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# GCSE GERMAN

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Insight report:  
2019 results at a glance

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September 2019



2019

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insights

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# How to use this report

This report provides a snapshot of this summer's results. It contains information on grade boundaries and performance by paper. This report is part of our full results insight series. For extra information on results:

- Access our free Enhanced Results Analysis tool. We've created [two-minute tutorials](#) to show you how.
- Navigate to [e-AQA](#) to download the full report on the exam for a detailed breakdown.
- [Book on](#) to one of our live lessons webinars. The Head of Curriculum for your subject will take you through this year's results and answer your questions.
- [Book on](#) to a Feedback event. See examples from real scripts from the summer to highlight common areas where students did well and where there's room for improvement.

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# Qualification summary

## Foundation tier

### **Paper 1**

This year's paper differentiated well and it was pleasing to see that the majority of students were able to respond successfully to the questions. There was little evidence of students leaving questions unanswered but some students' English spelling was poor, although fortunately in most cases comprehension of their answers was not affected.

### **Paper 2**

It is pleasing to report that the speaking test was successful in its aim of enabling students to demonstrate a level of oral proficiency that was commensurate with their ability. Nearly all Foundation tier students performed in a way that justified their tier of entry. There was an improvement in the conduct of the tests this year, which was pleasing.

### **Paper 3**

This year's paper differentiated well between students, with an improved performance by many students in Section B, where students are required to understand questions in German and, in some cases, respond in German. Relatively few students left questions blank this year. A good number of students responded well to the tasks and demonstrated an impressive knowledge throughout the paper and across the range of topics covered.

### **Paper 4**

The paper proved to be accessible for virtually all students, enabling them to demonstrate their skills and knowledge. Even the least able students attempted Question 1, Question 2 and Question 3. Students demonstrated their ability to refer to different timeframes and express opinions, as required by the task. The importance of addressing the bullet points had been conveyed to students and there was some very pleasing work, particularly in Question 4.

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## Higher tier

### **Paper 1**

This paper differentiated well between students of varying abilities. As with last year, most able students responded well to all questions, including those requiring written answers in German, in Section B. Overall, the standard of responses was pleasingly high and there was little evidence of lots of questions not being attempted. Students appeared to be appropriately entered.

### **Paper 2**

Students should be reminded to read carefully the introductory role play rubric, which explains the context of the task. In the photo card task, students who had made good use of their preparation time, by preparing at least three sentences in response to each of the three questions, performed well. In the general conversation, students had been well prepared and gave developed responses. However, question technique is a key area for further improvement. Teacher-examiners should tailor their questions to the interests and ability level of the student they are testing and use follow-up questions to demonstrate students' spontaneity.

### **Paper 3**

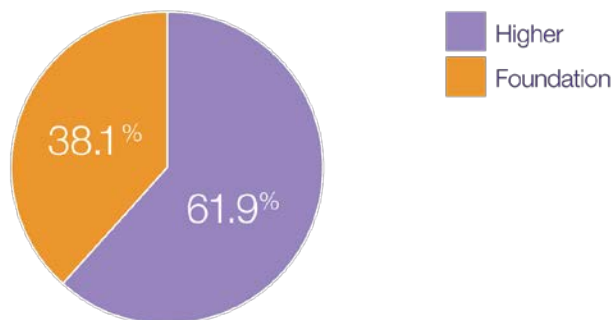
Students responded very well to the questions and very few students appeared to be inappropriately entered. The translation in Section C proved to be more accessible this year and students produced some excellent and precise translations, with the full range of marks being scored. A small number of students answered in the wrong language in Section B.

### **Paper 4**

The standard of work in this paper showed a slight improvement on last year's and students appeared better attuned to the demands of the paper. A pleasing number gained very good or good marks for all three questions. The translation task discriminated well, with all students able to score some marks. The importance of learning and practising high frequency vocabulary items eg conjunctions and prepositions, is key to success – as well as ensuring that all parts of the sentence have been translated carefully, particularly the little words.

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Entry volumes, Foundation vs Higher tier  
32,145 entries



Entry volumes,  
Foundation vs Higher  
tier.

This graphic shows how  
entries were split  
between the two tiers.

See also: our [guidance  
on choosing tiers](#).

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Conduct your own analysis using data relevant to you. Watch short [tutorials](#) on using Enhanced Results Analysis (ERA) for school, subject, group or student performance; or log straight in through [aqa.org.uk/log-in](http://aqa.org.uk/log-in)

# Grade boundaries

Subject or paper	Max mark	Summer 2019 grade boundaries								
		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
German 8668F (Foundation)	240	-	-	-	-	169	149	109	69	30

Subject or paper	Max mark	Summer 2019 grade boundaries								
		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
German 8668H (Higher)	240	201	179	157	135	114	93	82	-	-

## How to interpret grade boundaries

In this linear specification, students must be entered for Foundation or Higher tier across all four skills. Their final grade is based on the total scaled marks achieved across the four components.

### Grade boundaries are set using a mix of statistics and expert judgement

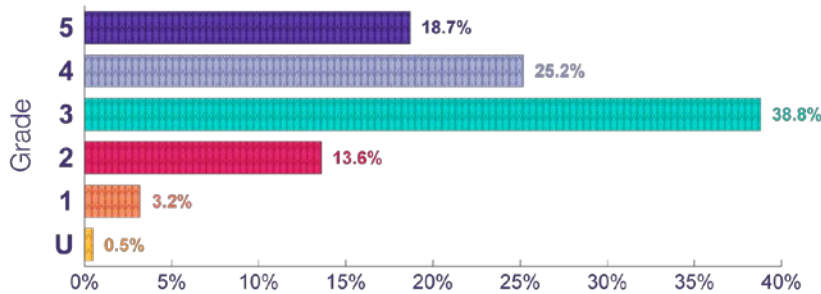
Our research team uses a range of statistics to make predictions that suggest the most appropriate grade boundaries. The statistical evidence considers the prior attainment of the given cohort as well as the distribution of marks. Senior examiners then review a script sample to confirm the statistically recommended marks are sensible for the grade.

Boundary setting is overseen by Ofqual. To find more grade boundaries and learn how they are set, visit [aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/results-days/grade-boundaries-and-ums](http://aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/results-days/grade-boundaries-and-ums)

Watch our two-minute team stories to find out more about how we set grade boundaries and ensure fairness. Visit [aqa.org.uk/team-stories](http://aqa.org.uk/team-stories)

### Grade summary: Foundation

This shows the percentage of students achieving each grade.



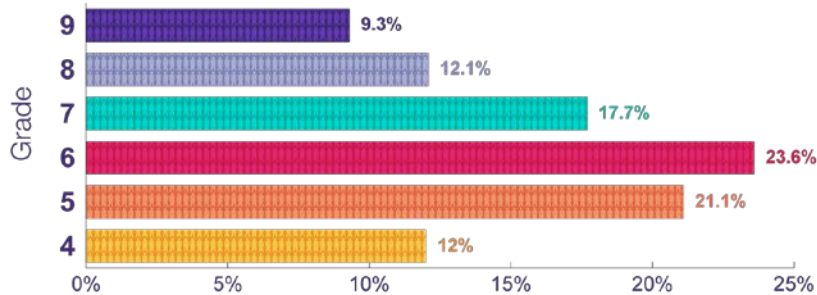
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Grade summary.

This shows the percentage of students achieving each grade. Each colour represents a grade.

### Grade summary: Higher

This shows the percentage of students achieving each grade.



Total achieving (3-U = 4.2%).

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Grade summary.

This shows the percentage of students achieving each grade. Each colour represents a grade.

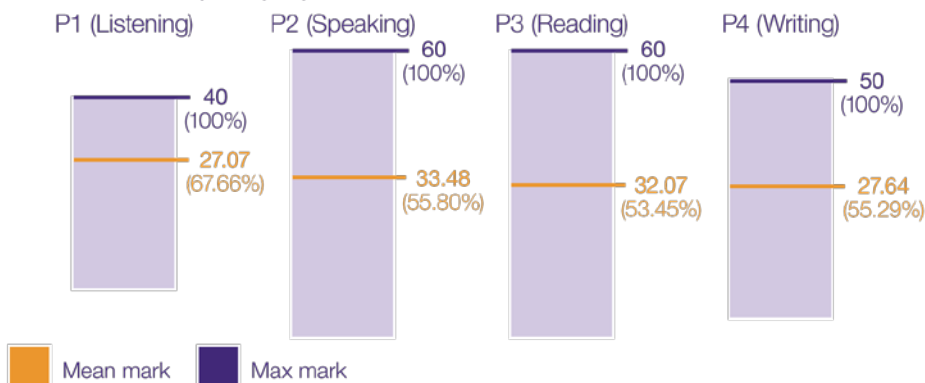


# Foundation tier insights

This is a snapshot. Learn more about every question from the summer 2019 series in the reports on the exam. Visit [e-AQA](#), log in and follow:

e-AQA > Secure Key Materials > GCSE > Languages > German (8668) > Reports on the exam.

## Mean mark per paper: Foundation



Mean mark per paper – Foundation tier.

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# Paper 1

## Highlights from summer 2019

Areas where students did best	Areas where students could improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In this paper, all Section B answers were non-verbal; this led to a more accessible paper and a higher mean mark.</li><li>• Questions 11-13 were well-answered, with over 75% of the students getting them correct.</li><li>• Many students answered Question 15.2 correctly, although there were some incorrect references to moving house, buying a house and saving up for a house.</li><li>• There was a reasonable number of correct answers to Question 20.1, which was testing students' ability to listen for detail.</li><li>• Question 21 was generally well answered, with most students getting 'mother's birthday' correct.</li><li>• Question 25 was another straightforward item, with most students choosing the correct answer and rejecting the distractors.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions 1-2 proved to be more challenging than expected. Students should be trained to listen for negatives, (<i>nicht</i>, <i>kein</i>) as these often flag-up a distractor.</li><li>• Question 6.2 – it was disappointing to see that some students did not understand the number <i>sechshundert</i>.</li><li>• Question 10 was challenging, perhaps because three of the options referred to cost and <i>Hochzeit</i> was not well understood.</li><li>• Question 15.1 was meant to be a low demand item, but many students did not understand <i>Frankreich</i>.</li><li>• Question 22 – the word <i>Ausflug</i> was clearly not well understood and many students did not know <i>Strand</i>.</li></ul>

# Paper 2

Areas where students did best	Areas where students could improve
<p><b>Role Play</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most students were well-trained in handling the target language prompts and were able to formulate an appropriate and succinct response.</li> <li>• Students should be encouraged to produce a short, standalone response that includes a verb and should be aware that the teacher-examiner prompt may not always take the form of a direct question.</li> <li>• Many students were able to form a question effectively from the prompt words(s) provided on the question task.</li> <li>• Students who succeeded on the unpredictable task were those who had a good command of question words.</li> </ul> <p><b>Photo Card</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was pleasing to see that mid-range students tended to score higher marks than in 2018, due to improved preparation.</li> <li>• Most students were able to give a simple three sentence response to the first question. Many made reference to the setting, the number of people and the weather.</li> <li>• Understandably, responses to the three prepared questions were usually more developed than responses to the two unseen questions.</li> <li>• Most students were able to give and explain opinions.</li> </ul> <p><b>General Conversation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally, students managed to sustain a conversation for the minimum time across two themes. Many made an effort to</li> </ul>	<p><b>Role Play</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some students found the formal role plays more challenging than the informal scenarios.</li> <li>• Role Play 2: Many students did not recognise the <i>was</i> element in Task 4 and only gave an opinion on recycling.</li> <li>• Role Play 3: <i>Kasse</i> was not well-known</li> <li>• Role Play 5: <i>Familiennamen</i> was often not recognised.</li> <li>• Role Play 7: <i>Eintrittskarten</i> was often not known or pronounced in such a way that it became unintelligible.</li> <li>• Role Play 9: Many students failed to recognise the <i>wo</i> prompt in Task 1 and did not include the location of the hotel.</li> </ul> <p><b>Photo Card</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There continues to be a mixed picture in terms of students' ability to recognise and respond appropriately to the question eliciting a response in a past or future time frame.</li> <li>• Photo Card A Task 4: The key element of <i>gern</i> was often not recognised and many students simply stated what subjects they learned.</li> <li>• Photo Card D Task 5: Few students picked up on the word <i>Welche</i> and the need to talk about specific rules they found good with most students giving an opinion about school rules in general.</li> <li>• Photo Card F Task 5: <i>Sendung</i> was often unknown.</li> <li>• Photo Card G Task 4: Many students failed to pick up on the key question marker <i>Wann</i>.</li> </ul>

develop responses and often gave opinions, which were sometimes explained.

- Although most students relied on simple structures and vocabulary, some did incorporate a wider range of structures, including modal verbs and common subordinating conjunctions.
- Many students attempted to use different timeframes, with varying degrees of success.
- Examiners noted some improvement in the standard of pronunciation this year, which was pleasing.

### **General Conversation**

- On occasions, there was a large difference between the amount of information conveyed on the nominated theme and the second theme.
- Opinions tended to include the same adjectives: *gut, interessant, langweilig*. Students should be encouraged to learn a range of adjectives.
- In some cases, the frequency of serious errors that impeded the communication of intended messages, led to a lowering of the marks for both communication and range and accuracy of language.
- Some students were able to deliver a reasonably fluent performance using pre-learnt responses, but there was often a lack of ability to react spontaneously through follow-up questions.

# Paper 3

Areas where students did best	Areas where students could improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Question 1 proved relatively straightforward although <i>halbacht</i> in Question 1.2 was more challenging.</li><li>• Question 5: students performed well on the whole and 94% scored three marks or more.</li><li>• Question 9 proved accessible to many students, with over 90% of students gaining marks for Questions 9.1 and 9.2.</li><li>• Question 10 was well answered by many students, though in 10.4 some failed to match <i>Erdbeeren</i> with <i>Obst</i>.</li><li>• Question 14: it was pleasing to see that students had practised translation and were familiar with the requirements of the task.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Question 6: <i>Oberstufe</i> was not well known and many guessed <i>gut bezahlt</i> as heroic or brave. Some students mistook <i>Fremd</i> for <i>Freund</i>.</li><li>• Question 7: many students found this question challenging, with few knowing AGs. <i>Klavier</i> was not well known and often interpreted as flute or clarinet.</li><li>• Question 13: the interrogative form <i>Wann</i> clearly challenged many students.</li><li>• Question 14: many students missed out renderings of <i>andere</i>, <i>manchmal</i>, <i>immer</i> – and <i>Samstag</i> was sometimes translated as ‘Sunday’. Students should be reminded of the importance of precision in this task. They should ensure that all parts of the translation have been completed, particularly the little words.</li></ul>

# Paper 4

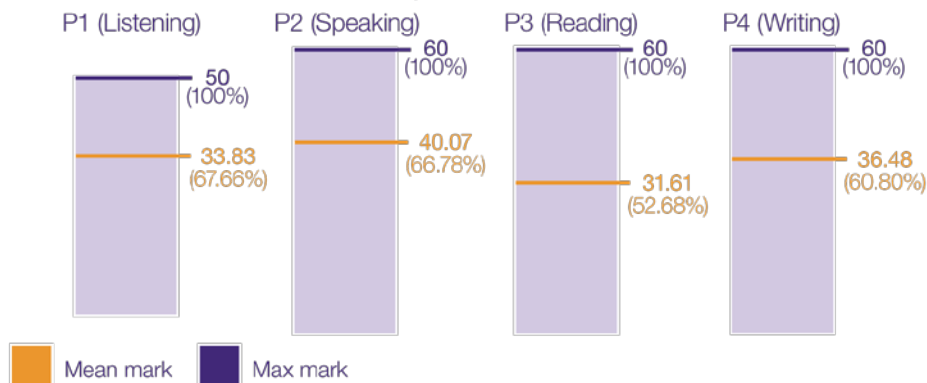
Areas where students did best	Areas where students could improve
<p><b>Question 1</b></p> <p>Many students scored full, or nearly full, marks by beginning each sentence with <i>Es gibt</i> – then used vocabulary with which they were familiar, to identify various people or things in the picture. Some who scored well also wrote a simple sentence about the weather or described a person in the picture.</p> <p><b>Question 2</b></p> <p>Very few students scored no marks and most responded adequately. It was pleasing to see that bullet points two and four were understood by virtually all students, as was <i>Fernsehen</i>.</p> <p><b>Question 3</b></p> <p>Students found parts of this demanding but, on the whole, the perfect tense was formed more successfully than in 2018 and there was a pleasing increase in the number who used the imperfect <i>spielte</i>.</p> <p><b>Question 4</b></p> <p>4.2 was the more popular choice but the standard of response was similar for both options, with a good knowledge of vocabulary and structures shown.</p> <p>There were fewer responses that were well in excess of the suggested length; lengthier responses risk including irrelevant material and/or deteriorating in standard of language towards the end.</p>	<p><b>Question 1</b></p> <p>Some students disadvantaged themselves by writing too much and making a mistake in the second part eg <i>Sie sind in einem Park and es gibt sonnig</i>. The whole sentence is assessed when awarding marks, so students should be advised to write simple, clear sentences.</p> <p><b>Question 2</b></p> <p>It was often the case that overly long responses were less clear and more inaccurate than those of the suggested length.</p> <p>Some students misinterpreted the question and wrote as if they were Karl. In such cases, examiners looked for any standalone information they could credit.</p> <p>Responses to the <i>Fernsehen</i> bullet were less well handled due to the separable verb.</p> <p><b>Question 3</b></p> <p>There some surprising gaps in lexical knowledge eg <i>trinken</i> and <i>Katze</i>. The phrase <i>nach Hause</i> was often used instead of <i>zu Hause</i> and few students knew <i>Büro</i>.</p> <p><b>Question 4</b></p> <p>Bullet 4 proved problematic in Question 4.1, with a number of students ignoring <i>im Internet</i>. The formation of the future tense proved challenging for some, with a past participle being used in place of an infinitive.</p> <p>In 4.2, <i>Urlaubsort</i> in bullet 2 was not widely known and a sympathetic approach was adopted when marking this. As in Question 4.1, there were instances of attempts to form the future tense that combined a form of <i>werden</i> with a past participle, instead of with an infinitive.</p>

# Higher tier insights

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## Mean mark per paper: Higher



Mean mark per paper – higher tier.

AQA GCSE German

# Paper 1

Areas where students did best	Areas where students could improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions 15 – 18: it was pleasing to see that students had clearly been well trained in how to answer these P/N/P+N questions and 15-17 were well answered – though the inclusion of <i>obwohl</i> in Question 17 led many to answer P+N.</li><li>• Question 25 was answered correctly by over 75% of students and it was pleasing to see them understand <i>eingebildet</i>.</li><li>• Question 26 was the most successful question in this section, with about 80% of students understanding the sister is quiet and correctly discounting the fact that the speaker is talkative; this demonstrated very good close listening skills.</li><li>• Question 33.2 was aimed at the most able students and it proved to be an excellent differentiator between students working at the highest levels.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Question 9: some students were tempted by the distractor and incorrectly gave an answer referring to jobs or the economy.</li><li>• Question 12 was well-answered by about two-thirds of students but many focused on the word <i>Chef</i> and chose the incorrect answer.</li><li>• Question 18: about one third of students chose the wrong answer; the use of the word <i>keinen</i> in <i>keinen Zweifel</i> may have been the reason so many chose N instead of P.</li><li>• Question 20: many students did not know what <i>Unterhaltung</i> meant.</li></ul>



# Paper 2

Areas where students did best	Areas where students could improve
<p><b>Role Play</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most students were well trained in dealing with the target language bullet points and formulated an appropriate and succinct response including a verb.</li><li>• Most students were able to form a question effectively from the prompt word(s) provided on the question task.</li><li>• Most students were able to respond appropriately to the unpredictable task, showing the necessary sound knowledge of question words and an ability to respond spontaneously. In some Higher Tier role plays, students will be required to answer two very simple unpredictable questions within a bullet point as opposed to one more challenging one.</li></ul> <p><b>Photo Card</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most students were able to give a simple three sentence response to the first question and many made reference to the setting, the number of people, description of people and weather.</li><li>• Most students were able to give and explain opinions and fewer than last year failed to access the 10-12 band due to lack of an explained opinion.</li><li>• Most students recognised the questions requiring a past or future time frame and responded appropriately.</li></ul> <p><b>General Conversation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most students were well prepared and gave developed responses. Opinions and justifications were regularly conveyed.</li><li>• Most students attempted a wide variety of language structures and vocabulary. The majority of students used some modal verb</li></ul>	<p><b>Role Play</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Role Play 10, Task 5: <i>Sportmöglichkeiten</i> was not well known and sometimes led to the formulation of an irrelevant question about sport rather than sports facilities.</li><li>• Role Play 11, Task 1: <i>Unterricht</i> was not well known.</li><li>• Role Play 13, Task 1: some students failed to understand the <i>seit wann</i> prompt and simply said when they worked. Students generally struggled to use <i>seit</i> accurately with the present tense.</li><li>• Role Play 17, Task 2: some students were unable to answer as they did not understand the word <i>Farbe</i>.</li></ul> <p><b>Photo Card</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Photo Card J, Task 5: some students did not hear the negative element (<i>nicht mehr</i>) and stated the subjects they will learn next year.</li><li>• Photo Card O, Task 2: some students gave an exclusively first person response instead of saying what food their family buys at the cinema.</li><li>• Photo Card Q, Task 4: <i>Nachbarn</i> was not widely known.</li></ul> <p><b>General Conversation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There was some over-use of <i>weil</i> clauses.</li><li>• The auxiliary verb was sometimes omitted when forming the perfect tense and when referring to a future time frame using <i>Ich werde</i>. Students sometimes forgot to include a second verb in its infinitive form at the end of the clause or used a past participle instead.</li></ul>

forms. The best performances included a wider range of subordinating conjunctions and relative clauses. Students were generally able to form tenses accurately, with the conditional and subjunctive forms used to good effect.

- Examiners noted some improvement this year in the standard of pronunciation which was pleasing.
- Many performances were fluent, often relying on pre-learnt material; the best performances were those where the student confidently developed his/her responses but also gave shorter, natural answers to follow-up questions.

- There was some over-reliance on pre-learnt material and in extreme cases, only about ten questions were answered by students in a set of mini-monologues.

**Reports on the exam are written by senior examiners who see more responses than anyone else. Access full reports via [aqa.org.uk/log-in](https://www.aqa.org.uk/log-in)**

# Paper 3

Areas where students did best	Areas where students could improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Question 6: students performed extremely well on this set of questions and clearly the topic was close to the heart of many students.</li><li>• Question 9 was generally well-answered at this tier and in 9.2, most students answered appropriately with <i>laufen gehen</i>.</li><li>• Question 11: students performed reasonably well on this set of questions and over 80% gained the mark for 11.4.</li><li>• Question 12: this year's translation was more accessible than 2018. It was pleasing to note that the translation produced a full range of marks and to see so many students gain a mark for <i>vor ein paar Monaten</i>. Students had clearly focused on producing a precise and accurate translation.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Question 3: many students were unfamiliar with <i>scharf</i> in this context.</li><li>• Question 4: in 4.1 <i>alleinerziehende</i> posed a problem for many students and in 4.2 <i>eifersüchtig</i> was not well known. In 4.4 <i>unterstützen</i> was often interpreted as 'understanding her'</li><li>• Question 8: <i>umgezogen</i> proved challenging for many students.</li><li>• Question 12: <i>Strassenbahn</i> seemed unfamiliar to many students and was often rendered as 'train'. <i>Vormittags</i> proved challenging for many and some students missed out a rendering of <i>ziemlich</i>. Students should be reminded of the importance of translating all aspects of the task, including the little words.</li></ul>

# Paper 4

Areas where students did best	Areas where students could improve
<p><b>Question 1</b></p> <p>1.2 was slightly more popular than 1.1 but the general level of response was better for 1.1 at this tier. A good range of appropriate vocabulary and structures was produced in responses to both options. Most students responded appropriately to the bullet points designed to elicit the various time frames.</p> <p>There were fewer responses which were well in excess of the suggested length; lengthier responses risk including irrelevant material and/or deteriorating in standard of language towards the end.</p> <p><b>Question 2</b></p> <p>2.1 was much more popular than 2.2 but the mean marks for content, range of language and accuracy were almost identical across the two options.</p> <p>Fewer students than in 2018 wrote overlong responses.</p> <p>It was pleasing to see the increased use of <i>man sollte</i> followed by <i>um...zu</i> plus an infinitive to express and justify an opinion.</p> <p><b>2.1</b> There were some excellent responses with detailed arguments about the importance of remaining fit and healthy. Bullet point 2 was handled better than bullet point 1.</p> <p><b>2.2</b> There seemed to be less reliance on pre-learnt material in responses to this option.</p> <p><b>Question 3</b></p> <p>Students tended to gain marks in the first and last parts of the translation.</p> <p>A pleasing number attempted to paraphrase</p>	<p><b>Question 1</b></p> <p>Bullet 4 caused the most problems in Question 1.1 with a number of students ignoring <i>im Internet</i>. The formation of the future tense proved problematic for some, with a past participle being used in place of an infinitive.</p> <p>In Question 1.2, <i>Urlaubsort</i> in bullet 2 was sometimes not known. As in Question 1.1, there were instances of attempts to form the future tense which combined a form of <i>werden</i> with a past participle instead of with an infinitive.</p> <p><b>Question 2</b></p> <p><b>1.1</b> Three common errors that affected clarity of communication were the failure to distinguish between <i>gesund</i> and <i>Gesundheit</i>, the use of <i>bekommen</i> for <i>werden</i> and the use of 'Gym' for <i>Fitnesszentrum</i>.</p> <p><b>2.2</b> Quite a lot of students used the same festival in response to bullet one and bullet 2; whilst this is acceptable, it led to repetition of information and structures in some cases and so did not demonstrate the necessary variety of language to gain a high mark for range of language.</p> <p><b>Question 3</b></p> <p>Lack of precision was noticeable with all-important little words missed eg <i>is</i> for <i>ist</i> was not uncommon.</p> <p>'Industry' was not well known and very few students rendered 'all the time' correctly. 'I am interested in cycling' also caused problems for</p>

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<p>rather than leave a gap where vocabulary and structures were not known.</p> <p>'I like the area' and 'My friends also live here' were well translated by the majority of students and very few students failed to translate 'last week', 'by bike' and 'every day'.</p>	<p>students.</p>
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