

GERMAN

<p>Paper 9780/01 Speaking</p>

Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Part I, consider the issue raised in their chosen article and their own reaction(s) to it
- in Part II, choose a subject which genuinely interests them and which clearly relates to a country where the target language is spoken
- in Parts I and II, be prepared to take the lead in the conversation
- in Parts I and II, be ready to engage in natural and spontaneous discussion.

General comments

The eighth series of this examination saw a further increase of the number of candidates and centres. All candidates approached both parts of the exam with confidence and were able to cope with the respective tasks, due to their own careful preparation and the valuable guidance they had received from their teachers. All candidates (including those in the Centres new to this specification) were familiar with the format of the examination and had been well prepared.

The key to success in the oral component of the Pre-U exam is effective communication. This depends on the candidates' ability to demonstrate factual knowledge, analysis and comparisons on their chosen topic, as well as on their readiness to offer ideas and opinions in both parts of the exam. Candidates need to have a wide range of structures and vocabulary at their disposal, and they need to be confident about using the language patterns they have acquired. In order to be considered for the highest marks it is also important that they have the versatility required for responding to unexpected questions within their topics.

Comments on specific tasks

Part 1

Six articles under the general headings of 'The developing world', 'Religion and belief', 'The media', 'Employment/unemployment', 'Young people/generation gap' and 'Urban and rural life' were offered. Candidates were given a choice of any four of these cards at the start of their preparation time. The themes of all six topics proved accessible, and candidates presented a range of creative ideas and personal views on each of them. It was pleasing to see that all cards were chosen. The text *Haben Zeitungen überhaupt noch eine Zukunft?* (The media) proved slightly more popular than the other five.

Candidates are given the opportunity during the preparation period to make brief notes on a separate sheet of paper. These notes can be used as prompts or reminders during the examination, but must not impede a spontaneous and genuine conversation. Candidates arrived in the exam room with just a few notes and used them wisely.

The majority of candidates showed very good to excellent understanding of the articles and offered interesting opinions on the issues discussed in them. Similarly, many candidates scored high marks for Range and Accuracy as well as Pronunciation and Intonation. It was evident that they had been taught the linguistic skills needed to communicate competently in unexpected situations, as most candidates competently used the linguistic structures that are necessary to do this successfully. Candidates appeared to be aware of the fact that marking is positive and their efforts at using complex language structures and vocabulary are rewarded. It is worth noting that all aspects of the mark scheme encourage a fluent and spontaneous conversation, while using a range of complex vocabulary and structures. Most candidates made good (in many cases excellent) attempts to lead the conversation.

For top marks candidates are expected to take the initiative in developing and expanding the discussion and being able to argue convincingly on their own point(s) of view.

Comments on specific tasks

Card 1: *Entwicklungshilfe oder internationale Zusammenarbeit – welcher Weg ist besser?*

The large majority of candidates who chose this text summarised it without difficulties and presented a range of opinions of the issues arising from it. Questions on the text covered Germany's role in encouraging the use of alternative energies in joint international projects, the importance of cooperation and whether financial aid can be successful. Questions on wider issues dealt with poverty in parts of the world, the crisis of refugees, the current effectiveness of international co-operation and aid programmes and potential solutions for problems in economically poorer parts of the world.

Card 2: *Jugendliche und die Frage nach dem Sinn des Lebens*

This card had the second highest number of choices in this session. Many candidates were quite passionate about the issues it raised and got personally involved in the article, regardless of any personal beliefs. Several of the discussions were quite outstanding. Questions on the text covered whether a belief in a traditional religion is still relevant to today's youth, whether religion can be replaced by other value systems (the text quoted family, friends and music) and whether it is important for young people to ask themselves existential questions. Wider issues were often student-led and included the question of whether religion should be taught at schools as a subject. They also covered diverse questions about religious fanaticism, the role of religions in history, different world religions, ethical values, and the potential advantages of prayer and meditation.

Card 3: *Haben Zeitungen überhaupt noch eine Zukunft?*

As mentioned above, this was the most popular text in this session, possibly because every young person nowadays is affected by media in one way or another. Questions on the text discussed the enduring relevance of newspapers up to now, their diminishing relevance today, alternatives of informing oneself online and new forms of providing news like blogging. The topic of fake news was also discussed passionately. Wider issues included the importance of free media for the democratic process, the question of censorship, the ever-growing influence of media and media tycoons in the modern world and views on what the media of the future might look like.

Card 4: *Neue Pläne der EU, um jugendlichen Arbeitslosen zu helfen*

This text was approached from various angles and many discussions were of a very high standard. Summarising the text caused few difficulties. Questions on the text covered potential reasons for the growing threat of unemployment for young people, opinions on the value of training in other EU countries and, of course, the potential implications of Brexit. Wider issues raised were about the advantages and risks of part time work, ideas on the world of work in the future, work in an increasingly automated and digitised world, EU workers in the UK and their likely status in the future, and the advantages and disadvantages of globalisation.

Card 5: *Immer mehr Männer über 30 wohnen bei ihren Eltern*

This text approached the topic of young people and the generation gap from a slightly unusual angle, but it led to a variety of interesting discussions. Summaries of the text were usually given without any major difficulties. Questions on the text covered potential reasons for the increasing number of young adults living with their parents, the importance of independence for young people and comparisons of the statistics between young men and young women living at home. Questions on wider issues discussed concerns for young people in our time, potential conflicts for them, discussions on the opportunities young people have nowadays, youth culture and its value, the value of traditions and conventions and the importance of freedom.

Card 6: *„In der Großstadt fühle ich mich freier und weniger beobachtet“*

Interestingly, candidates who chose this card tended to be those who live in a large city. Again, summarising the text caused very few difficulties. Questions on the text covered discussions on the perceived advantages and disadvantages of city life as opposed to country life. The differing aspects of community, culture,

opportunities and, as directly mentioned in the text, the concept of anonymity in cities were also discussed. Wider issues covered the topics of pollution and crime, as well as the risk of terrorism that is faced by city dwellers nowadays. The (dis)advantages of our multicultural cities were another theme. This was contrasted with the need for quiet and humanity's need to understand nature. Even Germany's growing trend of eco-villages was discussed by some.

Part 2: Prepared oral topic

This section of the speaking test was, with a small number of exceptions, done very well. Due to the fact that candidates have few restrictions on topic choice, other than it having to relate to a target language country and it not coinciding with any of the texts/films prescribed for Paper 4, the very large majority of candidates were adventurous in their topic choice and had researched diligently. Themes were discussed maturely and often with finesse. Only very few topics were offered by more than one candidate, which appears to indicate how much candidates and centres value this free choice of topics.

At the start of the topic discussion, candidates were invited to give reasons for their choice of topic. The discussions then followed the five to eight headings listed on their topic submission form. Most candidates had excellent factual knowledge at their fingertips. In addition, candidates coped well with unexpected questions asking for clarification, analysis, comparisons and also personal opinions relating to their chosen topic. Many of the discussions were highly impressive in terms of content and linguistic competence. Good factual knowledge was usually matched by an ambitious range of language and structures, as well as authentic pronunciation and intonation. The range of vocabulary offered by candidates was impressive in many cases.

The range of topics included various aspects of literature, music and the arts, historical figures and events, films, political and current affairs issues as well as social and environmental topics.

The following specific titles give an impression of the breadth of choice this year:

Der Nationalsozialismus und die Naturwissenschaften
Martin Luther bis 1521
Friedrich der Große
Das Leben von Andreas Hofer
Die deutsche Einigung
Bismarck
Konrad Adenauer
Angela Merkel
Vergangenheitsbewältigung
Das Leben der Juden in Deutschland seit dem 2. Weltkrieg
Die Türken in Deutschland
Von der DDR zur Ostalgie
Die olympischen Spiele 1936
München 1972
Die Rote Armee Fraktion
Deutsch – französische Beziehungen
Deutschland und seine Beziehung zur EU
Hat der Populismus in Deutschland mit der Flüchtlingskrise einen Schwung bekommen?
Fußball und Immigrationspolitik in Deutschland und England
Eine Einführung in Bahlsen – ein deutsches Familienunternehmen
Friedrich Hayek
Die deutsche Raumfahrtsindustrie
Goethes Prometheus: Die Stellung des Gedichtes im Sturm und Drang
Kafkas 'Die Verwandlung'
Hanna Arendt: Eichmann in Jerusalem
Ludwig Wittgenstein
Friedrich Nietzsche
Die Philosophie von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz
Hans Asperger: Warum war sein Werk so lange verschollen?
Max Planck
Albert Einstein
Deutscher Expressionismus in Kunst und Kino
Kunst im 3. Reich
Gustav Klimt

Egon Schiele
Bauhaus
Ein Vergleich der 4 und der 8. Symphonie von Franz Schubert
Der Rapper Sido
Die Entwicklung der Berliner Technoszene auf Grund des Mauerfalls
Der VW Abgasskandal
Deutschland – ein umweltfreundliches Land?
Die Jagd in Deutschland

Communication with Centres prior to the examination was efficient and effective. Agreement about exam dates was usually reached easily and candidate topic sheets were sent to the Visiting Examiner in good time. It was really appreciated when Centres gave an early indication of their candidates' topics, as this allowed more time for the examiners to prepare.

Finally, there is no doubt that candidates had taken a great deal of care to prepare in depth for this examination. Their hard work, enthusiasm and readiness to interact with an unknown Visiting Examiner were evident throughout, making what could be a nervous situation into a highly successful dialogue.

GERMAN

<p>Paper 9780/02 Reading and Listening</p>
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Key message

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- focus only on the required information and communicate it precisely in their answers
- pay particular attention to conveying the required information in unambiguous language.

General comments

In the Reading part of the examination (Part I), candidates are expected to answer two sets of questions – one in German, the other in English – and to translate a short passage from English into German. For the Listening part of the examination (Part II), candidates listen to three recorded interviews in German. They answer two sets of questions – one in German and another in English – and write a guided summary on the third interview. The questions are carefully worded and require an equally precise response. Overall, the candidates performed very well this year.

Comments on specific questions

Part I – Lesetext 1

Overall, candidates produced good answers in this exercise. Weaker candidates struggled to express themselves clearly in German.

Question 1

This question was generally answered correctly, but candidates are to be reminded that any spelling mistakes may result in the loss of marks if they lead to ambiguity (for example, writing '*Nachflugverbot*' instead of '*Nachtflugverbot*').

Question 2

Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 3

For this question, it was important to convey that the aim is to achieve an additional hour of silence (not just '*eine Stunde Ruhe*').

Question 4

Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 5

Many candidates answered this question correctly, but some responses were problematic due to candidates using the wrong preposition with '*Westen*'.

Question 6

- (a) There were no particular difficulties with this question.
- (b) In this question the use of the appropriate conjunction was essential. A good answer would have been *Die Flugsicherung wird erst sehr spät entscheiden, ob (not 'wenn') eine Lärmpause stattfinden wird.*

Question 7

A considerable number of candidates lost marks in this question by not conveying the idea of an aim, as indicated in the question (*Ziel*). Responses required a verb expressing the idea of 'finding out', such as *herausfinden* or *ermitteln*.

Question 8

Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Part I – Lesetext 2

Overall, this exercise produced good answers in English.

Question 9

Some candidates were not awarded a mark for this question because their answer was too vague, such as 'He was not curious about life in the west'. Some candidates also seemed to confuse West Germany (FRG) and East Germany (GDR) in their responses.

Question 10

- (a) This question was generally answered correctly. Some responses did not take on board that the text refers to the defence/military systems of other Socialist states and instead referred more generally to 'political' systems.
- (b) Some candidates forgot to include both required pieces of information ('They went to a type of holiday camp' and 'They were taught military skills') in (i) and wrote irrelevant or inaccurate responses in (ii), such as 'It was compulsory' or 'They learned Russian'.

Question 11

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 12

Most candidates supplied correct answers to this question.

Question 13

In order to receive both marks, it was essential to convey the information that there were different rules for discos/bars than for public events.

Part 1 – Lesetext 3

This exercise requires a good range of vocabulary as well as sound grammar. Many candidates completed the task successfully.

Question 14

With the exception of two instances where the pluperfect was required ('*hatte...bestanden*' and '*gewesen war*') the passage required either the simple past or the perfect tense. The most common grammatical difficulties encountered were with verb-subject agreement, possessive articles and word order. Other grammatical challenges included *Konjunktiv II* ('*Wenn die Wiedervereinigung nicht passiert wäre, hätte ich wahrscheinlich Russisch studiert*') and the passive voice ('*Heute werde ich oft von meinen Kindern gefragt*').

Vocabulary and idiom which caused particular problems included: came down = *fiel*, curious = *neugierig*, studied = *studiert* (not *gelernt*), I moved = *zog ich ... um/bin ich...umgezogen* (here not reflexive!).

Part II – Hörtext 1

As with the first two reading exercises, full sentences are usually not required for a correct response. Most candidates did well in this exercise.

Question 15

This question was generally answered correctly.

Question 16

There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 17

- (a) Some candidates were not awarded a mark for this question as they used a male pronoun (*er*) instead of the appropriate female pronoun (*sie*). This led to ambiguity as their statements seemed to apply to Herr Tischler, not the female lawyer (*Rechtsanwältin*).
- (b) For this response, it was essential to use the reflexive form of *sich blamieren*, as otherwise there is ambiguity about who is embarrassing whom.

Question 18

- (a) Some responses to this question were too vague, not mentioning that the teacher was bullied by her pupils. Some candidates invalidated their answers by referring to *Studenten* instead of *Schüler*.
- (b) This question was generally answered correctly

Question 19

Again, some responses for this question were too vague, such as “*man muss umschalten können*”. In order to receive the mark candidates had to convey the idea of being able to switch between High German and dialect.

Question 20

Most candidates provided the correct answer.

Question 21

- (a) Some candidates misspelled *Märchen* and did not receive the mark.
- (b) Most candidates provided the correct answer.

Part II – Hörtext 2

Question 22

Most candidates provided the correct answer.

Question 23

- (a) This question was generally answered correctly, although some answers were too vague, only referring generally to stress and not to performance (*Leistung*).
- (b) There were no particular difficulties with this question.

Question 24

Some candidates were not awarded a mark because they claimed that children who are less trained are more intelligent, whereas in the passage it says that they become more intelligent (in the future).

Question 25

- (a) This question was generally answered correctly.
- (b) In order to receive full marks for this question candidates had to convey the idea that children are developing their creativity and that this will help them use their talents later in life.

Question 26

For this question, it was essential to convey the idea of *uninterrupted* play.

Question 27

Some candidates missed the information on unconditional love and therefore were awarded only one out of the two marks.

Part II – Hörtext 3

In order to do well in this exercise, candidates had to be disciplined and cover all four bullet points within the word limit. Several candidates did not score full marks because they wrote too many words or lacked precision. Candidates should always make sure they adhere to the word limit of 100 words as any material beyond the 100 word mark will not be considered. Most candidates, nevertheless, did quite well. Candidates should remember to clearly cross out any notes or rough work.

Question 28

- ***Background to a recent court case.***
Most candidates received marks for the information that the case was about the question of whether a heavy smoker should move out of his flat because his smoking disturbed the neighbours, or not. Some candidates, however, did not understand that the tenant was airing the flat through his door into the staircase and wrote instead that the problem was caused by him smoking in the staircase.
- ***Legal rights of and restrictions on smoking tenants.***
Most candidates received marks for the information that smoking is regarded as an individual right and therefore legal, as long as it does not disturb neighbours. In some responses, however, the choice of verb was misleading. For example, candidates who wrote that it was ok to smoke as long as nobody was 'harmed' or 'burdened' did not receive this mark. Also, some candidates misunderstood the information that tenants have to air the apartment on a regular basis through the window and claimed instead that tenants were required to smoke by the window.
- ***Court ruling of 2006 and its significance for smoking tenants.***
This bullet point did not pose any particular difficulties for most candidates. In some cases, however, the responses were too vague, not referring to the idea of damage done to the flat or traces of smoke that make refurbishing necessary.
- ***Actions non-smoking neighbours can take.***
This bullet point did not pose any particular difficulties for most candidates, except that some candidates had reached the word limit and therefore could not be given some or all of the marks for the fourth bullet point.

GERMAN

<p>Paper 9780/03 Writing and Usage</p>
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Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Part I, choose a title and a topic on which they have something to say and for which they have command of appropriate structures and lexis
- in Part I, plan their essay to produce a well-structured and persuasive argument
- in Part I, write complex sentences when appropriate, but without losing the thread of the argument
- in Part II, read first the rubrics and then each question carefully and make sure they understand the sense of the sentence(s)
- in Parts I and II, carefully proofread their responses

General comments

The examination consists of two parts:

- In Part I candidates have to write a discursive essay, which tests their skill in expressing their ideas in German but also their ability to marshal their thoughts on paper coherently and successfully. In linguistic terms, the essay requires candidates to apply a variety of complex grammatical structures correctly and to show their command of German vocabulary and idiom.
- in Part II candidates are required to conjugate verbs (*Übung 1*), transform sentences (*Übung 2*) and fill in missing words in a continuous text by means of multiple choice (*Übung 3*).

Both parts of the examination demand detailed and thorough knowledge of grammar, as well as confidence in its application. Furthermore, in Part I candidates have to demonstrate the ability to describe, illustrate analyse and evaluate in response to the title and topic of their choice.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Discursive Essay (Question 1)

Nearly all of the five topics were equally popular this year: many candidates chose topic **(a)** and **(b)** where they had to write about either having one world language or smokers paying for their own doctor's bills. Two other topics were also popular, namely **(c)** on whether the state should invest in education or economy or **(e)**, where they were asked to discuss whether some states had the right to forbid other states to possess nuclear weapons. The question on organ donation **(d)** was not chosen quite as often, but nevertheless was handled equally successfully.

In order to write successful essays, candidates need to read the questions carefully and ensure that what they are writing addresses all aspects raised by the question. This proved particularly relevant for essays on topic **(e)** on the subject of nuclear weapons. Some candidates went on to discuss the relative power of, say, the USA, Israel and Great Britain and their moral obligations in general, but only referred to the issue of nuclear weapons as an aside.

In some cases (and across all five questions) conclusions were prematurely drawn in the introduction (and at times later contradicted), and candidates could have enhanced their performance by putting pros and cons into neat paragraphs, which ensures points are clearly delineated. It is important for a successful essay not just to make a point but to give evidence and evaluate findings. In some cases, the conclusion of an essay contradicted the preceding argument. A number of essays were too long, resulting in repetition and veering

off topic. These essays would have benefitted from a shorter, more concise approach and thorough proof-reading. Quality matters more than quantity here.

Some essays depended heavily on a number of learnt phrases, which did not necessarily improve the quality of the essay, especially in cases where there was an accumulation of such phrases, e.g. *Die Kehrseite der Medaille ist, dass man sagen kann, je früher beginnt ein Mensch, desto wird es schwieriger...*

Some responses showed a lack of relevant lexis. In terms of grammar, problems with the use of reflexive verbs (e.g. *Wir müssen sich erinnern...* and with comparatives (e.g. *Es ist mehr wichtig, dass....*) were apparent. Other difficulties arose with subject-verb agreements and the use of umlauts. Often learners used words which sounded similar to the correct word (*verschwunden* as a past participle, thinking it came from *verschwenden*; *Werbung* instead of *Bewerbung*) or made words up (*Verlierung* instead of *Verlust*, *beweist hätten* instead of *bewiesen hätten*)

Factual information supports the argument if it is correct, but unless candidates are sure of their information, they should avoid using it.

The majority of candidates explored the main issues of their selected topics successfully and the best essays provided a balanced view in coherently organised paragraphs. The most successful essays devoted one paragraph for each main point, avoided repetition and framed ideas and arguments with clear introductions and conclusions.

Part II: Usage

Many candidates did well in this part of the paper. The most challenging questions were **Question 6**, where the *Konjunktiv* was required, and **Question 11**, where some candidates were not sure how to deal with *weder...noch*, not realising, that the negative was already implied and did not need to be added.

Übung 1 (Questions 2–6)

Many candidates completed this task successfully. All candidates followed the instructions and wrote the whole sentence. Some candidates used the future tense in **Question 2**, which was not required, but accepted. In **Question 3** the reflexive verb gave some candidates cause for concern and in **Question 5** the passive was often unfinished – *abgegeben* was written, but *werden* was left out.

Question 6 was answered in the indicative in the second half of the sentence, or learners did not pick up that the time frame was all in the past and wrote the second half of the sentence in the present or even in the future tense.

Übung 2 (Questions 7–11)

The second exercise in Part II proved, as always, more challenging than the first. Most candidates successfully manipulated the sentence in **Question 7**. **Question 8** proved to be a stumbling block to some because they were not sure which construction or case to use after *trotz*. **Question 9** was handled well by the majority of candidates, the sentence was accepted with or without *dass*, but the verb had to be in the right place in each case. Again, **Question 10** was handled well with a variety of solutions being accepted – the passive was needed, but the tense could be either future or present and if *sollen* was introduced, that was a good solution, too.

As mentioned above, for **Question 11**, the negative meaning of *weder...noch* was not clear to all candidates, so a double negative in each sentence half was often the result and in some cases the word order produced was not correct.

Übung 3 (Questions 12–31)

Candidates generally did very well in the cloze test where they had to choose the correct word from four options. Those candidates who scored well in these questions could tell the difference between *legen* and *liegen* and *schon* and *schön*.

GERMAN (PRINCIPAL)

Paper 9780/04
Topics and Texts

Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- read the question with care and think about what they are asked to do
- plan their answer and organise their material with close attention to the question
- take care to include analysis and argument, and avoid simply retelling the story.

General comments

The manner in which all candidates engaged with the demands of the paper was impressive. There were some exceptional scripts in this cohort and all scripts made an attempt to engage with the tasks. This year, answers in the Topics section gravitated towards Topic 2 (*Das Kleinstadtleben*), Topic 4 (*Sport*) and Topic 5 (*Die Mauer*). The great majority of candidates proved adept at engaging with the spirit of this part of the paper, proving able to formulate good and balanced comparisons between the works of their choice. Even in weaker scripts it was clear that candidates had engaged with the material they had studied in a meaningful way. The better candidates referred to the texts, through quotation and/or direct allusion, to greater effect, targeting the precise terms of the question; some weaker scripts tended to retell the stories of the works studied. Planning is paramount in both parts of the paper and it was clear that the more successful scripts were almost always accompanied by a detailed plan. Writing in the target language is not an easy task, so it is vital to incorporate linguistic planning (key vocabulary, constructions etc.) at this level. Thinking through the comparative nature of the questions is also a key element in the mark scheme and this was not always apparent in some less successful answers. There was also a tendency for some weaker answers to produce memorised introductions rather than engage with the question on its terms.

In the great majority of scripts the standard of the German was good, with some candidates producing work of outstanding quality, often through a very focused, concise and incisive style. Many sustained good quality German in longer essays, maintaining their focus on the terms of the question. Some candidates, often with a rudimentary plan, did write longer essays but tended to lose sight of the terms of the question and hence started to lose focus. As ever, there were many more basic linguistic errors and Centres would be well-advised to take heed of such common problems and put in place measures to eliminate them. A sample of them is included here (error type/corrections in brackets):

'*nötwendig*' (instead of *notwendig*)
'*in beiden Filme*' (instead of *in beiden Filmen*)
'*der Film*', '*die Filme*', '*des Films*' (problems with genders)
'*die Ursache*' confused with *der Grund*
'*verscieden*' (instead of *verschieden*)
'*die Judin*' (instead of *die Jüdin*)
'*geschalgen*' and '*gewonnen*' (past participle problems)
'*winnen*' (instead of *gewinnen*)
'*seinen Traum erwirklichen*' (instead of *verwirklichen*)
'*airisch*' (misspellings)
'*die Mauer*' (gender problems)
'*die Figur*' (gender and plural problems, '*Die Figuren*')
'*stark*' and '*stärker*' (umlaut problems)
'*klammern*' (for to climb)
'*unmöchlich*' (instead of *unmöglich*)
'*wecknehmen*' (instead of *wegnehmen*)
'*können*' (umlaut problems in conjugation)

'so dass' and 'damit' (appropriate usage)
'das Werk' 'die Werke' 'in den Werken' (problems of gender and plural forms)
'stressen' (meaning)
'meinen' and 'bedeuten' (appropriate usage)
'kontrollieren' and 'unter Kontrolle halten' (appropriate usage)
'bevor' and 'vor' (appropriate usage)
'die BDR' (instead of *die BRD*)
'man kann sagen, dass er ein Berliner ist' (use of definite article)
'das deutsche Volk' (instead of *Bevölkerung*)
'probieren' and 'versuchen' (appropriate usage)
'als' and 'wenn' (appropriate usage)
'Der Author' (instead of *der Autor*)
'darstellen' (separable verb)
'wer' (used as a relative pronoun)
'beeinflussen' (need for a double e)
'das Thema' (gender and plural)
'Erwachsene/Jugendliche' (problems of adjectival nouns)
'man' confused with 'Mann' often resulting in the incorrectly spelt 'mann'
'dass' and 'das' confused
'der Charakter' (spelling)
'müssen' (often without umlaut)
'die Stadt' (confused with 'Staat' and 'staff')

For this paper all candidates require a core working vocabulary pertinent to their texts and films. In the delivery and preparation of the Topics section, candidates would be well-advised to build up and learn a solid topic-specific vocabulary base so that they can be confident in conveying their views. There was good targeting of the precise terms of the questions, although there was a handful of instances in which previous essay titles figured heavily in a candidate's thinking with the result that memorised padding, narrative, or too many historical aspects not pertinent to the terms of the question distracted candidates from the task at hand. For weaker candidates generalisations were often given where detailed knowledge and reference would have strengthened answers significantly. All candidates stuck to responding with reference to two texts only and this is very much in the candidates' interests. In almost all scripts it was clear that it has been well understood that word limits are for guidance only and that candidates do not need to worry about an upper limit. In a small number of scripts it was evident that candidates were counting words as they went along and thus often lost focus on the depth and strength of their arguments. Every line of an essay in this paper, however long, will be read and can thereby gain credit, so long as the response is targeted at the terms of the question.

There was a good range of responses in the Texts part of the paper. Answers were offered on six of the eight texts, with Dürrenmatt's *Die Physiker* proving the most popular text and both *Schachnovelle*, *Im Westen nichts Neues* and *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* not far behind. The command of English in the appropriate register was good, with some exceptionally sophisticated scripts in evidence. As in the Topics, section planning was somewhat variable and there was a strong correlation between stronger answers and considered planning. The examination was conceived to allow sufficient time to plan and candidates would be well-advised to practise this in their preparation. Thinking through the implications of the questions and crafting a clear line of argument before putting pen to paper for the essay proper is essential. The best answers demonstrated the ability to combine a wide take on the question with sustained analysis. Direct allusions, paraphrasing and analysed quotations were handled well in the main, but weaker candidates tended towards more generalised points and often did not offer enough evidence to back up their assertions, for sharp focus on the text is required in substantiating an answer. There is no upper word limit in this examination, but some very long essays did struggle to target the terms of the question on a sustained basis, with a meandering argument punctuated by narrative, padding and memorised viewpoints sometimes in evidence. Close reading of the mark scheme should form part of the preparation of candidates, focussing on the stipulations of the Good and Very good boxes. There is still a tendency for candidates to see introductions as a means of voicing generalisations or a means of restating the question rather than set out a considered approach to the question set.

This year the overwhelming number of candidates wrote a thematic essay, with a small number of candidates offering commentaries. Such commentaries divided into two types, with some showing exceptional ability to analyse the extract in detail, whilst others became narrative, retelling the story of the extract before moving to broader statements on the texts studied. It is vital to realise that a close reading of the extract given is what is required, with sustained analysis. The rubrics for these questions are also designed to give the candidates a steer with regard to the focus of the question; a critical commentary of an

extract is very much distinct from a commentary of what is happening. If opting to choose such questions, it is vital that this distinction is made in the delivery of the syllabus in centres. As stated in previous reports, candidates attempting such questions should be encouraged to refer to the line numbers given on the paper, for there is little mileage in copying long sections of the printed extract. Some of the best answers showed sustained analysis of the particular extract and they also proved skilled in linking the extract to the wider aspects/themes of the texts in question. In delivering the syllabus, practice in such tasks is a very fruitful way of engaging with the text if done in a critical way. Candidates should be reminded that quotations on their own do not make points; rather analyses of any quotations are required.

It is important for candidates to state clearly what question they are answering for in a couple of isolated cases this was not clear. Writing out the title also helps to focus the mind. It would help if candidates would start a new side in their answer booklet for their second essay. Some candidates also went onto continuation booklets. In such cases care should be taken in collating the books effectively. Some tended to insert later paragraphs via asterisks, when better planning might have avoided such a scenario. Handwriting was variable, with a few cases of difficult scripts; it is particularly important to be clear with endings in German. Candidates should be strongly encouraged to ensure the legibility of their scripts. Centres can help with this by asking their students to handwrite their regular assignments rather than use computers.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Cultural Topics

All five Topics attracted answers this year. Reports will only be given on those questions attempted by more than one candidate.

The standard of written German of the overwhelming majority of candidates was good, with all candidates able to respond to the tasks set. At the top there were some very high quality answers, in which candidates displayed the ability to write in an expansive and wide-ranging style, crafting arguments of great sophistication. At the other end there were problems with basic verb conjugation and syntax. At times cases were also less than secure and it would seem that the linguistic element of the Topics essay was not appreciated by some. As stated before, a core vocabulary was not always in evidence and this is an area to work on. Candidates should be reminded that it is customary to use the present tense as the default tense when discussing action in the text or film. There was no shortening of characters names this year and it was good to see this point heeded by all centres. It should be conveyed to candidates that they do not need to state what works they have chosen, nor give a potted summary in their introductions. Candidates should rather focus on the terms of the question in their introduction. There was a tendency amongst some candidates to simply restate the question in their introductions, or rely on a series of rhetorical questions

Question 2

- A** This question attracted more responses than **2B**. Problems were encountered with understanding the meaning of the phrase '*kleinstädtisch*', with some candidates not taking the significance of this word sufficiently on board. On occasion such candidates drifted away from the question and fell back on material which was more familiar to them and hence lost focus. The two texts chosen by all candidates were *Die Geschichte von Herrn Sommer* and *Das weiße Band* and whilst contrasts were often drawn about the different time frames – post-war for the former and pre-World War I for the latter – this did not always lead to a successful comparison with regard to the terms of the question. In analysing *Die Geschichte von Herrn Sommer* candidates often focused on means of transport rather than the mentality of the local inhabitants. The notion of '*Frauenrechte*' was also summoned in some answers but this was not always linked directly to the terms of the question. Also, the figure of Herr Sommer and an investigation of the link between him and the narrator did not feature in many answers.

- B** This question attracted a handful of answers and candidates were generally successful in focusing on the terms of the question. The suppression of feelings in *Die Geschichte von Herrn Sommer* was investigated quite well but the stronger candidates also focused on the importance of the narrator's witnessing of Herr Sommer's death and his subsequent decision to keep such information secret. Some candidates also analysed the symbolic nature of Herr Sommer. In writing on *Das weiße Band* weaker candidates tended toward generalisation rather than engage in the detail of the text. The mysterious and unsettling nature of the violence in the community and the fact that we as viewers are sometimes privy to such disturbing acts yet never find out 'the truth' did not always feature. More successful candidates showed a wide range of knowledge of the film and the ability to tie such knowledge to the terms of the question. A reading of the figure of Herr Sommer as a reflection of the narrator proved a fruitful line of inquiry for some candidates.

Question 4

- A** This proved a popular question amongst many centres. With regard to *Nordwand* candidates wrote quite well but tended to underplay the political nature of the attempt with regard to the media, with some side-stepping politics by choosing to focus on other areas (teamwork, love, individual bonds) and thus putting the broader picture to one side. In *Der ganz große Traum* candidates had obviously engaged with the film well but the importance of Prussian militarism and youth indoctrination was not as appreciated as it might have been. Konrad Koch's challenge to the establishment goes beyond football, for the manner in which the game is played has social and political ramifications as well. More successful candidates picked up on this in a convincing manner. Of the three films *Berlin 36* proved a little harder for the candidates to relate to the question despite the fact that it is the most overtly political film of the three, given the Nazis' attitude to sport as depicted. Weaker responses revealed hazy knowledge of the film and the key moments within it. The best answers reached a very high standard indeed.
- B** This question attracted a handful of answers. Candidates proved adept at focusing on the sense of *Mannschaft* but weaker scripts meandered somewhat as they felt their way through the contrasts between the works chosen; it was evident planning was not as thorough as it could have been for some. In analysing *Nordwand* candidates were very successful in examining the importance of the team, looking at the differences of opinion between Andi and Toni, as well as the role of Luise. In answers on *Der ganz große Traum* candidates were not always clear in defining Koch's new sense of team spirit and its deeper implications, especially in the sense of its challenge to the prevailing Prussian order. *Berlin 36* proved more problematic, with the competing visions of what a team is or the concept of a team-within-a-team (Gretel and Marie) not always explored.

Question 5

- A** This proved by far the most popular question of the paper and hence the range of answers was understandably wide. Weaker candidates rather jumped into the question, taking the wall in a rather literal sense but omitting to mention ways in which it was indeed physically overcome. Others rather sat on the fence, or came to competing conclusions in different parts of the essay without stepping back to draw an overall view. In answers on *Der Mauerspringer* the strongest candidates were able to analyse in detail the creation of an 'internal wall' within Berliners themselves, mirroring the real thing, whilst weaker scripts drifted towards narrative or isolated examples of the Wall's role as a physical barrier. In referring to *Der Tunnel* candidates showed good knowledge of the text for the most part, with some candidates showing in significant detail the relationship between the Wall and the individuals concerned, offering a wider variety of perspectives. Some candidates were rather hazy in allusion to the material, showing significant omissions. With regard to *Liebe Mauer* candidates performed well, drawing telling comparisons with the other text they offered. Candidates were also able to comment usefully on the differences of perspective in 1961, 1982 and 1989.

Question 5

- B** This question proved less popular but the standard of response was high as candidates were successful in targeting the precise terms of the question. Answers were well informed and thoughtfully argued, drawing attention to the different perspectives of the source material. There was thoughtful analysis of the reality of working in a police state and an appreciation of the complexity of the impact of the authorities on the lives of contrasting characters. Most candidates gave little consideration to the wall itself, but concentrated more on the behaviour of individuals, attitudes and the role of the Stasi. Candidates were also able to comment usefully on the differences of perspective in 1961, 1982 and 1989.

Part II: Literary Texts

The use of English was good, but some candidates showed a weak critical vocabulary and, as in the Topics section, some formal learning of appropriate terms and register will enhance future performances.

Question 6

- B** There were two types of approach to **6B**: those which started from an analysis of the novel to determine what long-lasting literary lessons may be drawn from *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*, and those which reflected on modern social problems first and then imposed these on a reading of the novel. Candidates who took the former approach tended to construct a more sustained argument and analysis. Some candidates were rather hesitant to offer a decisive answer on the 'museum piece' element which prevented them from reaching a firm conclusion. It was clear from all the answers, nonetheless, that there was good understanding of the mental and social pressures suffered by Werther and the stronger answers were able to deploy detailed analysis and reference to the text.
- C** This question on the epistolary form was generally better handled, with a number of answers very good indeed. There was proper consideration of the one-sidedness of the correspondence, the subjectivity, Werther's mindset, the role of the editor – all with detailed reference to the text. Some introductions linking the work to other contemporary epistolary novels from French and English literature were not always illuminating. The prime focus must remain the text on the question paper.

Question 7

- A** There was a small number of responses to this question. They fell into two camps, with the best showing excellent ability to give a full analysis of the extract. At the other end of the scale answers did not display the analytical angle required for a critical commentary. Such scripts gave a running narrative of what is happening in the scene instead of fulfilling the criteria of the question. The rubric should be read carefully in this type of question and here it centred on the characters' situation. It is vital therefore to read and analyse the lines of the scene with this in mind, looking at the way in which conflict is central. As the rubric states, the content and style of the piece (its comic value for example) should also feature. The extract should also be linked to the rest of the play, here perhaps with the previous and subsequent scene. The role of the spectator is also important in such an extract with regard to what he/she already knows.

Question 8

- A** This question attracted a small number of answers. The comments made on **7A** with regard to the technique for answering commentaries also hold true for this question. The need to give critical analysis of specific lines of the text and an appreciation of what the interchange reveals about the Gaborers were paramount.

Question 9

- B** Answers were of a variable quality, with candidates on occasion struggling with the term 'fragile' in the context of the novel. Stronger candidates were able to offer a view that war fundamentally changes the dynamics of 'comradeship', making it at once very strong and also uniquely fragile. Some candidates took a rather more black-and-white approach and rather lost sight of the question. The best scripts showed excellent powers of analysis.

- C** The question came from the guidance Remarque gives at the start of the novel and all candidates framed their answer in this context, but there was some unevenness in coming to a balanced treatment of both the ‘accusation’ and ‘confession’ sides of the question. Some candidates rather blurred fact and fiction and took Remarque’s words at face value instead of treating them critically. Certainly there are ‘accusations’ in the novel and certain amounts of ‘confession’. The sense of a ‘lost generation’, the ‘winners and losers’, the sense of writing out a ‘confession’ of wartime experience was picked up by many candidates with the best seeing the novel as a different way of eliciting a critical engagement with war from the reader.

Question 10

- C** This proved a popular question. What differentiated the quality of the answers was the varying success in critically engaging with the terms of the question. Narrative and padding proved a particular issue in responses, as did basic assumptions drawn from Zweig’s own life and suicide. These came at the expense of revealing detailed knowledge of the text, above all in who actually tells the story (the narrator, the narrator’s friend – the ‘source’ alongside the media for Czentovic’s depiction at first, the primacy of Dr B.’s first person story, and the narrator’s recounting of the final events). Some candidates mentioned that the *Novelle* could be seen as an allegory yet there is no neat mould in which the work fits; a more complex interpretation involving a close reading is therefore required. More successful candidates looked beyond the two as simply characters, with the notion of a struggle between humanism and totalitarianism playing out metaphorically through chess. At the top end there was a clear understanding of depth of the chess metaphor, one which is dynamic through the text. Rather than a mere game on a board there is a distinct psychological and ideological element to the game as it is presented in the *Novelle*. Precise allusion/quotation is required and this was not always forthcoming.

Question 11

- A** This question was attempted by a handful of candidates. As in **7A** and **8A**, there was a tendency to recount what was in the extract, rather than pay heed to the precise terms of the rubric, which asked ‘what was revealed about the situation of Möbius and the other characters’. As a result, overly narrative approaches missed the aims of the question. In this extract the tone and the manner in which the lines are delivered are critical in the engagement of the audience on an intellectual level, as this is key in the dramatic production (as underlined by the *21 Punkte* at the end of the play). The acting technique needed to deliver the lines is vital in understanding how the interaction between the stage and the audience works. Rather than just seeing the characters as conventional theatrical characters it is important to see them in the context of the dramatic theory of Dürrenmatt and how this is evident in the context of the passage. At the end of a commentary it is important to link the scene to the rest of the play.
- B** This proved a popular question, eliciting a wide range of responses. The best answers gave a wide take on the question, but weaker answers struggled with a definition of paradox, especially within the context of Dürrenmatt’s concept of drama. Many candidates identified the key notion of paradox but then struggled to link these ideas to the details of the play itself. In weaker scripts candidates erred towards a personal engagement with Möbius’ situation rather than a reflection on the wider implications of the play. In some scripts little mention was made of the final scene and its importance in terms of paradox as the audience is confronted with the sudden realization that the force of chance and the revelation of the worst possible outcome is embodied in Dr. von Zahnd. Some slid into padding and narration as the frame of the question, i.e. paradox, was lost. It is important that candidates relate in detail scenes from the play and here paradox takes a number of forms. As a result there was some limitation of insight in some answers.
- C** This was the most popular question in this part of the paper and attracted wide range of responses. Again, as in **11B** some candidates approached the drama as a rather conventional one, with a sense of psychological naturalism associated with Dr. von Zahnd rather than treating her as the embodiment of ‘Zufall’. Some took rather narrow view of Dr. von Zahnd, drawing parallels with Hitler or seeing her as a means of exploring the status of mental health in society, with such rather reductive readings not taking account of the broader framework and dramatic techniques employed in the play. Weaker scripts also tended to err towards narration and repetition, with some candidates quoting in English. Some saw the play as a ‘tragedy’ when Dürrenmatt specifically terms the work ‘*eine Komödie*’, albeit one of a rather unconventional nature. The interaction of the audience with the play and in particular Dr. von Zahnd is crucial in understanding the text as a piece of theatre and this was overlooked in some answers. Some candidates brought ‘absurdism’

into their argument but did not always manage to articulate how this was to be understood in the context of *Die Physiker*. A number of answers were wide-ranging in their approach, marshalling their material very convincingly indeed. The best answers were full and wide-ranging, showcasing an excellent ability to sustain an argument with close reading of the text very much in evidence.