



**GCSE**  
**German**

8668/WF Paper 4 Writing Foundation Tier

Report on the Examination

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## General Comments

The vast majority of students who sat this paper were entered at the correct level and almost all were clearly able to access the paper, with most students able to make some attempt at all questions. Where students did not understand an element of the question, some had been well trained to gain some credit by writing a simple ‘... *ist gut*’ response, which often worked in terms of covering the bullet point. Handwriting was occasionally an issue, often because it was so small that it was impossible to read. Whilst examiners will try their best to read a student’s handwriting, credit cannot be given where a word cannot be read.

The mean mark on the paper was just under 31/50 (just under 61% of the total mark).

### Question 1

This question requires students to write four sentences about a photograph, in this case of young people enjoying a film in a cinema, and was easily accessible to most students. Answers centred largely on the people in the photograph, and many students scored full marks by describing the people and location in simple but perfectly acceptable language. *Es gibt sechs Jungen / acht Mädchen / zwölf Personen / ein Kino* all scored 2 marks, and examiners accepted various attempts at plural forms and a variety of spellings, although *Mädchen* caused some problems as some misspellings (eg *Machen*) could not be accepted and *Junge* was also often misspelt. The plural of *Kind* was often not known. Many students picked up on the idea that the film was amusing and were able to express this: *der Film ist lustig, sie finden den Film lustig, sie lachen, sie lächeln* were not uncommon. As always, students are advised against trying to write something they do not know and to keep their answers simple.

Once again, disappointingly, sentences starting with *gibt es* were regularly seen and some students would have doubled their marks had they not started every sentence with that. *Sein* + infinitive (the invented present continuous) was also an issue, but instances of *der ist* were seen far less frequently than in previous years. Some students gave one-word answers where a minimum of two are required to score at least one point, and an attempt at a verb is needed for 2 marks, although on this question there is no requirement for correct verb forms.

Approximately 69% of students scored full marks on this question, which represents a marked improvement on the same question in 2023.

### Question 2

Most students were able to make a reasonable attempt at this question and many produced responses well over 40 words; however, it was clear that *Frühstück* was often not understood and as a result there were some unusual descriptions of breakfast items, which nevertheless were accepted, and a general comment (eg *Frühstück ist gut*) was also credited. Items of food and to a lesser extent drink were clearly well known, but many students did not know *Getränke*, referring instead to *Trinke* or similar. Students also often failed to manipulate verbs, with *ich trinkst gern...* commonly seen.

A few students misunderstood the scene setting rubric and failed to score on three of the bullet points by referring to *mein Freund* throughout, although bullet point 2 (*das Essen in der Schule*) did not require a personal response and could often be credited.

In general, there were some good accounts with supporting opinions often introduced by *weil*, and it was clear that this was a subject that students had much to write about. For a mark in the top band for Quality of language, however, ‘a variety of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures’ is required and answers heavily dependent on *sein* are unlikely to achieve this.

Almost 40% achieved the top mark band for covering all bullet points on Content, scoring either 9 or 10 marks, and around 50% did so for Quality of language. However, it was pleasing to see that a very small proportion of students managed only a minimal response to the bullet points.

### Question 3

Most students were able to make a confident start on the translations and a wide variety of spellings of *Klassenzimmer* was accepted, which ensured many scored on both elements of the first sentence. ‘My brother’ was also successfully translated by most students, but the correct verb form *hat* proved problematic, with *habt* commonly seen. As in previous years, *in der Stadt* was often well known, and many students were able to produce *ich mag...wohne(n)*. At this level examiners accepted an attempt at an infinitive as conveying the message. *Am Samstag* was known by almost all, although occasionally *auf Samstag* was seen, but the rest of this sentence proved problematic despite *kaufen* being accepted for ‘shopping.’ As always, the plural of *Freund* was rarely known, with both masculine and feminine singular forms commonly seen instead. Any attempt at a past tense was credited in the last sentence, but *letztes Jahr* was often the only successful element and not unsurprisingly few knew *Osterferien*. Spelling of *letztes* and *Jahr* was quite poor and although a variety of misspellings was accepted, *Yahr* and *latztes* were not. Whilst both *nach* and *zu Deutschland* were credited, *in* and *auf* were considered to have a different meaning. Surprisingly, few students knew *Deutschland* and even fewer could spell it correctly.

Students need to be aware that the incorrect person of a verb is an error on this question and that different persons of the verb will be tested.

Just under 70% of students scored 3 or above for Conveying key messages and around 60% for Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures. The most frequently achieved mark on both sets of criteria was 3. This is a marked improvement on 2023 and indicates that students found the vocabulary and structures required more accessible in 2024.

### Question 4

The overlap questions proved accessible to most with option 4.2 proving by far the most popular option (almost 90%) at Foundation tier.

On both questions students found the bullet points eliciting a reference to a past or future time frame the most challenging, often responding in the present tense about a past event (with or without a past time marker). Incorrect past participles and missing or incorrect auxiliaries were also common. Formation of the future tense continues to cause problems with *werden* + past participle and the omission of umlauts on *würde* and *könnte* commonly seen, although examiners did accept *werden* with an attempt at an infinitive (*werde...spiele*).

On the overlap questions, students are urged to read the questions carefully before making their choice and to ensure they understand exactly what is required. Understanding question words is often the key to success here. Students are also best advised to restrict their answers to 90 words as requested, and

not to attempt to write about things outside their capabilities in German. Where messages break down, either by use of English or simply German that fails to communicate, marks for Content are unlikely to exceed 4/10 and for marks in the top two bands a minimum of 2 opinions are required. For Quality of language, references to all three-time frames are required for marks in the top band and there must be some attempts to use complex structures.

#### **Question 4.1 (Transport)**

Most students who chose this option were able to respond successfully to the first two bullet points about the best means of transport and how they travel to school, but many made no attempt at bullet points 3 & 4, possibly due to not understanding the question word *wohin*.

Although examiners accepted any appropriate reference to a trip in the past with no requirement for this to be recent for bullet point 3, many students responded in the present tense or were unable to correctly form the past tense. A pure future tense was not required in response to bullet point 4 and many students were able to successfully describe a future trip, although problems with formation of the future tense were at times an issue as outlined above. Some students had clearly not understood *in letzter Zeit* or *in der Zukunft* and responded in the present tense throughout.

Performance on this question was disappointing, with just under very few students attaining top band marks for Content although there were slightly more who achieved top band marks for Quality of language.

#### **Question 4.2 (School)**

Students were clearly well rehearsed in writing about their school and about subjects they like learning and had little difficulty covering the first two bullet points. *Die beste Stunde*, however, on bullet point 3, caused difficulty for many who thought *Stunde* meant student and consequently produced an irrelevant response about themselves or a friend. Others wrote about break, lunch or exams, none of which were relevant. In response to bullet point 4: *was du in der Zukunft lernen möchtest*, students sometimes failed to mention *what* they wanted to learn in the future and therefore failed to score, despite often writing in some detail about future career intentions.

This option was both the more popular and also the more successful choice and produced the highest percentage of students attaining top band marks for Content with just under 10%, and just over 15% achieving marks in the top band for Quality of language.

## **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.