

GERMAN

Paper 3025/01 Translation and Composition
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General comments

There was a wide range of candidates for this examination, including native or near native speakers of German. The majority were familiar with the rubrics to the questions and with what to expect. A small number of candidates wrote lengthy pre-learnt openings, particularly in answer to **Question 1**, which were allowed limited reward by the mark scheme. Accurate use of tense and verbs was again an issue this year. A number of candidates used the present tense to narrate events in the past, which limited the candidates' ability to communicate clearly and gain full marks for communication. Several candidates did not read the instructions carefully and answered three questions when only two answers are required. This is not advisable as it leads to difficulties in terms of time available and is likely to have a negative impact on the candidate's final mark.

Question 1 Picture Story

The convention of this type of question is to relate the events depicted using the past tense: the perfect tense, imperfect tense or a mixture of both are acceptable. As in previous years some candidates appeared not to be aware of this and answered in the present tense. Whilst some credit could be given to those candidates, they nonetheless failed to achieve their full potential. Use of an appropriate verb was sometimes a problem in this question. For example, candidates often found it hard to express the actions of *climbing*, *picking*, *chasing* and *giving*. Similarly some of the weaker candidates did not know some of the nouns crucial to the telling of the story. Relatively few could manage the correct plural of *Apfel*. This was one instance where the lack of an umlaut altered the meaning and was therefore not rewarded by the mark scheme. Nevertheless, there were good examples of the use of relative clauses, as in *“ein Bauer, der mit seinem Hund im Garten arbeitete,”* and some candidates also correctly used a good range of subordinating conjunctions such as *weil*, *obwohl* and *nachdem*.

Question 2 Essays

Relatively few candidates attempted questions from this section. **Questions (a), (b) and (c)** were equally popular amongst those who did choose to do so. Candidates usually attempted to cover all five prompts although there were instances where the prompts were clearly not understood. This occasionally led to slightly illogical outcomes.

- (a)** *Eine Baufirma will vierzig Häuser im Park in der Nähe von Ihrem Haus bauen. Sie sind dagegen und Sie schreiben einen Brief an der Zeitung. Erwähnen Sie folgendes:*

Candidates mentioned a variety of reasons why the park was important. However, they were often less successful in describing what they were going to do in protest and many simply copied the rubric, and wrote *“wir haben Pläne für Protest”* without expanding. Candidates must read the rubric carefully and should be aware that credit is not given for simply copying phrases from the question.

- (b)** *Sie habe vor kurzem ein Paar Schuhe gekauft und Sie sind damit unzufrieden. Sie möchten das Geld zurückhaben. Wie verläuft das Gespräch im Schuhgeschäft? Erwähnen Sie folgendes:*

On the whole this was the least well answered of the essay questions. While most candidates appreciated that this question called for a dialogue and that their answer should have been laid out as a dialogue, they should realise that it is not necessary to keep writing the name of the person speaking in the margin, as if scripting a play. Candidates had particular difficulty in this question avoiding using phrases from the rubric in their answers, often simply copying *“vor kurzem ein Paar Schuhe gekauft”* and *“das Geld zurückhaben”*.

- (c) *Sie haben eine Schuldisko organisiert und die Band ist nicht erschienen. Beschreiben Sie folgendes.*

Although candidates were able to answer this question successfully, there were examples of answers which suffered from the fact that the candidate misunderstood the phrase “*Die Band ist nicht erschienen*”. It was intended to lead candidates towards writing something in a past tense. However, some candidates did not pick up on this and wrote about a band who were not able to come to a disco which was to take place in the future. Credit was nevertheless given where possible.

Question 3 Translation

Many weak candidates struggle to do well on the translation question if they opt for it and score considerably fewer marks than on the other questions. This year the translation included two stock time phrases which it would be reasonable to expect candidates to know: ‘at nine fifteen’: *um neun Uhr fünfzehn/Viertel nach neun* and ‘a few seconds later’: *Ein paar Sekunden später*. Most candidates could manage part of each phrase but not all of it. Other problem vocabulary items included station: *Bahnhof*; platform: *Gleis*; bang: *Knall*; and ticket: *Fahrkarte*. Candidates also had difficulty with many of the verbs. Where they did know the correct verb, the ending or tense was often incorrect. On a positive note it was pleasing to see that many candidates were able to gain marks at the end of the paper by successfully translating Mrs Meyer was relieved: *Frau Meyer war erleichtert*.



GERMAN

Paper 3025/02 Reading Comprehension
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General comments

Candidates' performance on this paper was in line with that in previous years. There was a full spread of marks, with a number of candidates achieving full or nearly full marks, in **Section 1** in particular.

Section 2 proved to be more challenging, though all candidates appeared to be familiar with the rubrics and the question types.

Section 3 as usual posed the biggest challenge for all candidates, but even here candidates appeared well prepared for the layout of the exercise.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Questions 1 – 5

This initial exercise tests comprehension of short reading extracts by way of multiple choice questions. The correct answers had to be selected from four visual stimuli, although in **Question 5** the four choices were words. This exercise posed very few problems and the majority of candidates were able, as expected, to get off to a confident start.

Questions 6 – 10

Most candidates also scored full marks on this exercise, where short statements about their ambitions, plans and interests needed to be matched to a list of statements referring to various professions.

Questions 11 – 15

Again, this exercise was well answered by most candidates. They were required to read a short letter and decide whether statements on it were true or false.

Section 2

Questions 16 - 23

In this exercise, longer answers had to be produced in the target language in response to questions on a text about a child's first day at school. Candidates who did not score highly here appeared either to have spent insufficient time on reading the questions carefully or had failed to understand them. Although answers can be lifted from the text in some instances, the material does of course need to correspond to the correct question. Most mistakes of this nature occurred in **Questions 20** and **21**, where candidates confused the pieces of advice required to answer **Question 20** with the preparatory activities suggested to be done at home. Answers should also be complete and unambiguous. In **Question 16** for example, some candidates who recognised that the first day at school was stressful failed to mention the important fact that it is more stressful for the parents than the children. Similarly in **Question 17** a few candidates wrote quite vague answers referring to any university and failed to mention that the university was in Bath. Whatever difficulties candidates had with this exercise they did, however, generally score well and **Question 23** proved a good question to finish with, with most candidates managing to answer it successfully.



Questions 24 – 31

Although this exercise mirrored the problems some candidates had encountered in the previous task, most candidates were able to start well by successfully identifying two examples of Socrates' negative opinion of the youth of today in answer to **Question 24**. There were again several examples of answers which did not quite answer the question fully enough, however. In **Question 27** references to *Schul- und Ausbildungszeit* needed to include the fact that these were *länger*. Similarly in **Question 28** it was not sufficient simply to lift *sich ... von den Eltern abgrenzen können* without including the crucial phrase *nur schwer*. Able candidates did score well. Again it seems clear that candidates should be encouraged to spend more time on reading and ensuring they have fully understood the questions.

Section 3

Questions 32 - 51

Many candidates found this cloze test, the last exercise on the paper, particularly challenging and generally did not score highly on it. The main problems appeared to be: subordinating conjunctions (**Question 37**, *als*, **Question 42**, *obwohl*, **Question 44**, *wo*), modal verbs (**Question 46**, *musste*). Relatively few candidates managed to produce the dependent infinitive *kaufen* in **Question 48**. A number of candidates nonetheless scored creditably here and many who did find the paper difficult finished on a high by answering the last three questions correctly.