
AS

German

Paper 1 Listening, Reading and Writing
Report on the Examination

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General comments

This first listening, reading and writing paper for the new AS qualification produced a wide range of responses. Most students appeared to have grasped the requirements of the different task types satisfactorily, although a few had difficulties with the summary questions and with Question 9, which required concise answers in German. Rubric infringements were few and there was no evidence of students running out of time. Although quality of written German was only assessed in the summary tasks, certain major errors or omissions could prevent students from conveying the necessary information in Question 9. It is important that students check their work carefully for careless mistakes.

Question 1

This listening activity on digital technology produced a fairly wide range of attainment. A number of students wrongly chose A as one of the correct statements, perhaps because they did not know the verb *ausgeben*.

Question 2

The series of interviews on Berlin was generally well understood, especially the interview with Talia where nearly 70% of students identified both correct statements. Sentence N caused some difficulty, perhaps because students did not make the necessary connection between *Wartezeiten* in the question and *Schlangestehen* in the recording.

Question 3

Many students showed good comprehension of the report on the *Jugendkulturfestival* in Bern. Sub-question 3 proved to be particularly accessible, with just over 90% of students making the correct link between *alle zwei Jahre* in the question and *jedes zweite Jahr* in the recording. Sub-question 6, which required understanding of the passive construction *wurde ... gefilmt*, was also well answered. The item that caused the greatest difficulty was sub-question 4, where many students did not make the correct link between *trocken* in the question and *ohne Regen* in the recording. Sub-question 7 also caused difficulty, perhaps because students did not understand one or more of the three verbs *auftreten*, *teilnehmen* and *sich bewerben*.

Question 4

This listening summary question, which centred on the experiences of a teenage mother in Austria, discriminated well across the attainment range. Most but not all students kept within the recommended length of 70 words. On the whole the students who scored the highest marks overall were those who conveyed the key points without sticking excessively to the wording of the recording. Those who attempted to transcribe whole sentences verbatim generally fared less well: they were less able to demonstrate their ability to manipulate the language as required for the AO3 mark and in some cases they made errors in their transcription which impeded communication and therefore limited their AO1 mark.

Individual words and phrases which caused difficulty included *verzweifelt*, *zur Welt bringen*, *Unterkunft* and *begleitet*. Some students struggled with pronouns, especially confusion between *sich* and *sie*. A small number of students wrote their answer partly or wholly in the first person, which led to a penalty of 1 mark overall.

Students sitting this exam in future are advised to look carefully at the wording of the bullet points and ensure that they address those bullet points directly. For example, if a bullet point refers to the past then the best response is usually one in the perfect or simple past tense, even if the source material expresses the information differently.

Question 5

This non-verbal reading task on art, in which students had to select missing words from a list, proved to be a good discriminator. Although roughly 10% of the entry scored full marks, only 43% of students scored half marks or more. While most of the vocabulary ought to have been familiar, students needed to look carefully at the verb endings to make sure that they fitted the context: the list of possible answers included third person singular and plural forms in the present and simple past tenses as well as infinitives. Among the more successfully identified items were the infinitive *erweitern*, which accompanied the noun *Horizont*, and the present tense verb *steht*, which belonged with the phrase *im Vordergrund*.

Question 6

In this non-verbal reading task about a theatre in Berlin, some questions proved to be harder than others. Almost all students gave the correct answer R for part 1, which required understanding of the word *begeistert*. Parts 2 and 5 also attracted a lot of correct responses. The greatest challenge came from part 7, where students had to understand the phrase *Junge DT-Freunde bis einschließlich 30 Jahre zahlen 1 Euro pro Lebensjahr* in the text in order to recognise that the statement *Junge DT-Freunde zahlen maximal 30 Euro pro Jahr* was correct.

Question 7

Many students showed fairly good understanding of this adapted extract from Hermann Hesse's novel *Knulp*. The most successfully answered item was part 3, where almost all students correctly matched *kalt und nass* in the question with *bei Regen und bitterem Wind* in the text. Parts 2, 6 and 7 proved to be the most difficult, with roughly half the entry choosing the correct answer in each case. In part 2 students needed to understand the phrase *An Freunden hat es ihm nie gefehlt*; in part 6 students needed to connect *ein Bett kriegst du* in the text with *eine Unterkunft angeboten* in the question; and in part 7 students had to understand the link between *er solle ... aufgeben* in the text and *Rat ... bekommen* in the question.

Question 8

Students' attainment in this reading summary on the art of blogging was generally slightly lower than in the listening summary. Some found it difficult to identify key points and tended to use up too many words lifting material from the text that was only of secondary importance. In a few instances students did not gain credit for their correct response to the third bullet point because this part of their answer came after the marking cut-off point, which in both summary questions is the first natural break between 70 and 80 words. Some students wasted words by writing an introduction, e.g. *Dieser Text handelt von ...*, rather than focusing straight away on the first bullet point.

Nevertheless, roughly 10% of the entry scored all 7 marks for AO2. The most successful approach was to follow the wording of the bullet points precisely: for example in the third bullet point students could begin their answer with *Sie sollten ...* and then re-express the ideas from the text in the infinitive form, e.g. *... an die Leser denken*. Some students ran into difficulties because they copied

words or phrases from the printed text inappropriately, suggesting that they had not understood them.

To score good marks for AO3 students needed to demonstrate the ability to manipulate the language accurately, with the emphasis on grammar rather than vocabulary. The task provided many opportunities to do this, such as the use of *um ... zu* clauses in the first bullet point, the possible sentence opening *Es enttäuschte sie, dass ...* in the second bullet point, and changing *du*-form statements into the third person plural in the third bullet point. As in Question 4 a number of students encountered problems with pronouns. Another common source of difficulty was the verb construction *sich interessieren für*. It was not good practice to quote whole sentences from the text in speech marks because students were then unable to gain credit for manipulating the German.

Question 9

This reading comprehension task on a Swiss festival required students to answer questions in German directly and only include relevant information. Many did so successfully, although despite the rubric some students inappropriately copied out lengthy sections of the text. The best answers were those that followed the wording of the question.

In part 1, the question *Was tut man...* invited an answer beginning with *Man ...* followed by a series of finite verbs. Answers in the passive were acceptable, but some students used only a past participle without *werden* which made their answer unclear. A few students wrongly included *Schweigeminuten* here, perhaps because they had not understood the phrase *in der ganzen Schweiz* in the question.

In part 2 the single word answer *Schweigeminuten* was appropriate. Many students appeared not to know *schweigen*.

Part 3 attracted a good number of correct responses, but some students mentioned Switzerland twice instead of mentioning both Switzerland and Bern.

In part 4 the phrase *Die historische Basis dieses Datums* could be lifted from the text and some students did this successfully. Other responses included irrelevant material such as the sentence *Das wissen ... ihnen egal*.

Part 5 required detailed comprehension of the last paragraph of the text and proved to be difficult. The phrasing of the question required an answer in the past tense and students had to infer the meaning from their reading of the two sentences beginning *Ursprünglich ...* and *Aber 1899 ...*. Some answers focused wrongly on the church bells rather than the decision to hold the event annually.

In part 6 students needed to respond to the wording *bis 1993* in the question and describe the day as it was up to that time. The two-word answer *Man arbeitete* was neat and accurate. Unfortunately many students inappropriately described the change that took place after 1993, for which no credit could be given.

Question 10

Most students understood the gist of this translation passage, but errors with individual words and phrases led to a range of attainment overall. Students are reminded that in a translation task every

word of the original text needs to be taken into account, even if not directly translated; they should stick as closely to the meaning of the original text as is consistent with clear English.

Words and phrases that were generally well translated included *als*, *geteilt*, *sich ... kümmert*, *hat ... ermöglicht* and *fördern*. Common omissions were *noch* in the first sentence and *deutschen* in the phrase *hat es deutschen Vätern ermöglicht*. Very few students were able to translate *familienfreundliche Politik* correctly, with most opting for 'politics' instead of the correct 'policies' or 'policy'. Other words and phrases that caused difficulty were the plural noun *Einstellungen*, the noun *Kindererziehung*, which was sometimes mistranslated as 'education', and the noun *Gesellschaft*, mistranslated as 'community'. Most students showed understanding of the passive construction *muss getan werden*, although some wrote 'more should be done' which was not precise enough.

Summary questions: advice to students

Students should first read the task on the question paper carefully so they know what the item is about. They should listen to or read the stimulus material in its entirety, identifying which sections of the stimulus material correspond to each of the three bullet points. They should then listen to or read the stimulus material a second time, pausing as necessary to make notes on each bullet point. Students should look at the number of marks available for each bullet point and ensure they identify sufficient pieces of information.

Once they have noted the key information, students should look again at the wording of the bullet points and write their answer on the question paper in such a way as to answer the bullet points directly. This will normally require some manipulation of linguistic structures, such as changing from direct to indirect speech or changing from a subordinate clause to a main clause. However it is not necessary to find synonyms for individual words or phrases.

Students should count their words and ensure that they stay within the word limit. Anything they write after the first natural break between 70 and 80 words (AS) or 90 and 100 words (A-level) will not be marked. Students should therefore avoid writing an introductory sentence or paragraph, as this would be likely to use up words without scoring marks. They should omit points of detail or examples unless these are specifically targeted by the bullet points.

The two marks available for the summary tasks – Content and Quality of Language – are awarded independently. For Content students will receive one mark for conveying each of the seven required pieces of information unambiguously. For Quality of Language students will receive a global mark out of five for the successful manipulation of the language. Anything that is lifted directly from the stimulus material cannot earn credit for Quality of Language. While students should try to use as wide a variety of structures as suits the task, they should also bear in mind the need to maintain accuracy.

Use of statistics

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.