

GERMAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0525/12

Listening

General Comments

This paper produced a wide spread of marks but it is pleasing to note that the vast majority of candidates found the paper accessible. All candidates coped well with the first section, after which performance tailed off gradually, especially in those tasks where written answers were required. Answers in German are not assessed for quality of language but candidates do need to answer the question they have been asked and to communicate their answer in a meaningful way. It is also helpful if the candidates' handwriting is clear and readily decipherable.

Candidates had obviously been well prepared for the examination and rubric infringements were rare.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Question 1-8

All material in this part of the examination is drawn from the Defined Content vocabulary which is readily available to Centres and candidates.

Most candidates scored full marks on this task, where they are required to choose the image which best answers the question. There was very occasionally a candidate who failed to gain the mark in **Question 6** or **Question 7**.

Exercise 2 Questions 9-15

This listening task was based on a weather forecast. Nearly all the multiple choice picture answers were correctly identified.

In **Question 9** the day of the week was almost always correctly identified as *Mittwoch*. Any sound alike spelling was acceptable even though a quick look back to the first question could have resolved any spelling difficulties.

In **Question 11** the temperature was nearly always given correctly as 9 or *neun*.

Most candidates gave the correct answer *Land* but the incorrect alternative *Schnee* arose in a minority of scripts. Some candidates wrote *Landgeben* showing that they were transcribing without any real understanding.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Question 17

This is a new task to this particular examination bringing it into line with the equivalent examinations in other languages. Candidates are required to identify 6 correct statements from a choice of 12 by listening to four interviews, which, on this occasion, were on the topic of television. Although many candidates identified all six correct statements, the increased level of complexity in the language in this section meant that 4 or 5 was a more common mark. A very few candidates put more than the required 6 ticks or crosses (either were acceptable) and lost marks according to the number of answers in excess of 6. It would be helpful if candidates could clearly indicate their final response.

Exercise 2 Questions 18 - 25

Most candidates got the gist of this interview about tourism in Germany but not always the detail. Providing one's own written answers to questions is clearly a much more challenging task.

Question 18 which required the one word answer *Direktor* was mostly correctly answered.

In **Question 19** any preposition with *Küste* or *Meer* was acceptable so most candidates got a mark, although some had not read the question properly and merely answered *in Deutschland*.

Question 20 was quite successfully answered except by a small minority of candidates who got the advantages of Germany and Spain mixed up.

In **Question 21** there were 3 possibilities for the 2 marks. Most went for *Qualität ist gut* but there was a great variation in the spellings, all of which were accepted if they sounded like the original word. *Keine Sprachprobleme* was also a popular choice although some candidates omitted a negative and therefore failed to gain a mark. Travelling in one's own car was more difficult to express satisfactorily, although many candidates did so successfully.

In **Question 22** it was important to understand *meisten* in the question. The answer was *Europa* (any preposition acceptable) and those candidates who put in a reference to America as well, were not credited unless they made it clear that the majority of tourists came from Europe.

Most candidates understood *Geschichte* in **Question 23** but had difficulty with the spelling. Again any version that sounded similar was acceptable but not the plural form as the meaning changes.

There were 3 acceptable alternative answers to **Question 24** and most candidates gained a mark. Very many candidates gave two or even three answers which can be a risky strategy if they happen to invalidate the correct answer by an incorrect one.

In **Question 25** the answer was simply *Deutschland* and it was very unusual to see an incorrect answer.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 26 – 31

This task, although multiple-choice, discriminated well between candidates. The ideas of the fantasy writer Katharina Yang were sometimes quite subtle. Most candidates gained the mark in **Question 27**, many chose **C** rather than the correct **D** in **Question 28** but in the other questions there was no real pattern to the incorrect answers.

Exercise 2 Questions 32 – 39

Most candidates understood the gist of this text about Julia's birthday party and gained a few marks. Most lost the marks because they did not directly answer the question.

Question 32 was generally not well answered, partly because some candidates interpreted *wer* as where and partly because *Erwachsene* seemed not be very well known. The spelling of *Erwachsene* was interpreted generously.

In **Question 33** most candidates managed to gain a mark with *Geburtstag*.

There were countless acceptable variations of the idea that Julia's father was in control in answer to **Question 34**. Answers about the youngsters not being treated as children and being able to have a proper celebration were also acceptable.

Question 35 was generally successfully answered.

Most candidates were aware that the answer to **Question 36** involved alcohol and cigarettes but then failed to add the negative which was necessary to give a direct answer to the question. *Verboten* seemed less well known than expected.

Question 37 was usually successfully answered.

Although some candidates got distracted by the make-up and pretty dress in the text, most understood that the answer to **Question 38 (a)** required some reference to sports clothing or jeans. In **(b)** there had to be some attempt at answering the question *warum? tanzen* on its own was not enough.

Question 39 was quite challenging as it required not only a full understanding of the text but the ability to express the idea. A minority of candidates achieved a mark for this question.

Overall, the standard of comprehension of spoken German demonstrated by the candidates in this GCSE Level examination is very pleasing.

GERMAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0525/13

Listening

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It was pleasing to note that the vast majority of candidates found this paper accessible. All candidates coped well with the first section, after which performance tailed off gradually, especially in those tasks where written answers were required. Answers in German are not assessed for quality of language but candidates do need to answer the question they have been asked and to communicate their answer in a meaningful way.

Candidates had obviously been well prepared for the examination and rubric infringements were rare.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Question 1-8

All material in this part of the examination is drawn from the Defined Content vocabulary which is readily available to Centres and candidates.

Most candidates scored full marks on this task, where they are required to choose the image which best answers the question.

Exercise 2 Questions 9-15

This listening task was based on a weather forecast. Nearly all the multiple choice picture answers were correctly identified.

In **Question 9** the day of the week was almost always correctly identified as *Mittwoch*. Any sound alike spelling was acceptable even though a quick look back to the first question could have resolved any spelling difficulties.

In **Question 11** the temperature was nearly always given correctly as 9 or *neun*.

Most candidates gave the correct answer *Land* but the incorrect alternative *Schnee* arose in a minority of scripts. Some candidates wrote *Landgeben* showing that they were transcribing without any real understanding.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Question 17

This is a new task to this particular examination bringing it into line with the equivalent examinations in other languages. Candidates are required to identify 6 correct statements from a choice of 12 by listening to four interviews, which, on this occasion, were on the topic of television. Despite the increased level of complexity in the language in this section, many candidates identified all six correct statements.

Exercise 2 Questions 18 - 25

Most candidates got the gist of this interview about tourism in Germany but not always the detail. Providing one's own written answers to questions is obviously a much more challenging task for candidates.

Question 18 which required the one word answer *Direktor* was mostly correctly answered.

In **Question 19** any preposition with *Küste* or *Meer* was acceptable so most candidates got a mark, although some had not read the question properly and merely answered *in Deutschland*.

Question 20 was quite successfully answered except by a small minority of candidates who got the advantages of Germany and Spain mixed up.

In **Question 21** there were 3 possibilities for the 2 marks. Most went for *Qualität ist gut* but there was a great variation in the spelling, all versions which sounded like the word were acceptable. *Keine Sprachprobleme* was also a popular choice although some candidates omitted a negative and therefore did not gain a mark. Travelling in one's own car was more difficult to express satisfactorily, although many candidates did so successfully.

In **Question 22** it was important to understand *meisten* in the question. The answer was *Europa* (any preposition acceptable) and those candidates who put in a reference to America as well, were not credited unless they made it clear that the majority of tourists came from Europe.

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There were 3 acceptable alternative answers to **Question 24** and most candidates gained a mark. Very many candidates gave two or even three answers which can be a risky strategy if they happen to invalidate the correct answer by an incorrect one.

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Section 3

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Exercise 2 Questions 32 – 39

Most candidates understood the gist of this text about Julia's birthday party and gained a few marks. Those who lost marks often did so because they did not provide a direct answer to the question.

Question 32 was generally not well answered, partly because some candidates interpreted *wer* as where and partly because *Erwachsene* seemed not be very well known. The spelling of *Erwachsene* was treated sympathetically.

In **Question 33** most candidates managed to gain a mark with *Geburtstag*.

There were countless acceptable variations of the idea that Julia's father was in control in answer to **Question 34**. Answers about the youngsters not being treated as children and being able to have a proper celebration were also accepted.

Question 35 was generally successfully answered.

Most candidates were aware that the answer to **Question 36** involved alcohol and cigarettes but some failed to add a negative in order to give a direct answer to the question. *Verboten* seemed less well known than expected.

Question 37 was usually successfully answered.

Although some candidates got distracted by the make-up and pretty dress in the text, most understood that the answer to **Question 38 (a)** required some reference to sports clothing or jeans. In **(b)** there had to be some attempt at answering the question *warum? tanzen* on its own was not enough.

Question 39 was quite challenging as it required not only a full understanding of the text but the ability to express the idea. A minority of candidates achieved a mark for this question.

Overall, the standard of comprehension of spoken German demonstrated by the candidates in this GCSE Level examination is very pleasing.

GERMAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0525/22

Reading and Directed Writing

The Paper was tackled well by the greater majority of candidates. Just a very few weak candidates omitted **Question 16** and also the more challenging writing task. In some cases poor hand writing and crossing out made the tasks difficult to read and candidates should be aware that this may be to their disadvantage.

Question Number

Questions 1-5

Sections 1 and **2** of this Paper test understanding of Minimum Core Vocabulary in the Defined Content Booklet and knowledge of simple Grammar and Structures as detailed in Part 1 of the List of Grammar and Structures in the Defined Content.

For the first 3 Exercises of **Section 1** candidate need to understand simple messages, signs advertisements and a short text dealing with everyday life.

These were all very well done by the majority of candidates, with the exception of **Question 2**, where answers suggested that candidates were not familiar with the word *Konditorei*.

Questions 6-10

Most candidates had no problems with this second exercise, although for some **Questions 7** and **10** posed a problem; *macht das Haus sauber* was not uncommonly matched to *deckt den Tisch* suggesting that *sauber* was not known.

Questions 11-15

Exercise 3 was tackled well by most candidates. For **Question 13** some candidates appeared to overlook *Gestern* and consequently chose the wrong answer. In the case of **Question 15** some candidates chose A as their answer.

Question 16

Candidates are required to picture stimuli and short verbal prompts to communicate three straightforward pieces of information in German.

This written exercise was tackled very well with most candidates scoring full marks for the communication aspect of this task. In a few isolated cases, candidates seemed to have interpreted the picture prompts as invitations to cite any mode of transport/leisure activity rather than to convey in writing precisely what they saw in the illustration. Some candidates wrote inviting their correspondent to visit or asking him/her about arrival times etc. rather than imparting information about their own plans. Dubious spelling, poor handwriting and incorrect verb forms meant that some scored less well for Language.

Questions 17-26

In this Exercise the candidate is required to locate information in a straightforward passage. Text rephrasing is not required, but the answer should be unambiguous.

This first element of **Section 2** was typically approached in a very straightforward manner. **Question 17** was answered appropriately by almost all candidates. Answers to **Question 18** generally communicated well, but on occasions answers were ambiguous e.g. *Hund spazieren und so lange (weg)*, and so could not be credited. For **Question 19** a significant number of candidates wrote that the parents remained at the table,

and failed to make any reference to their wanting to speak to one another. **Question 20** proved to be straightforward.

For **Question 21** many candidates wrote: *weil sie (sie/ihnen) erzählen wollten* or similar, which was unclear and failed to communicate that the parents wanted to explain something to the girls. Some candidates did not appear to have read the Question carefully enough and wrote: *dass Mutti den Tisch gedeckt hat/hatte* rather than saying what was on the table. A number lifted from the text to produce the phrase *der Kaffeekanne war eine grosse Obsttorte*, which could not be credited. The remainder of the Exercise proved to be unproblematic for most candidates.

Question 27

Almost all candidates seemed to find this task accessible and very many scored full marks for Communication. In some cases candidates omitted task **(b)** or **(c)**, which meant that the maximum they could score for Communication was 9, and some candidates omitted to write about both of these, which meant that maximum possible for Communication was 8. Candidates wrote predictably, but appropriately about being able to go swimming, go for walks or visit museums etc. Some candidates referred to tourist attractions in languages other than German and these could not be credited unless they were described. e.g. *Touristen können Big Ben sehen* was not credited, but *Touristen können die grosse Uhr Big Ben sehen*, or similar was credited. For task **(b)** candidates made appropriate suggestions about accommodation and many gave examples of hotels with details of cost and/or location. Although Task **(c)** did not always produce the anticipated past tense, as candidates sometimes referred to their favourite location rather than where they had been or what they had done, there were many good responses here. Candidates not only referred to the place/activity, but frequently gave an opinion here too. Many candidates scored full marks for Language, but in a significant number of cases the Language was very repetitive with no attempt to vary verbs or sentence patterns.

In **Section 3** of the Paper most of the vocabulary comes from the Minimum Core, but the texts also contain some additional vocabulary. Candidates are asked to respond to Questions requiring both gist and detailed understanding. Whilst selective lifting may be appropriate to answer some Questions, mere location and transcription indicating vague understanding is not.

Questions 28-34

Just a very few candidates seemed to take a statistical gamble and ticked either all of the 'Ja' boxes or all 'Nein'. When providing corrections to the incorrect assertions, some candidates were not attentive to the rubric and the need to avoid the use of *nicht* (and *keine*) in their answers. Candidates occasionally disadvantaged themselves by invalidating their answers with extraneous information from the passage which ended up appearing to give an impression of alternative answers or lifted, so that the answer did not make sense.

A number clearly did not understand some Questions and either wrote irrelevant responses or copied large chunks of the text, perhaps hoping that they contained the answers. A few candidates left answers blank in this Exercise. Some answers to **Question 28** suggested that *üben* was not understood, as candidates decided that the statement was false and then sought to justify it, by saying that Nils wanted to be able to speak Chinese in China. For **Question 29** some candidates answered: *Es* (rather than *er*) *war unsicher*, which failed to communicate. **Question 30** was generally unproblematic. In answer to **Question 31** many candidates wrote answers with no mention of Nils, which made them ambiguous e.g. *Sie mochten er fotografieren / er haben die Leute fotografieren* or seemed to suggest that the Chinese photographed themselves e.g. *Sie fotografierten sich*. The remainder of the Exercise proved to be straightforward.

Questions 35-43

Although there were many good responses to Questions in this Exercise, some candidates would be well advised to look more closely at the interrogative, so that they provide the information requested. **Questions 35** and **36i** and **36ii** were answered well by almost all candidates. For **Question 37** some candidates did not seem to understand precisely what was being asked and answered in respect of the *Ernst-Wittman-Schule* project and so wrote: *im Herbst*. Some candidates described the project to be undertaken. Some lifted indiscriminately and wrote: *Bis Zum Morgen des ersten Tages*, which did not make sense as an answer here. **Question 38** proved to be straightforward. **Question 39** was generally answered correctly. However some candidates had obviously misunderstood and wrote that the teacher provided the tools and some wrote about gloves and shovels. There were many good answers to **Question 40**; a minority merely stated that a baker had come along without mention of the donated sandwiches, which did not answer the

Question. Many candidates answered **Question 41** correctly, but a significant number lifted badly, such that their answers could not be credited e.g. *nicht nur müde sondern auch*. **Question 42** was answered appropriately by many. Relatively few candidates answered **Question 43** correctly; many lifted: *Sie würden es jederzeit wieder machen*.

GERMAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0525/23

Reading and Directed Writing

The Paper was tackled well by the greater majority of candidates. Just a very few weak candidates omitted **Question 16** and also **Question 27**, the more challenging writing task. In some cases poor hand writing and crossing out made the tasks difficult to read and candidates should be aware that this may be to their disadvantage.

Question Number

Sections 1 and **2** of this Paper require understanding of Minimum Core Vocabulary in the Defined Content Booklet and knowledge of simple Grammar and Structures as detailed in Part 1 of the List of Grammar and Structures in the Defined Content.

For the first 3 Exercises of **Section 1** candidates need to understand simple messages, signs advertisements and a short text dealing with everyday life.

Questions 1-5

These were all very well done by almost all candidates.

Questions 6-10

Most candidates had no problems with this second exercise.

Questions 11-15

Exercise 3 was tackled well by most candidates.

Question 16

The candidate is required to respond to picture stimuli and short verbal prompts to communicate three straightforward pieces of information in German.

This written exercise was tackled very well with most candidates scoring full marks for the communication aspect of this task. In a few isolated cases, candidates seemed to have interpreted the picture prompts as invitations to cite any food or drink/leisure activity rather than to convey in writing precisely what they saw in the illustration. Dubious spelling, poor handwriting and incorrect verb forms meant that some scored less well for Language.

Questions 17-26

In this Exercise the candidate is required to locate information in a straightforward passage. Text rephrasing is not required, but the answer should be unambiguous.

This first element of **Section 2** was typically approached in a very straightforward manner. **Question 20** was not always appropriately answered; some candidates stated that the father went to Munich without conveying the idea that he drove his daughter and her luggage to Munich.

The remainder of the Exercise was very well accomplished by almost all candidates.

Question 27

The candidate is required to write a short composition and scores 1 mark for each relevant piece of information. One task requires the past tense and the others allow the candidate to write in the present tense.

Almost all candidates seemed to find this task accessible and many scored full marks for Communication. Candidates wrote appropriately about the exams in general or made specific references to the various subjects that they had taken. Candidates not only referred to the exam(s), but frequently explained how they felt, namely relieved, exhausted etc. Not surprisingly descriptions of celebrations and holidays often overlapped i.e. the wonderful celebratory holiday they had had or were going to have, but most candidates provided enough detail to be credited for both **(b)** and **(c)**. In some cases candidates did omit task **(b)** or **(c)**, which meant that the maximum they could score for Communication was 9. Many candidates scored full marks for Language, but on occasion the Language was repetitive with no attempt to vary verbs or sentence patterns.

In **Section 3** of the Paper most of the vocabulary comes from the Minimum Core, but the texts also contain some additional vocabulary. Candidates are asked to respond to Questions requiring both gist and detailed understanding. Whilst selective lifting may be appropriate to answer some Questions, mere location and transcription indicating vague understanding is not.

Questions 28-34

Candidates generally coped extremely well with this exercise. Just occasionally some disadvantaged themselves by invalidating their answers with extraneous information from the passage which ended up appearing to give an impression of alternative answers or lifted, so that the answer did not make sense. In answer to **Question 31** candidates occasionally wrote that girls and boys both did one hour of sport per week, suggesting that the word *genauso* of the Question was not always understood.

Questions 35-43

Although there were many good responses to Questions in this Exercise, some candidates would be well advised to look more closely at the interrogative, so that they provide the information requested.

Question 35 was answered well by almost all candidates. For **Question 36** some weaker candidates did not seem to understand precisely what was being asked and simply lifted indiscriminately from the text. **Questions 37, 38** and **39** were appropriately answered by nearly all candidates. In answer to **Question 40** candidates located the relevant information in the text, but some manipulated the language such that they wrote, *Er hat Tiere bedroht*, which was obviously incorrect. Some others supplied a lift here rather than attempting to manipulate the language i.e. *um bedrohte Tiere zu retten und seltene Pflanzen zu retten*, which again could not be credited.

Candidates coped well with **Questions 41** and **42**.

Although some candidates gave an appropriate answer to **Question 43**, some did not appear to understand *verbringen* as they wrote, *(Sie möchten) in eine(r) Ökowohnung verbringen*, which could not be credited.

GERMAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0525/03
Speaking

General comments

These comments are to read in conjunction with the **Teachers' Notes** for March – May 2011.

It is always a privilege to moderate the work of candidates from all over the world and, as in previous years, their ability to communicate in German is highly impressive. There were many highly scoring performances, which showed that the candidates had worked hard and prepared themselves thoroughly for the examination and were able to score very high marks in many cases. The full range of marks was available to all, but inevitably there was a wide range of performance from candidates, with the general standard being comparable to that heard in previous years.

Centres generally conducted the Speaking Test very professionally and most Examiners had prepared themselves thoroughly before the examination and prepared their candidates to deliver their best. However, in a small number of Centres, Examiners were not well prepared for the Role Play situations, which resulted in the candidates not being fully able to demonstrate their ability; often candidates were confused as the Examiner allowed the situation to develop into an unnecessary mini-conversation; sometimes certain Role Play tasks were just not asked or completed. Occasionally, some Examiners did not ask appropriate questions in the Topic and / or General Conversation sections of the test. It is essential that thorough preparation for these sections takes place so that candidates can produce their best under examination conditions and Examiners must ensure that they are prepared to use the full range of time frames (present, past and future time) in these sections of the test by asking the sort of questions which will allow these time frames to be used: otherwise marks on scale **(b)** (Linguistic Quality) may well be limited, as is explained on pages 9 and 10 of the **Teachers' Notes**. Examiners must consult these instructions very carefully as there are still many Examiners who are awarding higher scale **(b)** marks to candidates who do not (or cannot) convey past and future meanings. Such candidates cannot be awarded above the satisfactory band (see **Teachers' Notes**, pages above). Similarly, candidates whose topic or conversation is significantly curtailed cannot expect to be awarded full marks, if they do not have time to demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and language structures. Most Examiners do seem to use a stopwatch or alarm to guide them with timings, but there remain many tests, which are simply too short; there are very few that are longer than the recommended times for the two conversations however. In a very few cases, some candidates seemed unaware of what was required of them for the Speaking Test and seemed rather perplexed when they were asked what topic they had prepared to speak on; in these cases an unsatisfactory and often rambling 'presentation' about 'Myself / My life' was produced, despite the advice offered on page 9, **2(b)**, of the booklet.

Most Centres forwarded the appropriate new sample size for the Centre (outlined on pages 3 and 4 of the **Teachers' Notes**) with clear recordings, in labelled cassette boxes or, as is now more common, on CDs; a pleasing trend is the use of computer files. Only a few recordings remain of a poor quality. MS1 copies and Working Mark Sheets for all candidates should be sent to the Moderator with the recordings, yet some Centres failed to do this. The cover sheet was not always included. Occasionally Centres sent the complete set of recordings of all candidates, rather than a sample, as is instructed on pages 3 and 4. Where Centres had requested permission from the Board to use more than one Examiner to conduct and assess the Speaking examination for their candidates, extensive and helpful notes on Internal Moderation (as detailed on p7 of the notes) were usually submitted; most of these were exemplary.

Administrative work in Centres was generally good this year, but clerical errors of addition on the working mark sheets (WMS) still occur, particularly in Centres with a large number of candidates; a CW/AMEND form has to be issued as a result.

The recommended timings for each section of the test were usually observed, but some Centres did run together the Topic and General Conversation sections, which can make moderation difficult. There were also a small number of Centres where the Role Play tasks developed into quite lengthy conversations, usually Examiner led, and others where the General Conversations were very brief and perfunctory.

The mark scheme was generally applied fairly consistently and the order of merit within the Centre was usually accurate. Where adjustments were necessary, these were often the result of lack of time frames in the conversation sections or failure to complete Role Play tasks adequately.

Comments on specific questions

Role Plays

Examiners are reminded to encourage candidates to attempt all parts of each task. If only one part of a task is completed, the full three marks cannot be awarded.

In Role Plays A the tasks of greeting and thanking the interlocutor are important; failure to address these parts of the task will result in an incomplete message, with a maximum mark of 1 (as in the mark scheme on p12). One task in Role Plays A will always be a **greeting + rephrasing of the rubric**; a further task will always be **expressing thanks + asking a question**; two tasks will be the expression of **one piece of simple information** each, where the response may very well be brief, but can be worth the three marks (see p.12, para. 3 of the notes); in addition there will always be a task where the candidate **chooses from an option offered by the Examiner**.

In Role Plays B **greetings and thanking** are equally important as expressed above. In addition, one task is structured to demand a **reaction** from the candidate in addition to a piece of information. This was set out on the candidates' card in such a way as to make this clear. A lack of **reaction** was marked this year with very many candidates only able to score a maximum of one mark for that particular task for an incomplete response. One further task on Role Play cards B will demand that the candidate **replies to a question asked by the Examiner but not printed on the card**: this will always be cued as *Beantworten Sie die Frage*. Remaining tasks will expect the candidate to **ask a question** and to offer **two pieces of information in reply to a question from the Examiner**.

The majority of candidates however were able to converse fluently in their Role Plays and make use of natural and idiomatic German to complete their tasks. Examiners are reminded that they should adhere to the rubrics and printed stimuli of the Role Plays and not attempt to add to or extend the set tasks, nor develop them into mini-conversations. Equally importantly, Examiners should be wary of feeding information to the candidates by giving them a choice of vocabulary, which cannot then be credited. Full guidance is given on page 8 of the booklet, under **Structure of the Examination: Role Plays**.

Role Plays A

Page 15, A1, 2, 3

This was a straightforward Role Play and most candidates performed well. The information required was well known to most candidates.

Task 2: a good variety of responses, a favourite was *'neben dem Kuchen'* which seemed a very advantageous position!

The other tasks were well attempted and it was encouraging that most candidates were able to form the question in **task 5**.

Page 16, A4, 5, 6

This too was a straightforward Role Play and most candidates again performed well. The information required was equally straightforward and accessible. Most tasks were answered briefly and single word responses were awarded full marks here.

Task 2: the length of stay varied from 1 night to 3 months.

All tasks were well attempted and again the formation of the question in **task 5** did not prove difficult.

Page 17, A7, 8, 9

This situation was straightforward and most tasks were well attempted.

Task 3: this task was however found quite challenging with the format of the question and the separable verb. Many candidates did not separate the components.

Task 5: most candidates simply responded '*Ich habe einen 100-Euro-Schein*'; rarely was any apology offered or a request whether the ticket-office were happy to change this.

Role Plays B

These tasks are more demanding, in that they require the ability to use a range of time frames and to give explanations, justifications and opinions and a **reaction** where necessary. Centres are reminded that the two-part tasks demanded in the candidate's rubric can be split by the Examiner; this is quite appropriate.

Page 18, B1, 4, 7

This Role Play was well attempted generally with most candidates able to explain that they were looking for a job and offer suitable responses to the questions asked them. The reaction to the news that there were vacancies in **task 3** was rarely expressed however.

Task 1: some candidates did not give a reason for their call, but many used the wording of the introduction.

Task 2: there was some lack of comprehension, with answers such as "*um neun Uhr*", but most did well here.

Task 3: almost all candidates scored 1 mark only here.

Task 4: there was good use of the past tense generally; the most frequent verb was '*gearbeitet*', but almost all attempted two elements.

Task 5: a good attempt at the interrogative form, but many candidates did not show verb agreement with plural '*Arbeitsstunden*'.

Page 19, B2, 5, 8

This Role Play was accessible to most candidates, and was a well-rehearsed situation.

Task 1: many candidates followed the wording of the introduction to form the question.

Task 2: occasionally answered '*wo?*' instead of '*wann?*'.

Task 3: well answered, briefly, with two objects.

Task 4: well attempted, basic vocabulary for the description, but usually a lack of reaction to the news that a bag had been found.

Task 5: again many candidates used a singular verb with '*Öffnungszeiten*'.

Page 20, B3, 6, 9

This was again an accessible Role Play B, with a straightforward role for the candidate and scope for invention within the rubric.

Task 1: many candidates followed the wording of the introduction to form the question

Task 2: there was usually a problem with the shower and the TV '*kaputt*' or '*funktioniert nicht*'.

Task 3: there were some unrealistic answers ('*drei Tage*', '*eine Woche*' etc.) which led one to believe that the question was not always well understood.

Task 4: again a lack of reaction, but the room numbers were almost always correct.

Task 5: sometimes '*wenn?*' for '*wann?*' and the separable verb caused some problems.

Topic (Prepared) Conversation

As usual the Presentations ranged widely from monologues, where even struggling candidates were left to fend for themselves, to immediate general conversations with no initial candidate exposition. Examiners are asked to let candidates speak for approximately a full minute before interrupting, so that the exposition of the candidates' prepared material can be assessed. However, one must not lose sight of the many Examiners and candidates who do an excellent job by producing a natural and not too over-rehearsed presentation and subsequent discussion with spontaneous exchanges in a variety of time frames, and a full range of vocabulary and structure. It is the manipulation by candidates of their prepared material and the quality of their response to the Examiner which will determine their marks.

The choice of topics was very wide; in many Centres candidates chose very challenging topics; there were some very commendable expositions on the environment, problems of drug abuse and crime, religious intolerance and the role of youth and women in society; many were able to speak at a very high and sophisticated level; in other Centres, candidates were happier with less complex topics such as holidays, School, home life, future plans etc.

Candidate performance was generally very good on this part of the test with some fluent, interesting expositions and discussions. There is still a minority of candidates, who clearly do not prepare a topic as prescribed by the syllabus; they cannot be awarded high marks for scale **a**) (quality of presentation and preparation).

General Conversation

Overall, a good standard; there are not many in the 'weak' band, and what is always pleasing is that most candidates will genuinely attempt to develop their response wherever possible. The result is often extremely spontaneous and natural from the better candidates.

The best performances from candidates in this section of the test were ones where they were encouraged to use a variety of time frames, relevant vocabulary and appropriate structures; many were able to demonstrate a high degree of fluency in their responses to the Examiner's questions. As usual, a wide range of topic areas was tested, including School, holidays, family life, education, daily life, the environment etc. – all of which are entirely appropriate and all being topic areas where all candidates can reasonably be expected to have a suitable command of relevant vocabulary and idiom. A minority of Examiners do ask questions which are perhaps too sophisticated for the average candidate, thus denying such candidates the opportunity to demonstrate what they know or could offer with a more basic level of vocabulary and structure.

As has been said in the General Comments section, for both Topic and General Conversation, Examiners must ensure that candidates are offered the opportunity to respond in a range of tenses, otherwise marks above the satisfactory band on scale b) cannot be awarded. Similarly candidates whose topic or conversation is significantly curtailed cannot expect to be awarded full marks if they do not have the time to demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and language structure.

The majority of Examiners conducted the examinations well. The best performances were from Centres whose Examiners followed the Role Plays as set out in the booklet, kept to time in the conversation sections, allowed the candidate to present his / her topic before beginning the discussion and asked questions from a range of topic areas in the General Conversation. In particular, good performances needed to include enough questions offering opportunity for the candidate to produce past and future tenses. This year (in comparison with previous years) there were fewer examples of Examiners who seriously disadvantaged their candidates as a result of poor examining. However, there does remain a number of Examiners whose conduct of the examination prevented their candidates from achieving their best, e.g. those who did not carry out the Role Plays as prescribed, those who did not allow the candidate to present the topic for 1 - 2 minutes before asking questions, those who had not thought sufficiently about the type of questions which would be appropriate to ask, and so wasted time and opportunities, those who did not keep to time (this year, the incorrect timings were usually examples of Examiners cutting the conversation sections too short, hence not allowing the candidates long enough to talk), those who talked too much themselves, not giving the candidates enough of a chance, etc. The most frustrating of these were the Examiners who failed to ask any or enough questions to prompt the candidates to use the past or future tense in the General Conversation, and hence caused their candidates' performances to be moderated at no more than 6 on scale **(b)**.

There were a few Centres whose Examiners did not make clear the distinction between the Topic and the General Conversations, though again this was less of a problem this year, as compared with previous years.

General Impression

It was pleasing to see that the impression mark was consistently well used by the majority of Examiners in the larger Centres, although sometimes the award of a particular mark seemed somewhat random, particularly in Centres with only one or two candidates.

Internal Moderation

The number of entries from UK Centres with a large candidature this year meant that internal moderation was a necessity for these Centres, as most have been given permission by the Board to use more than one Examiner to conduct and assess the tests. Internal moderation was however carried out in a totally appropriate – and usually exemplary – way, which was extremely pleasing. Internal assessment was also very sound in most cases, with little or no need for scaling.

GERMAN (Foreign Language)

Paper 0525/42
Continuous Writing

General comments

It should be noted that prior to this session and further to the recommendations received following the examinations in Summer 2010, the 0525/04 mark scheme (which had been updated in September 2009) underwent significant revision. Great efforts were made to render the mark scheme more user-friendly and to bring about consistency in the principles being applied. In particular, changes were made to the way in which Language marks are awarded in both **Questions 1** and **2**, with the aim of ensuring that candidates are credited for both accurate and ambitious use of language.

A very good number of candidates produced accurate German of a high standard. A number of candidates this year produced near flawless German. However, spelling errors affected candidates across the ability range. Some very common words/phrases were incorrectly spelt - e.g. *nächstes Wochenende, am Samstag* etc. Candidates need to take care with the genders of their nouns, especially as an incorrect gender can also affect language ticks for use of associated adjectives, etc. As has been noted in previous years, in order to gain credit for the use of nouns, candidates should be sure to use capital letters on nouns (or to adjust their handwriting style such that small/capital letters are easily distinguishable); similarly, candidates should avoid writing *ich* with a capital 'I'. In order to improve their performance, candidates should ensure that their verbs are in the appropriate tense. The use of a wrong tense can affect both Language ticks and Communication marks. Hence, it is imperative, most notably in **Question 2**, that candidates use tenses accurately and with consistency. Although a good number of candidates attempted complex sentences successfully, candidates need to take greater care with word order rules. Infinitives and past participles should be correctly located and candidates could improve on their use of word order in subordinate clauses and in their application of Time/Manner/Place. In a few instances, the writing of some lower-ability candidates was mixed with English/another language.

This year, there was less of a difference between the quality of German produced for **Question 1** and that produced for **Question 2**. Although some candidates seemed better prepared for the more directed/letter style of **Question 1** and had received less preparation for the more creative/free writing required for **Question 2**, overall it appeared that Centres had responded well to this issue and had worked hard to prepare candidates equally well for each style.

Candidates should be reminded about the importance of clear handwriting: a small minority of candidates produced work which was very difficult to read. Similarly, candidates need to be reminded of the word count: 130-140 words for each question. Examiners do not mark for either Communication or Accuracy after the 140th word. With this in mind, candidates across the ability range should be sure to begin the task as set out in the rubric. Candidates giving too much preamble thereby use up valuable words and may find that they do not gain marks later in the task, if important communication points are made after the word count has passed.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 is a guided writing exercise. Candidates choose between two options, **(a)** and **(b)**.

In this session, **Question 1(b)** proved to be significantly more popular than **Question 1(a)** and was the preferred option for the majority of candidates. It may be that candidates felt more confident about tackling the more informal letter option. It could also be that the language associated with the topic of *ein Hobby* was more accessible than that of *Abfall*.

Question 1(a) *Seit einiger Zeit gibt es in Ihrer Stadt/in Ihrem Dorf immer mehr Abfall auf den Straßen. Sie schreiben einen Brief an Ihre lokale Zeitung.*

Although there were comparatively very few candidates who tackled this question, a number of excellent letters were produced. Many candidates are being well prepared for the skill of writing a formal letter, though to improve they should be reminded about their use of the *Sie* form and, even the most able candidates, should be encouraged to produce an accurate letter opening. E.g. *geehrter/geehrte* was rarely spelt/used correctly. Less able candidates used phrases that were too colloquial for a formal letter (e.g. *Hallo! Wie geht's? Bis bald!* etc.).

A number of candidates answered this question whilst not having understood the word *Abfall*. Some had misunderstood the word to be *Unfall*.

Some candidates had understood the question correctly but strayed from the set tasks to write more generally about environmental issues. It is important to remind candidates that they should not produce pre-learned set essays on a given topic; they need to address the specific tasks, as set out in the rubric.

- Almost all candidates were able to communicate effectively on this first task, though descriptions of their town/village varied hugely from a simple sentence to a detailed paragraph.
- Candidates who had correctly understood the meaning of *Abfall* were able to communicate successfully on this task. However, a significant number of candidates had not understood the word *Abfall* and so had difficulty in explaining what the problem was. Others had misunderstood the problem to be that of an accident (*Unfall*), and so wrote about something entirely different.
- Although a good proportion of candidates expressed their opinions clearly and gave good reasons, others had not understood the word *halten* in this context and so had not given an opinion. Others had assumed it meant *stop* and so talked about putting an end to the problem. Candidates need to be familiar with the phrase: *Sagen Sie, was Sie von der Situation halten, und warum* and should remember to explain why/give reasons for the opinions they express.
- Varied answers were given for what the candidates had done to help solve the problem, and there were some interesting and ambitious accounts. However, a past tense was called for in this task, and in some instances candidates referred to what *they do* rather than what *they had done* to combat the problem.
- The final task proved the most challenging for candidates. Many found it difficult to talk specifically about what should be done in the future. Hence there were a number of vague answers. There were some candidates who had written very good answers to this task but were prevented from gaining the communication point because they had already exceeded the word count of 140 words.

Question 1(b) *Sie haben dieses Jahr ein neues Hobby gefunden. Sie schreiben einen Brief an Ihren deutschen Brieffreund/Ihre deutsche Brieffreundin.*

This letter was the preferred option for most candidates and there were some very impressive answers produced. The more personal aspect appealed to the candidates who chose this question, the subject content was easily accessible and the individual tasks resulted in varied and creative answers. It seems that this was the more accessible of the two letter options and hence some of the less able candidates may have been disadvantaged in choosing **Question 1(a)** over **Question 1(b)**.

- Most candidates were able to convey why they had chosen their hobby. Some told complicated stories, recounting how they had come about doing their particular hobby. A wide variety of hobbies was talked about. Many candidates clearly chose a hobby which they genuinely practised and about which they were able to use specialist vocabulary. However, candidates should be sure that they choose subjects which they are able to spell in German: some hobbies were chosen with incorrect spellings or with words from another language. Less able candidates who chose a simple subject, e.g. *Fußball* tended to do well.
- The second task presented the greatest challenge in this question. Many candidates did not understand the phrase: *zum nächsten Mal* and so wrote generally about when they practise their hobby, rather than referring to a specific future occasion.
- Candidates were generally able to convey any problems relating to their hobby. However, a significant proportion of candidates misread/misunderstood *Nachteile* as *Vorteile*.
- Most candidates completed this task very well, and were able to write in detail about the reactions/opinions of their various family members. A number went on to describe how the family members join in with the hobby, etc.
- Many candidates were successful in asking the penfriend about his/her hobbies. There were some candidates who had written very good answers to this task but were prevented from gaining the communication point because they had already exceeded the word count of 140 words. Less able candidates copied *seine/ihre* from the rubric and so were not able to convey the message. It is important that candidates use the possessive accurately.

Question 2

Als Sie eines Abends von der Schule nach Hause kamen, bemerkten Sie, dass Sie den Schlüssel verloren hatten. Beschreiben Sie:

- *Ihre Reaktion, als Sie den Schlüssel nicht finden konnten*
- *Was danach passierte*

Most candidates made successful attempts at this task and there were some examples of impressive and creative answers produced. The guidance bullet points gave candidates a structure to their writing and helped to prevent candidates from writing off-topic. It is worth noting that, in order to gain all Communication marks, candidates need to ensure that they address both bullet points.

A number of candidates had misunderstood the word *Schlüssel* and went on to talk about having lost an item which they described as being e.g. aus Leder/von Adidas etc. The subsequent narrative usually (though not always) revealed what had been understood by the word *Schlüssel*. In some such cases, the misunderstanding prevented the Communication points from being awarded.

Some candidates were disadvantaged by their lengthy/detailed descriptions of the scene in their narrative before realising they had lost the key. This resulted in Communication points falling after the word count. Candidates are reminded that they should begin their account as the rubric states, in this case at the point of realising they had lost the key.

A number of candidates tried to avoid the use of a past tense, either by using a conversation style, or simply by writing in the present tense. Some candidates were successful in including a limited amount of direct speech. However, this question requires the use of the past tense and hence any attempts to avoid the past tense usually resulted in significantly fewer marks being given. Similarly, candidates who alternated indiscriminately between tenses often did not communicate the messages effectively and this again resulted in fewer marks being awarded. It is important that candidates remember to answer this question in a past tense, and to do so with consistency.

A small minority of candidates used the guidance phrase *Was danach passierte* as an opportunity to describe another event entirely, and this resulted in a few cases of irrelevancy. Candidates should be reminded to keep to the specifics of the initial situation that is given, in this case the loss of their key.

There were many examples of candidates copying spellings incorrectly from the rubric. E.g.: *Schlüssel* was often copied incorrectly. Similarly there were examples of language from the rubric being used without necessary manipulation. For example, the verbs which appeared in the rubric in the imperfect tense, e.g. *kamen/bemerkten* were sometimes adapted incorrectly for use with another pronoun (e.g. *ich kame*).

GERMAN (Foreign Language)

Paper 0525/43
Continuous Writing

General comments

It should be noted that prior to this session and further to the recommendations received following the examinations in Summer 2010, the 0525/04 mark scheme (which had been updated in September 2009) underwent significant revision. Great efforts were made to render the mark scheme more user-friendly and to bring about consistency in the principles being applied. In particular, changes were made to the way in which Language marks are awarded in both **Questions 1** and **2**, with the aim of ensuring that candidates are credited for both accurate and ambitious use of language.

A very good number of candidates produced accurate German of a high standard. A number of candidates produced near flawless German. However, spelling errors affected candidates across the ability range. Some very common words/phrases were incorrectly spelt - e.g. *nächstes Jahr*, etc. Candidates need to take care with the genders of their nouns, especially as an incorrect gender can also affect language ticks for use of associated adjectives, etc. As has been noted in previous years, in order to gain credit for the use of nouns, candidates should be sure to use capital letters on nouns (or to adjust their handwriting style such that small/capital letters are easily distinguishable); similarly, candidates should avoid writing *ich* with a capital 'I'. In order to improve their performance, candidates should be sure that their verbs are in the appropriate tense. The use of a wrong tense can affect both Language ticks and Communication marks. Hence, it is imperative, most notably in **Question 2**, that candidates use tenses accurately and with consistency. Although a good number of candidates attempted complex sentences successfully, candidates need to take greater care with word order rules. Infinitives and past participles should be correctly located and candidates could improve on their use of word order in subordinate clauses and in their application of Time/Manner/Place.

This year, there was less of a difference between the quality of German produced for **Question 1** and that produced for **Question 2**. Although some candidates seemed better prepared for the more directed/letter style of **Question 1** and had received less preparation for the more creative/free writing required for **Question 2**, overall it appeared that Centres had responded well to this issue and had worked hard to prepare candidates equally well for each style.

Candidates should be reminded about the importance of clear handwriting: a small minority of candidates produced work which was very difficult to read. Similarly, candidates need to be reminded of the word count: 130-140 words for each question. Examiners do not mark for either Communication or Language after the 140th word. With this in mind, candidates across the ability range should be sure to begin the task as set out in the rubric. Candidates giving too much preamble thereby use up valuable words and may find that they do not gain marks later in the task, if important communication points are made after the word count has passed.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 is a guided writing exercise. Candidates choose between two options, **(a)** and **(b)**.

In this session, **Question 1(a)** and **Question 1(b)** were chosen by almost equal numbers of candidates, although **Question 1(b)** was marginally more popular. It may be that candidates felt more confident about tackling the more informal letter option. It could also be that the language associated with the topics of *einen Urlaub/eine Familie* was more accessible than that of *ein Sportzentrum*.

Question 1(a) *Ab September soll das Sportzentrum in Ihrer Stadt/in Ihrem Dorf zumachen. Sie sind dagegen und Sie schreiben einen Brief an Ihre lokale Zeitung.*

A number of excellent letters were produced. Candidates are being well prepared for the skill of writing a

formal letter, though to improve they should be reminded about their use of the *Sie* form and, even the most able candidates, should be encouraged to produce an accurate letter opening. E.g. *geehrter/geehrte* was rarely spelt/used correctly. Less able candidates used phrases that were too colloquial for a formal letter (e.g. *Hallo! Wie geht's? Bis bald!* etc.).

A small minority of candidates answered this question whilst not having understood the word *zumachen*. This had an impact on the remainder of their narrative.

A few candidates had understood the question to be about a sports centre but strayed from the set tasks to write more generally about sport. It is important to remind candidates that they should not produce pre-learnt set essays on a given topic; they need to address the specific tasks, as set out in the rubric.

- Almost all candidates were able to communicate effectively on this first task, though descriptions of what can be done in the Sports centre varied significantly from a simple sentence to a detailed paragraph.
- Most candidates were able to talk about the sports they had practised in the Sports centre. However, a past tense was called for in this task, and in some instances candidates referred to activities that *they do* rather than those *they had done*.
- A good number of candidates were able to talk about where they would have to go in the future. Some, however, had misunderstood the rubric and so talked generally about sports which they would do in the future, rather than addressing the specifics of this task.
- Although a good proportion of candidates expressed their opinions well and gave clear reasons, others had not understood the word *halten* in this context and so had not given an opinion. Candidates need to be familiar with the phrase: *Sagen Sie, was Sie von der Situation halten, und warum* and should be prepared to explain why/give reasons for the opinions they express.
- Varied answers were given for how the candidate's friends had reacted to the situation. Some had misunderstood the rubric and talked more generally about friends' sports activities.

Question 1(b) *Sie waren vor kurzem auf Urlaub und haben eine nette Familie kennen gelernt. Sie schreiben einen Brief an Ihren deutschen Brieffreund/Ihre deutsche Brieffreundin.*

The more personal aspect of the informal letter appealed to the candidates who chose this question. The subject content was easily accessible and resulted in some impressive answers being produced.

- Most candidates were able to convey how they had met the family. Some gave very brief explanations, while others told complicated stories, describing how they had encountered/got to know the family.
- The second task presented some challenges: a number of candidates had difficulty in manipulating the phrase *was Ihnen bei dieser Familie gefällt*. Others gave lengthy/detailed descriptions about the various family members and their positive characteristics.
- A good number of candidates conveyed their parents' opinions and gave clear reasons. Others had not understood the word *halten* in this context and so had not given an opinion. Some had expressed their own opinions rather than those of their parents. Candidates need to be familiar with the phrase: *Sagen Sie, was Sie von der Situation halten, und warum* and should be prepared to explain why/give reasons for the opinions they express.
- Many candidates were able to explain when they would like to see the family again. This task demanded the use of the future: when *they will* see the family. Some candidates referred more generally to when *they see* the family.
- Many candidates were successful in asking the penfriend about his/her last holidays. There were some candidates who had written very good answers to this task but were prevented from gaining the communication point because they had already exceeded the word count of 140 words. Less able candidates copied *seine/ihre* from the rubric and so were not able to convey the message. It is important that candidates use the possessive accurately.

Question 2

Als Sie eines Tages mit Ihrem kleinen Bruder in der Stadt waren, konnten Sie ihn plötzlich nicht mehr finden. Beschreiben Sie:

- *Ihre Reaktion, als Ihr Bruder nicht mehr da war*
- *Was danach passierte*

Most candidates made successful attempts at this task and there were many examples of impressive and creative answers produced. The guidance bullet points gave candidates a structure to their writing and helped to prevent candidates from writing off-topic. It is worth noting that, in order to gain all Communication

marks, candidates need to ensure that they address both bullet points.

Some candidates were disadvantaged by their lengthy/detailed descriptions of the scene in their narrative before realising that they could not find their brother. This resulted in Communication points falling after the word count. Candidates are reminded that they should begin their account as the rubric states, in this case at the point of realising they were unable to find their brother.

A number of candidates tried to avoid the use of a past tense, either by using a conversation style, or simply by writing in the present tense. Some candidates were successful in including a limited amount of direct speech within the body of their narrative. However, this question requires the use of the past tense and hence any attempts to avoid the past tense usually resulted in significantly fewer marks being given. Similarly, candidates who alternated indiscriminately between tenses often did not communicate the messages effectively and this again resulted in fewer marks being awarded. It is important that candidates remember to answer this question in a past tense, and to do so with consistency.