



GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**GERMAN
GCSE**

SUMMER 2018

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?l=en>

Online Results Analysis

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

Component	Page
Component 1: Speaking	1
Component 2: Listening	5
Component 3: Reading	7
Component 4: Writing	9

GERMAN

GCSE

Summer 2018

COMPONENT 1: SPEAKING

This is the first year of the reformed GCSE and the candidates had to demonstrate new skills. Most candidates coped well with the Role Play, the description and discussion of the Photo Card and the Conversations. However, as with any new exam there were a number of common mistakes with regard to the conduct of the exam.

Role Play

Foundation Tier

Generally, the Role Plays were performed well, even allowing candidates at the lower end of the spectrum the opportunity to gain a few points, when giving just single word answers. It was surprising though to see so many students not being able to cope with standard questions like *'Was für Filme siehst du gern?'*; *'Wie kommst du normalerweise zur Schule?'*; *'Wie ist das Essen in der Kantine?'*; *'Bekommst du Taschengeld?'*

It was obvious at this level that the knowledge and application of question words *'Wer?'*; *'Was?'*; *'Wie?'*; *'Wann?'*; *'Wo?'* were often not known at this level.

Having to give an opinion also proved a challenge for some candidates, who were perhaps assuming that the prompt would help them to give the answer. Therefore, some candidates got confused and felt they had to use the word *'Meinung'* in their answer rather than resorting to the simpler *'Ich finde ____ gut/schlecht'*.

The unseen question was challenging for most candidates, because they often didn't know the question words.

Another new skill was to have to ask a question. Some centres had prepared their students well, but there is definitely room for improvement.

Specific Comments on the Role Play Cards

Set 1

The question *'Was für eine Person bist du?'* was very challenging for most candidates.

Set 2

The last question *'Was für Filme siehst du gern?'* was often not answered. Some candidates picked up on the word *Film* and answered accordingly.

Set 3

Question 1 was often answered well about music festivals and then candidates got confused about the answers to questions 2 and 3.

Set 4

The phrase *'...in deiner Gegend'* was often not known.

Set 5

Candidates found the questions '*Welche Nationalität sind Sie?*' and '*Waren Sie schon in Österreich?*' challenging.

Set 6

The unseen question '*Wie kommst du normalerweise zur Schule?*' was often not answered well, although at face value it looked like an easy question.

Set 7

The question '*Wie ist das Essen in der Kantine?*' was often answered with a list of what the candidates ate in the school cafeteria.

Set 8

The question '*Was für eine Person bist du?*' was very challenging for most candidates. Also, the unseen question '*Bekommst du Taschengeld?*' was not well known by many candidates.

Set 9

The word '*Schulfächer*' was challenging, with candidates giving answers about school in general and not details on the subjects.

Higher Tier

As with the Foundation Tier, candidates generally coped well with the role plays. Some candidates wanted to part with a lot more information than was needed for the individual questions, which shows that they did not really know about the format of a role-play.

Again, there were some surprising mistakes or misunderstandings: The question '*Wie findest du deine Schulfächer?*' was often answered as if the question had been about school in general.

Most mistakes were made when a specific tense was required.

Register infringement also happened, however the more able students managed very well.

With regards to giving an opinion, some students got confused and felt they had to use the word '*Meinung*' in their answer rather than resorting to the simpler expressions like '*Ich finde _____ gut*'.

Specific Comments on the Role Play Cards

Set 1

The questions '*Was sind gute Freunde?*' and '*Wie sieht dein(e) Traumpartner(in) aus?*' were often answered with the same answer.

Set 2

Although the question asked about an opinion on the sports facilities, many candidates answered with a list of things to do. In addition, the word '*Sportmöglichkeiten*' was often not known.

Set 3

Most candidates performed well on this card.

Set 4

The question '*Was gibt es für Touristen in Ihrer Gegend zu tun?*' needed some activity mentioned rather than a list of sights. The polite form '*Sie*' was needed in the question and the more able candidates managed very well with that.

Set 5

The past participle '*angekommen*' and the verb '*zurückfliegen*' were challenging for some candidates.

Set 6

Some candidates mentioned other problems in their area rather than environmental ones.

Set 7

Some candidates gave an opinion on their school, rather than on the school subjects, as the question required. Again, the word '*Schulfächer*' was not recognised or known. The unseen question '*Wie würdest du die Schule verbessern?*' was also challenging for some candidates.

Set 8

The unseen question '*Was für eine Person bist du?*' was challenging.

Photo Card

Foundation Tier and Higher Tier

Most candidates were able to say a couple of sentences to describe the picture. The more able ones did rather well with the picture itself. Some had been taught phrases like '*Ich sehe, im Vordergrund/Hintergrund gibt es*', which helped.

The questions were not always answered well but most candidates gave it a good try. At times teachers tried to simplify the questions to help their students.

Time keeping for the photo card was a big issue. Centres are reminded to keep to the recommended times and examiners need not ask supplementary questions which lead away from the topic of the card.

Conversations

Foundation and Higher Tier

Candidates were generally well prepared for their chosen theme. Unfortunately, some were over rehearsed, which resulted in a distinct lack of spontaneity/natural conversation.

This part of the exam is a conversation and not a presentation followed by a discussion. It is not a requirement for the candidate to say which theme they have chosen or to give a short presentation.

There was often a discrepancy in the performance between the chosen and prescribed themes, with the latter not as well executed as the former. There were also occasions when centres chose the incorrect second theme, or where both parts were not given equal timing. This had an effect on the overall marks awarded for the conversation.

Teachers should avoid asking inappropriate personal questions like:

'Rauchst du?'/ 'Trinkst du?'/ 'Hast du schon mal Drogen genommen?' / 'Rauchen deine Freunde?' etc.

Summary

Overall, the new GCSE exams well conducted.

Based on this year's performance in this Component, centres should focus on the following:

- German question words are key to candidates producing relevant responses: 'Wer?'; 'Wie?'; 'Was?'; 'Wo?'; 'Wohin?'; 'Was für?'; 'Wann?'; 'Welche?'
- Candidates being confident in offering an opinion: '*Ich finde...gut/schlecht.*'; '*Ich mag...*'; '*Ich mag... nicht*'. Or more advanced: '*Ich meine, dass...*'/'*ich finde, dass...*'/'*ich glaube, dass...*'
- Candidates must ask a question. 'Wie findest du...?'/ 'Hast du...?'
- Practise giving concise descriptions of pictures.

GERMAN

GCSE

Summer 2018

COMPONENT 2: LISTENING

General points

- Attendance registers should be completed and enclosed with the scripts.
- Script envelopes should be completed and the number of scripts contained in each envelope must be indicated.
- Scripts should always be packed in examination number order.
- Scripts should be completed in black ink or ball point pen not pencil. This is mentioned on the front of the candidate's answer paper.
- Candidates who tick too many boxes lose marks.
- Extended answers often lead to negating the correct answer and losing the mark.
- Candidates who write in German where an English answer is required fail to gain marks and vice versa.
- Candidates should make clear which answer is intended for marking. Redraw the box if there is ambiguity. The use of arrows often causes confusion.

Foundation Tier

- Q1 Mostly well done. Some candidates failed to tick two boxes for b and c.
- Q2 The majority of candidates answered correctly. *Rezepte* and *Gerichte* seemed to create problems.
- Q3 A number of candidates wrote a description of the photos in the box instead of the letter. Some candidates failed to recognise the negative and chose batteries as a correct answer in Section 1.
- Q4 Mostly well done although *Fremdsprachen* was often not recognised as a synonym for *Spanish und Französisch*.
- Q5 A number of candidates answered that a problem with the party was that no one came instead of lots of guests couldn't come. Some candidates confused the gifts and answered that she got a mobile phone as a present.
- Q6 This was challenging for a number of candidates. *Schweiz* and *Vollpension* were not universally known.
- Q7 Some candidates answered that the report was about school and then tried to make their answers to b fit this topic.
- Q8 Answers were often not specific enough and spoke in general terms about mobiles being banned or used at break. A number of candidates had the wrong idea that schools don't have enough computers because pupils have mobile phones.

Q9 Generally well answered. The most challenging question was d where a number of candidates confused 14 and 40 or answered that they got a refund.

Higher Tier

Questions 1, 2 and 3 as per the Foundation paper.

Q4 Generally well answered although some candidates were not specific enough with their answers.

Q5 This was challenging for a number of candidates. *Hausaufgaben* was often given as the answer to b. Some candidates failed to recognise the difference between problems at home/school and gave *konzentrieren* as an answer to c. Although c required an infinitive to be grammatically correct, variations e.g. *schlaf/schlafe* were accepted.

Q6 Generally well answered although *Entwicklungsländern* was often not understood.

Q7 A number of students answered 'weather' for b which was too vague a response and were not specific enough in their answers to c

Q8 A number of students recognised there was a question about the financial aspect of weddings in Section 1 but few recognised that it was who will pay for everything with a number of alternative answers being given. Section 2 was more accessible. Section 3 caused problems where a number of candidates thought the trend was to get married later in the day.

Q9 A number of students understood that photos were being used on cigarette packets but used this as the measure that will be introduced in the future. Section 2 created confusion as a number of students answered that alcohol addiction was on the increase and then tried to make their answers to d and e fit this problem.

GERMAN

GCSE

Summer 2018

COMPONENT 3: READING

General points

- Attendance registers should be completed and enclosed with the scripts.
- Script envelopes should be completed and the number of scripts contained in each envelope must be indicated.
- Scripts should always be packed in examination number order.
- Scripts should be completed in black ink or ball point pen not pencil. This is mentioned on the front of the candidate's answer paper.
- Candidates who tick too many boxes lose marks.
- Extended answers often lead to negating the correct answer and losing the mark.
- Candidates who write in German where an English answer is required fail to gain marks and vice versa.
- Candidates should make clear which answer is intended for marking. Redraw the box if there is ambiguity. The use of arrows often causes confusion.
- Candidates seemed well prepared for the Translation section.

Foundation Tier

- Q1 Mostly well done. A number of students wrote 3 answers to bii which lost them marks.
- Q2 Mostly well done. The link between *nie zu spät* and *pünktlich* caused the most problems.
- Q3 Mostly well answered. Recognising the difference between *umweltfreundliche* and *umweltfeindliche* for f was the main challenge.
- Q4 Generally well answered although a number of students didn't recognise *Straßenbahn*.
- Q5 A number of students failed to understand *wählen* leading them to answer 'finding a job' for a. Most were able to recognise the jobs mentioned although a small number answered politician for *Polizist*.
- Q6 Some candidates incorrectly answered that it would soon be her birthday for a. Some candidates failed to recognise the difference between Conni and Phillip and stated that he said hello at the start of the phone call. A number of candidates didn't recognise the question asked by Conni and gave a number of different educated guesses.

- Q7 A high number of candidates answered France and Poland instead of Germany for b. The popular activities were generally well recognised, however not many candidates understood that Germany was becoming more popular with Russian tourists.
- Q8 Candidates often needed to be more specific to gain marks. The idea of daily needed to be included to gain the mark for b. There was a lack of detail when statistics were required e.g. over half
- Q9 As you would expect this was far more challenging for Foundation candidates than Higher ones. Foundation candidates were often able to pick out keywords but not answer specifically enough to gain marks, especially for d and for e candidates often got the tense of the question wrong.
- Q10 **Translation.** A surprising number of candidates were unable to translate *Mittwoch*, often choosing a different day or using the phrase 'in the middle of the week'. Some candidates didn't translate the comparative *billiger* correctly and therefore lost marks. *Komödie* was sometimes translated as a comedian. A number of candidates didn't recognise *Süßigkeiten* and often translated it as popcorn.

Higher Tier

Questions 1 and 2 as per Foundation Tier Questions 8 and 9

- Q3 Generally well answered.
- Q4 Generally well answered. There was some confusion between *nervös/Nerven* leading to a number of candidates choosing *Nina UND Markus* for a.
- Q5 Mostly well answered.
- Q6 Candidates often weren't specific enough when answering this question, especially for b,d and e.
- Q7 This proved more challenging than the first Literary Text on the paper. Candidates often didn't understand that it was his last autumn in the family house and often answered 'because it's autumn' for a. A number of candidates stated that Nadine lived in an old town which lost them marks. Numbers caused problems when answering f with a variety of answers given e.g. 10 times in 6 years/16 times in 10 years etc.
- Q8 Time phrases caused some problems with different combinations of 2/5/hours/days per week being used to answer c. *Nebenjob* was often understood to mean 'next job'
- Q9 A number of candidates were unable to translate *Dorf* correctly, often using town or area. Some candidates incorrectly translated that there aren't many young people. Some candidates thought voll was deep and a number were unable to translate the plural *Freunde* correctly which lost them marks. *Ausland* also created problems with a number of candidates believing it to be Australia.

GERMAN

GCSE

Summer 2018

COMPONENT 4: WRITING

General Comments

All centres dispatched their scripts on time, suitably labelled and well packaged. Attendance registers were included and candidates' papers were packed in register order.

Most candidates stuck to the suggested word limits suggested although some higher tier candidates substantially exceeded the suggested limits. It should be noted that whilst this in itself does not penalise the candidate, it does of course increase their opportunity for errors. Where this was the case, candidates were not able to access the highest marks for "Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy". Many candidates wrote the word count total at the end of their answers, which was helpful.

Handwriting caused some issues for examiners this year. What cannot be read, cannot be marked. Some candidates word processed their answers to avoid problems with illegible handwriting. This, of course, has to be arranged in advance with centres' examinations officers.

Umlauts, or rather lack of them, affected communication in some cases (mochte/ möchte; konnte/ könnte; wurde/ würde; war/wäre; and hatte/ hätte).

Many candidates do not capitalise nouns.

Foundation Tier

Question 1

Nearly all candidates followed the instruction to write a complete sentence in response to the stimuli, which reflects good training in centres by teachers. Perfection is not required to gain full marks as the mark scheme allows minor errors. Centres need to encourage candidates that less is definitely more for this question. Writing a short sentence with a verb will gain full marks. Candidates should therefore be discouraged from writing complex sentences for this question. Many candidates wrote a perfectly acceptable response but then tried to add extra information, which was ambiguous and therefore only allowed them to achieve one of the two marks available. Most candidates were able to manipulate "dein/deine" into "mein/meine". Problems occurred with the question word "wie" in "Wie deine Stadt/dein Dorf ist" and "Wie du zur Schule kommst". The latter was the most poorly answered question and very few understood that it was asking for transport to school and not a description of the school. The last stimulus revealed a certain lack of geography or general knowledge, with answers such as "mein Lieblingsland ist New York".

Question 2

Candidates need to write approximately 60 words and cover all three bullet points by giving information and expressing opinions. Some candidates lost marks because they omitted one or more of the bullet points, resulting in Band 2 marks for Communication and Content, as very few facts, ideas and opinions were presented. At this level, it was unusual to see

attempts at subordinate word order and simple main clause sentences prevailed. Again, perfection is not a pre-requisite to gain full marks on this question, as the mark scheme states that responses should be “mainly clear” and may be “occasionally ambiguous”. Those candidates who produced three pertinent simple sentences with accuracy inevitably scored higher than those who were off-piste and trying to translate what was in their head into German.

Question 3

This was a challenging question for many candidates at Foundation Tier. Some misunderstood the question entirely (perhaps thrown by the use of “Sie”?) and thought they had to write promoting a job opportunity in Berlin, rather than applying for such a job. Although candidates were free to include other material, they had to include a response to the three bullet points and again, if this was not the case, then marks were lost. To get into Band 4 (7-8 marks), candidates had to meet almost all requirements of the task. Consequently, candidates dropped to Band 3 for most of the requirements or even Band 2 – some of the requirements. Centres need to ensure that candidates must attempt all three of the stimuli to stand a chance of achieving higher marks for Communication and Content (CC). Some persistent failings were not giving a reason for the subjects candidates were learning in school, and past reference to a job the candidate had done. Many candidates answered this last point in the present tense. The mark scheme for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy (LKA) states for Band 3 and 4: references to past, present and future events are attempted. At this level and in this question in particular, candidates can expect to be given tasks that test their ability to manipulate tenses. When planning their answer, it may be useful to train candidates to write tense that each bullet point demands. Again, at this level, most candidates answered using some variety or a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, with some or occasional attempts at structures that are more complex. Only a limited number of candidates wrote sufficiently accurate German to gain marks in Band 5 for LKA where there are mainly minor errors and references to tenses are successful.

Question 4

This was also a challenging series of questions for candidates at this level. Messages were often grammatically incorrect and therefore only partially communicated, resulting in many marks at 1 for parts (a) to (c) and 2 at best for parts (d) and (e). Many candidates did not seem to know how to form questions (b – when does school start?). Many also did not know certain items of vocabulary – start (lots of use of the verb starten!), school canteen (Schulesenzimmer was the most imaginative, but incorrect version!), and French (many Frankreich answers). Spellings of quite common words (letzt/ nächst plus any ending going, Freitag) were frequently incorrect. There were literal translations for (c) (wir haben zu tragen ein schuluniform), and many translated I will as “ich will”.

Higher Tier

Question 1

Some of the issues experienced by Foundation Tier candidates, applied here too. However, overall, Higher Tier candidates appeared to cope much better with the crossover question and produced more accurate and relevant German. As at Foundation Tier, there was some confusion over the nature of the task and some candidates failed to refer to all bullet points.

Question 2

By far the most popular option from the scripts seen was Option 2 – Hobbys. This was generally completed to a better standard than the question on family celebrations.

With option 1, several candidates misread “Feier” for “Ferien” and wrote half their answer on the latter topic instead, which affected their marks for Communication and Content as Band

4 (12-15 marks) states “meets almost all requirements”. Only answering half the task means probably squeezing into Band 3 at a push – “most of the requirements”. Candidates could make up for lost ground on marks for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy as these are assessed independently of the content. Some candidates also were not explicit enough in explaining why family celebrations were important to them. Conversely, there were some lovely answers at the top end of the ability range. Most candidates dealt with their past birthday celebration quite well.

With option 2, some candidates got themselves tangled up by trying to say the advantages of hobbies are this, and the disadvantages are that, instead of using straightforward ‘weil’ clauses, which is what more successful candidates did. A surprising number of candidates failed to relate their further hobbies to having more time or money. It is quite easy to transform “wenn du mehr Zeit und Geld hättest” in the prompt to “wenn ich mehr Zeit und Geld hätte”.

For most candidates their accuracy, or rather lack of it, meant that LKA marks fell in the main into Bands 3 and 4. Only a limited number of candidates’ work demonstrated a real command of the language and had a very firm grasp of its grammar. These candidates were able to produce some very complex sentences, with subordination, modal verbs, um . . . zu clauses, and the like.

From an examiner’s viewpoint, it would be useful for candidates to indicate which question they have chosen (task number or title) to avoid any confusion.

Question 3

Question three is a translation exercise. Candidates who paraphrase will preclude themselves from gaining full marks. However, this strategy will allow them to partially convey the message and therefore gain one mark for the first three sentences and two marks for the remaining two. At Higher Tier, the translation task will be between 50-55 words. Therefore, candidates can expect the five sentences to contain complex structures.

Responses to this question ranged from very good to middling.

Sentence 1: Many candidates knew ‘Österreich’, but conjugated ‘fahren’ with “haben” and not “sein”.

Sentence 2: Generally a well-translated response, although very few candidates knew the intensifier “extremely” which limited their mark to one (meaning partially conveyed).

Sentence 3: Generally the most poorly done section. Not many candidates knew “lasted” or “coach”.

Sentence 4: Most candidates completed this sentence, although many used “mehr teuer” and not the comparative.

Sentence 5: A very limited number of candidates knew the relative who and many could not conjugate lives correctly. Some did not know aunt and showed creativity by writing “meine Mutters Schwester”.

General Comments

Operations ran smoothly this year and centres are to be congratulated on preparing their candidates generally well for the demands of this new specification. The overwhelming majority of candidates were entered for the correct tier. Centres may like to consider training

candidates to plan their answers before committing final pen to paper. There did not seem to be much evidence of forward planning and may address problems such as not referring to all the bullet points. Similarly, paragraphing really helps to clarify your thoughts and gives your work an immediate and obvious structure.



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk