

2021 ASSESSMENT REPORT

GRM315114 - German

Part 1

Listening and Responding

Marks varied greatly in this section of the paper.

Question 1

In Question 1, the term “Fußgängerzone” was widely misunderstood. It is a Pedestrian Mall, so “street” and just “footpath” were not accepted.

- d) Many students struggled with the given directions, even with such simple ones as “go along the street to the square and turn right”. “the second street on the left”. This was disappointing for Level 3C

Question 2

- e) In Question 2, (e) was not answered well, with some students confusing “for” and “against”. Details from the spoken text were needed to gain the full marks, not just assumptions made by the students.

Question 3

- d) several students felt that Julain spoke French and Japanese, not English and some Japanese. Julian is German, so for him, English is a foreign language.
- e) Few students seemed to know the term “Jugendherberge” which was surprising.

Question 4

- a) Markers accepted both the German form of “Hessen” or the English “Hesse” as the answer to this question.
- b) Explain why Frankfurt am Main is often known as Mainhattan (3 marks). Details are really important for students to obtain the full marks, as in question (f).
- It lies on the river Main (1)
 - Its skyscrapers are among Europe’s tallest (1)
 - And because of the remarkable skyline (1/2)
 - It’s compared with New York’s Manhattan (1/2)

Part 2

Orals

Most students presented well. Students are reminded that chewing gum in a oral exam is not appropriate.

The awards ranged from “t” to “A”, with a couple of students being Level 2 standard for conversation. These students mainly used the Present Tense in their answers and had to be carefully prompted for their answers to questions asked in the Perfekt.

All students had prepared their answers about their families and house well, but more complex answers became problematic for some.

As usual, word order was a problem for several students e.g. “Letztes Wochenende, ich habe.....” or “Ich würde kaufen ein Haus”. As German word order differs so much from English, students really need to learn the start of many sentences by heart.

Several students answered “Ich war ...geboren” instead of “ich bin ...geboren”.

Another frequent error was the use of “ich will” for “ich werde” when a question was asked about future plans. The pronunciation of “werde” and “würde” were also frequently confused, but as the “ü” sound is not one used in English, this is understandable. However, teachers could stress the difference and make students practise regularly.

Overall, the standard was similar to previous years.

Part 3

Reading and Responding

Again, marks varied greatly, with several students not giving enough detail in their answers.

Question 5

Several students felt the author of the report was male but did not lose marks for this. There were clues that it was a female writing e.g. the passage was adapted from the woman’s magazine *Freundin* and at the end she addresses her “liebe Leserinnen”. The number of marks for this question were changed to 22, following the responses of the students.

Most students answered (c) with simply “to learn bouldering”, which was deemed to be worth only one mark.

Question (d) was changed to being worth 5 marks and question (h) changed down to 2 marks.

For question (e), examiners accepted either “the colours indicate the difficulty of the climb” or “to indicate a specific route.”

Question 6

Quite a few students misunderstood that the target audience was “European businessmen and women”.

Question 6 had its marks changed to 20, after looking at student responses to question (e). This question was deemed to be worth 3 marks. The French transport Minister believed that “night trains (1 mark) will play (1/2) a key role (1/2) in European Mobility (1).

Occasionally students said a “Nachtzug” was a “night bus”. This is not an acceptable alternative at Level 3, although they were credited with a half mark.

In question (f), the word “Nachfrage” was variously interpreted to mean “the next question” or “the Other question” instead of “the demand”, which was to be found in the small dictionary used by the Setting Examiner.

Question 7

It was clear that some students did not understand the posed question from time to time, so incorrect answers were given.

It was also clear, that often students found a word or word from the question and simply copied out the sentence in their answer. This demonstrates a lack of understanding, but is a common thread when questions are to be asked in the target language.

No student correctly answered (d). They had to change trains three times- in Hannover, Berlin and Braunschweig (Brunswick) but students did not have to indicate the places.

Part 4

Writing in German

Only questions 8,10 and 11 were answered in this section i.e. a narrative, a blog and an email. Questions requiring a profile and a conversation were not attempted. These two latter text types are part of the text types a learner may be expected to produce in the exam.

General comments

- Conjugation needs work, as many students did not make subject, adjectives and verbs agree. Students should be encouraged to proof -read carefully before completing their work.
- Word order in German sentences was a problem for some students, and it is this which really separates top level students from others. The verb comes in second place in German sentences and past participles go at the end - to name two instances in which German differs greatly from English. This needs to be practised regularly during the year.
- Some students still incorrectly use “haben” instead of “sein” in the Perfekt tense. Also, past participles were often incorrect. Yet even small dictionaries usually have a section of German verbs in their various tenses. Students are encouraged to use this function.
- Prepositions and their cases caused problems too.
- Once again, some students did not capitalise nouns, as is required in German.
- Commas were often not used correctly e.g. after “aber”, where they should come before. Definitely no comma after the first idea in the sentence.