answers have been put in bold in the list below. These omissions rendered some of the answers incomplete, preventing the small number of candidates who made them from scoring.

Correct answers:

Question 17: für alle, die **leichter/besser/einfacher** Englisch lernen wollen;

Question 18: Sie wussten nicht wie sie Englisch lernen sollten **und** hatten weder Zeit noch Lust dazu,;

Question 19: in Oxford **und an anderen Unis**;

Question 20: einen Kasten **mit Vokabelkarten**/Grundkenntnisse;

Question 21: wenn man das Wort schon kennt;

Question 22: wenn man das Wort noch nicht kennt/wenn man noch unsicher ist;

Question 23: wie oft **und** wie lange man das macht/übt;

Question 24: weil man (an den abgelegten Karten) sehen kann, welchen Fortschritt man gemacht hat/weil es mit diesem System einfach gut geht/Spaß macht, zu lernen;

Question 25: man kann seinen eigenen Kasten zusammen stellen.

Zweite Aufgabe

Ten marks were available for communication (2 marks per bullet point). Up to five marks were available for a maximum total of 20 ticks for linguistic accuracy; these marks were awarded on a positive basis.

With regards to the five bullet points:

- Very few candidates failed to give two pieces of information about themselves
- A small minority of candidates seemed to be unfamiliar with the concept of *an einem Austausch teilnehmen* and missed out on being able to give two reasons for wanting to do so
- Very few candidates failed to give information on the third bullet point. A tiny minority stated what they did *not* like about their school, instead of what they liked about it
- The two hobbies caused very few problems
- Some of the questions asked were a bit tenuous, i.e. they were not always *passend*, but most candidates scored well here.

Most candidates scored full marks for accuracy, as they needed only 20 ticks to do so.

Section 3*Erste Aufgabe*

Most candidates coped well with a new format of questions. It is important for future success to remind candidates they only need to write corrected statements if the statement was false, i.e. a *nein*-statement, as stated in the rubric.

There was no clear pattern to the wrong answers that were given, except with **Question 28**, where *Sie sehen den Computer als Arbeitsgerät* was often mistakenly given.

Correct answers: **Question 27:** *Ja*; **Question 28:** *Nein. Sie haben es sich hart und ernsthaft erarbeiten müssen*; **Question 29:** *Nein. Er hat nichts gegen Computer*; **Question 30:** *Ja*; **Question 31:** *Ja*; **Question 32:** *Nein. Sie sollten gut dosierte Spielzeiten haben*; **Question 33:** *Ja*.

Zweite Aufgabe

This was the most demanding part of the examination, as intended. Where mistakes occurred, they did so, again, without a clear pattern.

Correct answers:

Question 34: *die Zahl steigt/wächst*

Question 35: *(mit Arbeit) in Krankenhäusern/Altenheimen/beim Zivildienst;*

Question 36: *Sie müssen ihre Einstellung verteidigen/sagen, warum sie den Wehrdienst verweigern;*

Question 37: *dass auch ihre Altersgenossen sagen müssten, warum sie Soldat werden wollen und ihre Einstellung verteidigen sollten;*

Question 38: *dass Frieden/Freiheit ausgerechnet durch Waffen/Soldaten/den Wehrdienst verteidigt wird;*

Question 39: *Sie sprechen leise/haben Selbstzweifel/es gibt wenige Hurra-Patrioten*

Question 40: *Sie haben Angst/Ekel vor der Arbeit im Zivildienst;*

Question 41: *Man schätzt sie hoch ein/viele Plätze könnten ohne sie nicht funktionieren/müssten geschlossen werden;*

Question 42: *Sie haben hohes Selbstvertrauen/zeigen klares Engagement.*

Paper 0525/03

Speaking

General comments

These comments are to be read in conjunction with the *Teachers' Notes* for March – April 2003.

As in previous years, the ability of candidates to communicate in German is impressive and there were very many highly scoring performances by candidates. The full range of marks was available to all candidates and there was a wide range of performance from candidates again this year, with the standard heard being very comparable to that heard in previous years.

Centres generally conducted the Speaking Test very professionally and Examiners had prepared themselves thoroughly before the examination and prepared their candidates to deliver their best. Only in a few cases were Examiners not well prepared for the Role play situations, which resulted in the candidates not being able to demonstrate their ability fully. In these situations, candidates were somewhat confused that the situation was being unnecessarily extended into a mini-conversation. In a few of these cases, some tasks in the Role plays were not even completed. Some Examiners did not ask appropriate questions in the Topic and/or General Conversation sections of the test, and some candidates seemed unprepared for these sections of the test: it should be stressed that thorough preparation for these sections can produce excellent performances. Candidates should be prepared to use the full range of time frames (present, past and future) in these sections of the test, and Examiners should give ample opportunity to ask the sort of questions which will allow these time frames to be used, otherwise marks in category B (linguistic quality) might well be limited.

Most Centres forwarded the appropriate sample size for the Centre with clear recordings in cassette boxes, which were well labelled. Only a few recordings were of poor quality. It should be stressed, however, that the tape should run on without interruption between sections in accordance with the instructions (p. 5).

Administrative work in Centres was generally very good this year, with fewer clerical errors of addition on the working mark sheet (WMS). It would however be helpful if the Role play card number were indicated on the WMS for each candidate recorded.

The recommended timings for each section of the examination were usually observed, but some Examiners did run together the Topic and General Conversation sections, which makes Moderation especially difficult.

The mark scheme was usually applied fairly consistently and the order of merit within the Centre was usually accurate. Where adjustments were necessary, the lack of time frames in the conversation sections or failure to complete all the Role play tasks were usually to blame.

Centres are reminded of the Administrative Notes (paragraph 2, p. 3) where they are advised to use only one Teacher/Examiner in the interests of standardisation. Only where there is a large candidature is permission for the use of an additional Examiner to be sought from the IGCSE Languages Officer. If two Examiners are used, then Centres must ensure that rigorous standardisation takes place.

Comments on specific Role plays

Examiners are reminded to encourage candidates to attempt all parts of each task. If only one part of a task is completed, only one mark can be awarded. The majority of candidates were able to converse fluently in their Role plays and make use of natural and idiomatic German to complete the required tasks.

It is highlighted in the *Teachers' Notes* (p. 4) that a candidate's mistakes should not be corrected. As has been stated earlier, Examiners should adhere to the rubrics and printed stimuli of the Role plays and not add to or extend the set tasks, nor develop them into mini-conversations. Full guidance is given on p. 6 of the booklet, under *Structure of the Examination*.

Role-plays A

Page 13

Most candidates did very well. Some candidates failed to pick up on the plural stimuli of *Stunden* and *Fächer*.

Page 14

Most candidates were able to handle this Role play well and offered a variety of appropriate contents for the *Päckchen* and reasons for being in Germany.

Page 15

A minority of candidates found difficulty in offering choices of *Vorspeise* and *Hauptgericht*, but most were able to select appropriately.

Role-plays B

These Role plays were more demanding in that they required the ability to use different time frames and to give explanations, justifications and opinions where necessary. The longer tasks were often split by the Examiners, which is quite appropriate. Most candidates also took note to consider the context of the setting provided in the rubric.

Page 16

This Role play proved a good discriminator as it involved responses in a variety of time frames. Some candidates found difficulty in expressing adequately how to ask about pay and hours of work.

Page 17

Once again a variety of time frames were necessary for full completion of the tasks, but this was not beyond the scope of many candidates. There was an interesting variety of bought items.

Page 18

Again there was the necessity of handling a range of time frames for successful communication of the tasks here, but this was not beyond the majority of candidates.

Topic (prepared) conversation

As was the case last year, a pleasing and wide range of topics was offered. The best examining in this section sounded natural and unrehearsed. It gave rise to natural, spontaneous exchanges whilst encouraging the candidates to use a variety of tenses, vocabulary and structures. Examiners are reminded to let candidates speak for a full minute before interrupting: in a few cases candidates were questioned as soon as the section started and this was often not helpful to the candidate.

The choice of topics was appropriate in most cases. Some candidates talked about very challenging topics, which were of a very high and sophisticated level. In some cases, such candidates could not sustain the high level of performance in their presentation in the discussion section and would perhaps have been more comfortable choosing a typical IGCSE topic such as holidays, free time, school and ambitions/future plans. Others, however, were able to sustain the high level and gained very high marks for this section.

Performance was, on the whole, very good and some fluent, interesting expositions and discussions were heard. Candidates presented a very wide range of prepared topics, with subjects which were relevant or interesting to them personally. Such topics are inevitably more stimulating and can bring forth a whole range of descriptive individual language. Well-prepared candidates are then able to proceed to the General Conversation with greater confidence, knowing that they will then be able to answer questions on a wide variety of issues. Candidates who clearly do not prepare a topic as prescribed by the syllabus, cannot be awarded high marks for scale **(a)** (quality of presentation and preparation).

Examiners must consult the *Teachers' Notes* very carefully as there are still a number who are awarding higher scale **(b)** marks to candidates who do not (or cannot) convey past and future meanings. Such candidates cannot be awarded above the satisfactory band (see *Teachers' Notes*, p. 6). Similarly, candidates whose topic or conversation is significantly curtailed cannot expect to be awarded full marks if they do not have time to demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and language structures.

Again it must be noted that some Examiners do not make it clear where the **Topic** ends and the **General Conversation** begins. This can be extremely difficult for the Moderator.

General (unprepared) Conversation

Again, the best performances from candidates in this section of the test were ones where they were encouraged to use a variety of tenses, relevant vocabulary and appropriate structures and many were able to demonstrate a high degree of fluency in their responses to the Examiners' questions. As in previous years, the overall standard of work heard in this section was high. A good range of topics was discussed, with most Examiners covering at least 2 or 3 areas. Topics covered included school, holidays, family life, education, daily life, life in other countries, geographical surroundings and free time – all of which were entirely appropriate. Some Examiners, however, pose questions which are too sophisticated for the average candidate, thus denying such candidates the opportunity to demonstrate what they know or can offer with a more basic level of vocabulary and structure.

General Impression

It was pleasing to see that the impression mark was consistently well applied by the majority of Examiners.

Paper 0525/04
Continuous Writing

General comments

The candidates demonstrated a wide range of competence which ranged from apparent native or near-native speaker competence to a few who could not formulate simple sentences. On the whole, the standard was encouraging.

Presentation, for the most part, was good, but occasionally handwriting was difficult to decipher. Candidates should be aware that this could disadvantage them.

In the main, candidates used the reformed spellings as required. However, it was apparent that a few Centres were still not applying this. This was most in evidence with the use of *ß* in *daß*, which is no longer correct.

A great majority handled German syntax well. Some candidates did not always use capital letters appropriately; they were occasionally missing for nouns, even in some very fluent scripts and in a number of cases *sie* and *Sie* were confused. Gender and case were often wrong.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

There were many extremely good letters, and it was clear that most candidates were thoroughly versed in this skill. Candidates are advised to note the requisite number of words; a few exceeded this, which was not to their advantage.

- (a)(1)** Descriptions were appropriate generally, although some indicated that candidates understood *abends* to mean *heute Abend* or one particular evening.
- (2)** Various appropriate reasons were given here.
- (3)** Many good points were made here, although some candidates did not offer their opinion.
- (4)** Mostly answered well with a variety of preferred activities being mentioned, but some candidates clearly misunderstood the task and described the activities they were actually engaged in. A significant number, again, misunderstood *abends* and described what they were going to do that evening.
- (5)** Not all candidates asked how their correspondent would react, but instead asked for more general advice.
- (b)** Only a few candidates lifted sentences and/or phrases from the rubric, for which they could not receive credit. Occasionally candidates used both *du* and *Sie* in the same letter or addressed the manageress as *du* throughout.
- (1)** Candidates introduced themselves appropriately and all but the very weakest candidates could explain the problem.
- (2)** This was well answered.
- (3)** There was no problem here.
- (4)** Candidates were generally able to express themselves appropriately. A significant number of candidates from non-European Centres did not seem aware that the Euro has replaced the DM.
- (5)** Many candidates failed to ask a question and wrote about their expectations. Some asked for advice.

Question 2

There were some very good answers here, although a number of candidates completely misunderstood the rubric and wrote irrelevant material. Some candidates seemed to have confused *Wohnblock* with *Wohnung* and some had a happy child in their story suggesting that they did not understand *weinend*. Stories were generally relevant however, with appropriate vocabulary. Some candidates wrote some or all of their essay in the present tense; candidates are reminded of the need to write in an appropriate past tense and to avoid lifting from the rubric. A few candidates spent too much of the essay setting the scene rather than developing the story. It was evident that whilst letter writing had been very well rehearsed and executed in almost all cases, this exercise was sometimes dealt with less successfully by the same candidates.