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FOREIGN LANGUAGE GERMAN

Paper 0525/01

Listening

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General comments

Candidates had obviously been well prepared and, generally, scored highly. As in other parts of the examination, questions which needed to be answered in the target language proved more challenging, but the majority of the candidates coped well.

Comments on specific questions

Erster Teil

Erste Aufgabe

Most candidates scored full marks in this part of the Paper. **Question 2** proved most problematic.

Zweite Aufgabe

A few candidates gave *mit Freunden* as the answer to **Question 10** (correct answer: *mit der Familie*). It was obvious with **Question 12** that a number of candidates had changed their minds (correctly) from A to B. Initially, perhaps, they were rather in a hurry to answer, but it is to their credit that on reflection they managed to make the correct choice. **Question 15** was most often incorrect if a candidate failed to get full marks; here the notion that Peter was going camping with his friends needed to be conveyed.

Zweiter Teil

Erste Aufgabe

Generally well done. A tiny minority seems to have guessed, rather than having understood both the questions and the recording, but there was no discernible pattern to the errors.

Zweite Aufgabe

This exercise seems have been understood quite well. However, the distinction between the use of *seine/r* rather than *ihre/r Schwester* needs further instruction. Some candidates seemed to think that Astrid had a fight with Bernd, which made subsequent sensible answers rather difficult.

It was apparent that **Question 29** was troublesome to some candidates who either failed to answer at all or hazarded a wild guess. The correct answer is *wenn sie älter ist*.

Dritter Teil

Erste Aufgabe

Most candidates scored well here. **Question 31** was sometimes answered with D rather than the correct B. **Question 34** elicited C or D rather than the correct B.

Zweite Aufgabe

Candidates with reasonable active language skills scored well in this part of the Paper. Some candidates gave the same reply to **Question 38** as to **Question 37** instead of stating *um einen guten Job zu bekommen*. It is unlikely for the same answer to score with two different questions. A degree of inference was also tested at this most advanced level of the examination.

In reply to **Question 41**, a number of candidates gave the fact that boys and girls are in the same class as a reason, instead of the correct reason, namely that the boys and girls are of different ages and have different abilities.

Paper 0525/02
Reading and Directed Writing

General comments

Overall, a pleasingly high standard was achieved by the majority of candidates. Where candidates were required to answer in the target language, a small minority struggled to express themselves accurately. The cloze-exercise (*Fragen 46-68*) proved to be as difficult as ever for those candidates whose receptive language skills outstrip their active ones, but here, too, candidates were performing better than in previous years.

Comments on specific questions

Erster Teil

Erste Aufgabe

Questions 1 – 6 were answered correctly by nearly all candidates. Most problematic was **Question 4**, where A was sometimes chosen over the correct C.

Zweite Aufgabe

All questions were answered well, there was no discernible pattern for the few errors that were made.

Dritte Aufgabe

With few exceptions, answers to this exercise were correct. **Question 14** and **Question 19** were occasionally answered incorrectly; perhaps *kaum* was not well known.

Vierte Aufgabe

Generally this was done well. Only a handful of candidates failed to score fully here. *Kuchen und Getränke* were sometimes rendered as *Küche und Tränke*. The main problem was a failure to include all points mentioned in the rubric, which prevented some candidates from scoring all ten marks.

Zweiter Teil

Erste Aufgabe

Most candidates scored highly here, showing sound understanding of the text. There was no general pattern to the occasional mistaken answer.

Zweite Aufgabe

Most candidates displayed good knowledge of German and scored well. Some communication marks were lost through failure to address all points in the rubric. Very few candidates' written German was so poor that they couldn't gain any marks for accuracy.

Dritter Teil

Erste Aufgabe

Most candidates scored well. **Questions 35, 36 and 37** proved to be the most problematic, but again with any clear pattern to the few wrong answers given here.

Zweite Aufgabe

Although the exercise was done well by most, **Question 43** proved most taxing. Candidates who did not score here generally failed to point out how Markus' life had changed and thus failed to get the full two marks.

Dritte Aufgabe

The cloze-test was done very well by a great number of well-prepared candidates, but tripped up those whose understanding outweighs their grammar.

Paper 0525/03

Speaking

General comments

To be read in conjunction with the Teacher's Notes for Paper 3 October/November 2002.

Sample size for moderation

Centres sent the correct sample size for moderation; see Instructions page 3 paragraph 4. Larger Centres sent larger samples to cover the full ability range. Very occasionally, the lower range of candidates was not well represented and this rendered the standardisation of marks in those Centres more difficult.

Identification of cassettes

Centres labelled the cassettes with the Centre name and number and the candidates' names and numbers. A few Centres continue not to identify the role play card number on the mark sheet, on the cassette label nor indeed on the cassette before the role play begins.

Mark sheets

Working Mark Sheets were completed in accordance with the instructions, with the Centre's and Examiner's name and Centre number. A number of Centres continue to fail to forward the Moderator's copy of the MS1 or send both to the Moderator. A very small number of Centres fail to carry out mathematical checks which result in the wrong marks being allocated to candidates.

Preparation

Examiners *must* make themselves familiar with the Instructions, mark scheme and role play situations in advance of the examination. Again, in very few cases an Examiner's lack of preparation led to difficulties in the role play for the candidate.

Some Examiners failed to adhere to the time scales outlined in the 'Structure of the Examination' in the Teacher's Notes. Both the Topic and Conversation should last approximately 5 minutes each (in one or two cases both these sections did not last 5 minutes in total).

Quality of recordings

The quality of recording was, in general, satisfactory, although, on a small number of occasions, poor recordings made it very difficult to hear the candidates properly.

Teachers are reminded that once the test has started the cassette should run **without interruption** and should be stopped only in accordance with the 'Instructions'.

Components of the scheme of assessment

The results yielded a wide range of marks - most candidates were able to acquit themselves well in the examination and were able to demonstrate what they could do in the language.

Role plays

It must be noted that, when applying the mark scheme, some Examiners should be mindful that 'minor errors' are tolerated and should not be marked down to 2, whilst there were many examples of incomplete utterances, or utterances not attempted or malformations of verbs being awarded full marks (i.e. where the content is not complete).

It is always helpful to the Moderator if the role play number is announced, but confusing when the wrong number is announced or written on the Working Mark Sheet.

Examiners must constantly guard against disadvantaging their candidates through 'feeding' vocabulary and structures in their questioning. Thorough preparation by Examiners of their stimulus questions and care in giving the candidate enough thinking time to answer before being tempted to 'support' the candidate will help avoid this pitfall.

Most candidates understood the rubrics and fared well on the role plays. Even the weaker candidates were able to score satisfactory marks. Most Examiners are often very supportive of their candidates' efforts, encouraging them to extend very short answers to demonstrate their linguistic ability, although the Examiner should beware of using the short stimulus to develop 'mini conversations', which are not required and can lead the candidate to make unnecessary mistakes.

Role play A (page 13)

A very familiar topic for candidates concerning school and done very well by the majority of candidates. There were no particular difficulties in this role play as the demands were for everyday conversational exchanges.

Role play A (page 14)

Another very common topic for IGCSE candidates, which was well handled by most. The most difficult stimulus was the *warum* question, which required candidates to use their imagination in their preparation as did the final question concerning what they had done.

Role play A (page 15)

Meeting a person and discussing what one has seen already and one's opinion of Germany, discussing one's free-time interests and then arranging to meet them is probably the 'bread and butter' of most basic German courses. Consequently, most candidates fared well on this role play.

Role play B (page 16)

Candidates found this role play inherently more difficult and struggled insofar as they left out tasks or details, such as where they had stayed in a hotel before. Some found it difficult to express how they would find out more information. B-type role plays are intentionally more demanding, including, as is the case in this role play more negotiating, providing of opinions and justifications.

Role play B (page 17)

A challenging role play where candidates need to give details and explanations as well as make polite requests. Many candidates found requesting their friend to collect them, giving details of exactly where they were, very demanding.

Role play B (page 18)

Again a more challenging role play where candidates are required to explain a problem, using their imagination in their preparation. Curiously, describing what they would do whilst waiting and suggesting a meeting point stretched all but the best candidates in their command of German.

Topic

Some Examiners did not adhere to the guidelines regarding the separate lengths of the Topic and Conversation. Some Examiners completed both sections in five minutes.

Examiners must familiarise themselves before the examination with the full criteria regarding marks for structures and usage of future and past tenses for the higher bands, in order to apply these criteria correctly.

Candidates, in general, prepared well for this section. Unfortunately, a few were ill-prepared and relied on the Examiner to question them on the topic, which led to some candidates being unable to complete the five minutes on the topic because of a dearth of prepared material. Candidates are expected to present their own chosen topic, with the Examiner exploring and probing the candidate for further information by pitching relevant questions. Any 'prepared speech' should be interrupted by the Teacher asking for clarification, or justification. A few Examiners pose unchallenging questions, which do not allow the candidate to demonstrate their depth of knowledge of the topic or their linguistic ability. Such poor preparation can only disadvantage the candidate in the mark scheme under both scales (a) and (b).

Again most candidates prepared topics on subjects ranging from *meine Familie* or *mein letzter Urlaub*. The best candidates have well-prepared topics, which allow them to set the agenda and thus demonstrate their linguistic ability.

Conversation

This part of the examination was generally well done with the majority of candidates displaying a good degree of understanding and preparedness to respond to more general questions.

The topic often leads naturally into the conversation. However, the conversation should not become a second 'mini-topic' limited to one area, which can lead to a very restricted range of vocabulary. This happened on a few occasions.

Most Examiners are aware of a candidate's ability and attempt to pitch the questions at the appropriate level, with Examiners testing the candidates to the highest level they are capable of.

However, there remains a very small number of Examiners who deny the candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their higher skills in the use of tenses, vocabulary and structures by asking closed or limiting questions, thus removing the opportunity to develop vocabulary and verb tenses.

The Impression part of the Mark Scheme was generally used accurately by the Examiners, although care must always be taken when using the scale in an examination where one candidate is bilingual.

Paper 0525/04
Continuous Writing

General comments

The candidates demonstrated a wide range of competence. The overall 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 wrote using the reformed spellings as required. However, it was apparent that some candidates were still not applying this. This was most in evidence with the use of *ß* in *daß*, which is no longer correct.

The greater 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. Genders 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 the skill. Candidates would be advised to note the requisite number of words; a few exceeded this, which was not to their advantage.

- (a)
- 1 Descriptions were appropriate.
 - 2 Various appropriate reasons were given here.
 - 3 Many good points were made here.
 - 4 Many good points were made here.
 - 5 Candidates generally wrote appropriate direct or indirect questions about their correspondent's holidays.
- (b) Just a few candidates lifted from the rubric. Some did not write to a male visitor as indicated in the rubric. Occasionally, candidates used both *du* and *Sie* in the same letter.
- 1 The situation was well described, and imaginative and appropriate reasons were given.
 - 2 This was well answered.
 - 3 There was no problem here.
 - 4 Candidates were generally able to formulate an appropriate question.
 - 5 Suitable outings and activities were suggested.

Question 2

There were some good answers here, with only a very few weaker candidates completely misunderstanding the rubric. The large majority of stories were relevant with appropriate vocabulary. Some candidates wrote some sentences in the present tense, however. It was evident that while letter writing had been very well rehearsed and executed in almost all cases, this exercise was often dealt with far less successfully by the same candidates.