

GERMAN LANGUAGE

<p>Paper 8683/01 Speaking</p>

Key messages

- The presentation should last between three and four minutes and must clearly relate to the culture or society of a German-speaking country, whilst also reflecting the candidate's personal interests.
- Candidates should ask the examiner at least two questions in the topic conversation and two questions in the general conversation. These should ideally be spontaneous, but, if necessary, candidates should be prompted to ask them.
- No marks can be awarded for Seeking Information if no questions are asked.
- It is recommended that the candidate's two questions in each conversation should be asked within the allotted time and integrated into the discussions. They should ideally not be left to the end.
- The whole test should be completed within twenty minutes and the two conversations should be of approximately equal length, at around eight minutes each.
- The candidate and the examiner should be equally audible to anyone listening to the recording, and the recording equipment should be tested beforehand and placed accordingly.

General comments

Most centres had small numbers of candidates for the speaking test, but nearly all were appropriately entered and were aware of the requirements. Presentation topics mostly referred to issues in a German speaking society, and were often very interesting and informative. However, it was evident that not all candidates are aware that they must ask the examiner a minimum of two questions per conversation. It was often the case that candidates did not ask any questions spontaneously. If they were not prompted to do so by the examiner, they were unable to access the marks available for Seeking Information. Some examiners did prompt their candidates but only at the very end of a conversation, which is not good practice as questions should be integrated and arise naturally during the discussion. Candidates were on the whole very responsive and nearly all were spontaneous, with very few relying on prepared responses. Most centres used the mark scheme correctly and fairly accurately. Some centres allowed the tests to last too long, thus risking tiring the candidates. Twenty minutes should be the maximum duration of a test. Recording quality was usually very good, but at some centres either the candidate or the examiner was less audible owing to incorrect placement of the recording equipment.

Specific Comments on the sections of the examination

Section 1 (Presentation)

- If the presentation contains ideas and opinions, refers to the culture or society of a German-speaking country, and is delivered in a fluent and confident fashion, nine or ten marks may be awarded for content.
- However, presentations that are far too long, even if confidently delivered, should not receive nine or ten marks for content as they cannot be considered to have been 'well organised', as indicated in the mark scheme.
- For a mark of five for pronunciation a candidate does not have to be a native speaker.
- A well-prepared candidate should be able to access at least 4 marks for Language. A 'reasonable range' of structures and (topic-specific) vocabulary is required, delivered 'fairly fluently', and without ambiguity of meaning.
- There was a very good range of interesting, up-to-date or relevant presentation topics, including the following:

Datenschutz, Cern – der Large Hadron Collider, Heidi Klum – TV-Sendung, technischer Fortschritt in der deutschen Geschichte, 5G, die Autorin Kerstin Gier, die Corona-Epidemie, 'Made in Germany', Hamburg/München/mein Deutschlandbesuch, and der literarische Wettbewerb 'Poetry-Slam'.

Section 2 (Topic Conversation)

- In this conversation, issues raised in the presentation should be followed up and discussed.
- Candidates should be able to defend any ideas and opinions already expressed and ought also to have prepared plenty of additional points. However, examiners should not expect them to know any specific factual information over and above what has been presented.
- Any issues more suitable for the General Conversation should be raised later in **Section 3**, provided that the main issues of the Topic Conversation are not returned to.
- The questions a candidate puts to the examiner to 'seek information', should be as varied as possible. „Was denken Sie?“ or „Sind Sie der gleichen Meinung?“ are useful questions to move the conversation along, but a wider range is expected for marks of four or five.
- If a candidate asks only one question during a conversation the maximum mark for Seeking Information is three. If no questions are asked, even after prompting, the mark is zero.
- A maximum mark of three should be awarded for Providing Information if the candidate can deal with basic situations and concepts, but finds more complex ones difficult.

Section 3 (General Conversation)

- This section should be distinct from **Section 2**. It should not be shorter, but of a similar length to the Topic Conversation at around eight minutes.
- The examiner should clearly inform the candidate that the Topic Conversation is over, and should introduce a completely different topic for the General Conversation. At least two different topics should be covered in this section.
- It is essential to cover mainly complex issues in order to allow candidates access to the higher marks available for Comprehension and Responsiveness or Providing Information and Opinions.
- Questions, such as *Warum?* or *Inwiefern?* are particularly useful in prompting in depth discussion.
- It should not be expected that candidates will know any specific information on an unexpected topic chosen by the examiner, even a current topic such as the Corona virus pandemic, although they may well be expected to have their own opinions and suggestions. If a candidate is clearly unhappy with the topic suggested, the examiner should quickly suggest a different area of discussion.

GERMAN LANGUAGE

Paper 8683/22
Reading and Writing

Key messages

In this paper, candidates read two texts with a common theme (*Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr*; young people volunteering in the social sector).

They must then answer vocabulary questions for **Question 1** and grammar questions for **Question 2**. In **Questions 3** and **4**, candidates answer comprehension questions about the two texts. In **Question 5**, candidates are asked to summarise the two texts with reference to the advantages and disadvantages of the *Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr* and then briefly give their own opinion.

General comments

The majority of candidates coped well with the demands of this exam and showed a good understanding of the two texts as demonstrated by the answers to **Questions 3 – 5**. The quality of language varied from excellent to very poor. Whilst some candidates wrote confidently using their own words, others restricted themselves to copying large chunks of the original text without attempting to rephrase ideas and opinions. This could not be credited. **Questions 1** and **2** also presented a difficulty for candidates who did not have a sufficient command of vocabulary and grammar for this level.

In **Question 5**, candidates should be reminded to keep the summary task in mind and not just rephrase both texts without reference to the task. Simply copying sentences from the text does not gain marks as it does not demonstrate summary skills.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Some candidates coped well with this question, but many struggled to find the synonym in the text.
- (b) Many candidates coped well with this question.
- (c) Some candidates struggled with this question as they did not understand the original word they were given and were thus unable to find a synonym in the text.
- (d) Most candidates coped well with this question.
- (e) The majority of candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 2

- (a) Some candidates coped well with this question and answered correctly. However, many candidates used the wrong tense in their answer.
- (b) Many candidates answered this question correctly. However, the position of the word *leider* sometimes presented a problem.
- (c) This question was usually answered correctly and candidates recognised the required structure.
- (d) A significant number of candidates answered this question correctly and used the correct endings.

- (e) Many candidates did not answer this question correctly and used a wrong, often colloquial, sentence structure.

Question 3

- (a) This question did not present any difficulties for most candidates.
- (b) Many candidates answered this question correctly and were awarded full marks. Some candidates only referenced one statistical fact and were awarded one mark.
- (c) This question presented a difficulty for many candidates and they were unable to give the required details. Many candidates restricted themselves to simply copying large chunks from the text, hoping the right answer might be included.
- (d) Most candidates scored full marks in this question.
- (e) This question was generally answered correctly. However, some candidates only gave one piece of the required information.
- (f) The question presented no difficulty and most candidates referred to all three required pieces of information.

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates did not compare life before and now and simply restricted themselves to describing either the current or the former life. This could not be credited with marks.
- (b) Candidates often struggled with this question with many only gaining one mark out of three. They did not understand the volunteer's thoughts about his childhood compared to that of the children in the children's home.
- (c) Most candidates identified two out of three details but were unable to describe the different emotions experienced by the children in their own words.
- (d) Many candidates were able to identify the three necessary points for the answer.
- (e) A significant number of candidates coped well with this question and gained full marks.

Question 5

Some candidates coped well with this task and were able to identify many advantages and disadvantages of the *Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr* scheme. However, there was often a very poor quality of language which made it very difficult to understand some candidates' summaries.

Candidates should be reminded to adhere to the word limit. Any points after the 150-word cut-off will not be credited. The aim of this question is to produce a concise summary and candidates should be discouraged from copying sentences directly from the text. Instead, they should summarise points briefly and succinctly.

In **Question 5b**, some candidates were able to give a relevant opinion on the topic and supported their opinion with valid reasons, often drawing on their own experience. However, the majority of candidates restricted themselves to writing in general without giving personal opinion or simply repeating sentences from **Question 5a**. This is to be discouraged as it does not demonstrate that the candidates has understood and engaged with the text

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- (b) Many candidates answered this question correctly. However, the position of the word *leider* sometimes presented a problem.
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GERMAN

<p>Paper 8683/32 Essay</p>
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Key messages

In order to perform well in this paper, candidates should:

- select the title which they feel most confident about answering;
- write a response that is clearly relevant, supported with examples, coherently structured and well informed;
- use German which is accurate and of a suitably advanced nature, as well as demonstrating a good use of idiom and appropriate topic-related vocabulary;
- use sentence patterns which show some evidence of complexity in a style which is easy to follow.

General comments

Most essays were coherently argued with a suitable introduction and conclusion and of an appropriate length. As always, the strongest essays demonstrated insight, and opinions were supported with well-chosen evidence.

Many candidates had an excellent command of German and achieved marks for Language in the Very Good category. Most used an impressive range of vocabulary, both general and topic-specific. Their language was almost always fluent and idiomatic but occasionally lacked precision.

Common errors included:

- lack of punctuation;
- lack of capitalisation of nouns;
- incorrect but phonetic spelling.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Jede neue Generation hat ein besseres Leben als die vorherige Generation. Teilen Sie diese Meinung?

This question was quite popular with candidates. Many mentioned the development of technology as a defining feature of their generation compared to previous generations. Most candidates weighed the evidence, wrote thoughtful essays and came to the conclusion that each generation faced different problems, so it is impossible to evaluate who has or had the better life.

Question 2

„Wenn ich ungesund leben will, geht das nur mich etwas an. Die Verantwortung für die eigene Gesundheit und Fitness liegt bei jedem Einzelnen.“ Dirk, 45 Jahre alt. Was halten Sie von Dirks Standpunkt?

Most candidates agreed that health and fitness are the responsibility of the individual but only in a positive sense. They disagreed with Dirk that he could live unhealthily without affecting anyone else. Smoking and alcohol consumption were rarely mentioned as an unhealthy lifestyle choice.

Question 3

Wie viel Prozent eines Jahrgangs sollten nach der Schule an der Universität studieren? Begründen Sie Ihre Antwort.

No candidates chose this title.

Question 4

In der Zukunft wird es nur noch fahrerlose Fahrzeuge geben. Stimmt das Ihrer Meinung nach? Finden Sie diese Entwicklung positiv?

This was a popular question. Those who chose it were obviously interested in this subject and many were very well-informed about the technology and the social and ethical aspects of driverless vehicles. The essays were usually argued with conviction, with relevant examples and interesting to read.

Question 5

Tierarten sterben aus ganz natürlichen Gründen aus. Wir sollten nicht versuchen, alle gefährdeten Tierarten am Leben zu erhalten. Stimmen Sie diese Aussage zu?

Few candidates chose this question but those who did were convinced that animal species are dying out through the effects of human activity and not for purely natural reasons. They wanted to conserve all species.

GERMAN

Paper 8683/33
Essay

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