



A-level  
**German**

7662/3 Speaking

Report on the Examination

7662  
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## General

Most students were well prepared for the tests. As in previous years, students entered for the V-option reacted well to a face-to-face conversation with a visiting examiner and seemed to enjoy the opportunity of demonstrating their knowledge and language skills. No problems with arrangements at centres regarding accommodation and providing chaperones were reported.

Examiners thought that, on the whole, the standard of students' performances had improved slightly from last year. For the T-option, the uploading of audio files and of documentation from centres onto the media platforms worked well and the quality of recordings was good. Some centres failed to upload the Candidate Record Form(s) alongside the recordings; chasing these up caused undue delay for marking examiners.

### Teacher-examiner conduct

Once again, students' performances and the resulting marks were influenced by teacher-examiners' conduct. Many teachers conducted the tests very well; they provided opportunities for students to complete the tasks and achieve good scores in all Assessment Objectives. As in previous years, there were however widely observed shortcomings in teacher-conduct which often had a negative impact on marks.

- Many teachers were still too reluctant to follow-up and develop students' responses; instead, they accepted points made without inviting further explanation, clarification, or views. Following-up on students' replies with unpredicted questions or prompts requires candidates to show their ability to react spontaneously and opens access to higher AO1 marks.
- In both parts of the test students were often allowed to deliver lengthy monologues and were not engaged in a genuine conversation. Teachers often accepted statements from the candidates instead of probing for real understanding and evaluation with additional questions.
- Teachers frequently asked a lot of closed questions. Repeated *Denkst du, dass...* or long *oder* questions not only use up valuable time but are also likely to suggest ideas and present vocabulary to candidates.
- Insufficient exploitation of the stimulus card was still evident in many tests. Students are best served to achieve good AO2 marks if they are invited to discuss various aspects of the card content in greater detail and thereby show full understanding of the stimulus material. This cannot be achieved if students are allowed to simply read out information on the card without further discussion. The printed questions must therefore be interspersed and supplemented with more than one additional question and student's responses should be followed up appropriately. As in previous years, a considerable number of teacher-examiners asked the three questions on the card in succession without further exploration of the stimulus material.
- Many teacher-examiners did not steer the wider discussion on the stimulus card sufficiently onto matters relating clearly to the German-speaking world and thereby denied students access to higher AO4 marks. Students should be invited to support factual information with examples and evidence from a German-speaking country; this is especially important for the sub-themes on Cards A-C with their more universal content. Personal or general questions such as, "How many

hours do you spend online?” or ‘What do you think about designer fashion?’ cannot attract AO4 marks.

- In the wider AO4 discussion in Part 1, but also during the IRP discussion, teachers often tended to ask mainly factual questions and did not sufficiently invite students to evaluate facts or to draw personal conclusions all of which is an essential part of the AO4 criteria.

Most teacher-examiners adhered to the prescribed timings. There were a few tests that overran considerably. Marking examiners time the test as a whole and any material delivered after 18 minutes cannot be considered for assessment. For this reason it is also important that teachers keep the transition from the stimulus card discussion to the IRP presentation as brief as possible.

As in previous years, a number of teachers alternated between the *du* and *Sie* address during the test. This is not good practice. Using *du* throughout the test is perfectly acceptable; the questions on the stimulus cards can and should be adapted if the informal address is used.

### Students' performance

**AO1:** The majority of students spoke with good or acceptable fluency. Marks in the two lowest bands were rare. Many candidates demonstrated independence by extending their responses of their own accord, but in many teacher-conducted tests students could have scored more highly if the teacher-examiner had supplied better opportunities for spontaneity and independence.

**AO2:** Overall, candidates showed good understanding of the stimulus content, and many were able to convey the information on the cards in their own words. Highest marks were achieved where students gave additional explanations, evaluations, or views on elements of the stimulus material. In centre-conducted tests, many students were however prevented from being awarded high AO2 marks because teachers did not exploit and discuss the cards in detail. Just one additional question between the printed ones, as heard in many card discussions, was hardly sufficient for a satisfactory exploration of the stimulus card. Candidates' own questions were usually valid. Centres are reminded that students' questions must contain a conjugated verb and that repeats from either a printed question or an earlier question from the teacher cannot be credited; in such cases, marks for AO2 have to be capped at 4 and 3, respectively.

**AO3:** As in previous years, students' grammatical proficiency varied widely, but examiners felt that the overall standard had improved slightly from last year. Very low AO3 rarely had to be awarded as the great majority of students had sufficient knowledge of grammar and vocabulary at their disposal to communicate without ambiguity. Examiners heard some impressive performances where students used a variety of structures and ambitious vocabulary as well as appropriate idioms with confidence and a high degree of accuracy. Sub-ordinate clauses with *dass*, *weil* and *wenn*, relative clauses and infinitive structures were often handled well; correct use of the passive voice was often less successful. Some less able students struggled with accurate word order even in simple sentences and demonstrated shortcomings with verb conjugation and perfect tenses. Some students in the lower range of grammatical ability sometimes delivered highly accurate and sophisticated pre-learnt statements but

struggled when required to answer spontaneously to unexpected questions. Relying to some extent on prepared material is appropriate, but for awarding AO3 marks examiners must take into account a student's ability to form language on the spot. The standard of pronunciation was generally good with some excellent performances. Weaknesses with the production of German *ch*, *z* and *v* sounds occurred as well as *Umlaut* errors. Fewer anglicised pronunciations with words like *AfD*, *DDR*, *Bayern* etc were observed.

Common grammar errors included:

- modal verb forms (*die Leute kann*)
- wrong use of *konnte / könnte*
- preposition 'ago' (*drei Jahre vor / drei Jahre früher*)
- wrong use of *wenn / als*
- word order after *und / aber / auch* (*aber denke ich, es auch hilft*)
- missing adjective endings
- possessive pronoun *sein / ihr*
- *sein / sind* confusion (*das wird nicht gut..... sind*)
- Perfect Tense *hast du besuchen*

Common vocabulary errors included:

- *kennen / wissen*
- *wird / werden / bekommen*
- use of *nur* as an adjective: *die nur Partei*
- *jeder / jemand*
- *Interesse / interessant / interessiert (ich bin interessant)*
- *im Ost / im West*
- *einzig / einige / eigene*
- *spenden / verbringen / ausgeben*
- *töten / sterben*
- *erlauben* for *dürfen*
- *überall* used for 'overall'
- *also* for *auch*
- *ich stimme mit das* for *ich stimme (dem) zu*

**AO4 (Stimulus Cards):** Students had generally good knowledge of and insight into the themes and sub-themes they had studied. The majority of students chose cards which dealt with Year 13 themes. Examiners reported that although many candidates had solid factual knowledge, they often could not back this up with suitable examples from the German-speaking world.

Discussion of stimulus cards

All cards were accessible in terms of content and vocabulary. As mentioned above, candidates in centre-conducted tests were often allowed to deliver monologues about the material; many students covered the entire content of the card in their opening response, regardless of whether this was wholly relevant to the first question. The best performances happened when students used their own words when conveying the card content and added some comments, views, or interpretation. In centre-conducted

tests some students read out verbatim each element on the card (sometimes just introduced with *es gibt*) with little or no attempt to paraphrase bulleted information in whole sentences. When teacher-examiners then failed to pick up on points made by the candidate and to explore aspects of the card higher AO2 marks could not be awarded. In a good number of teacher-conducted tests the wider discussion on the sub-theme following the third printed question took up by far the largest part of the allocated time and some teacher-examiners ran out of meaningful AO4 related questions.

### **Card A: Grünes Licht für die Homo-Ehe in der Schweiz**

Due to the prescribed sequence this card was not often discussed. Students who chose it usually did well and knew a lot about the issue of same-sex marriages. The best performances included comments on the late legislation in Switzerland compared to Germany and Austria and the importance of the right to adopt children. Some students read out the points about the new law verbatim and unfortunately, teacher-examiners rarely pursued some of these. In the wider discussion, virtually all students knew about the legalising of *Homo-Ehe* in Germany and different types of families, but the discussion often remained factual rather than evaluative. Some candidates mentioned *Mehrgenerationenhäuser*, but other knowledge about *Familienpolitik* in German-speaking countries eg *Kindergeld*, *Elternzeit*, *Kita- und Kindergartenplätze* was very limited.

Suitable points for discussion of the stimulus card included: why children from *Regenbogenfamilien* may need protection; the meaning of *Mitmutterschaft*; reasons for the delayed introduction of same-sex marriage in Switzerland; comment on the quote under the second photo.

### **Card B: Mehr Respekt im digitalen Raum**

As this card appeared very low down in the sequencing grid it was hardly ever discussed. It is, therefore, not possible to give relevant feedback on it.

### **Card C: Vielfalt in der Welt der Mode**

This was a relatively popular card. Many candidates realised the issue of diversity within the fashion industry and commented on it with evidence from the card. Students frequently used *Modelle* for *Models*. In teacher-conducted tests, the quotations could have been exploited to a much greater extent. The third question and ensuing wider discussion often proved problematic since many candidates had little concrete knowledge about the sub-theme that was specific to the German-speaking world. Teachers often resorted to asking personal questions about the student's fashion and/or shopping preferences and sometimes deviated into the world of music and television.

Suitable points for discussion of the stimulus card included: why diversity and inclusion in the world of fashion is important; the intention behind employing older and plus size models; why black models may still not be fully accepted by some; whether fashion shows and magazines with a diverse range of models might be popular among shoppers.

**Card D: Weihnachten ohne Einsamkeit**

The card was accessible to most candidates who chose it although not everybody clearly explained the main purpose of the initiative ie combating loneliness at Christmas. The bulleted information was often read out without further comment and appreciation. Unfortunately, not many teacher-examiners made use of the opportunities for further discussion that the card contained, for instance exploring the age group mentioned or the quotations on the card. Most students found the initiative a good idea but often without giving relevant reasons. Answers to the third question about other *Weihnachtstraditionen* were in most cases limited to *Weihnachtsmärkte*, very few students mentioned other traditions such as *Adventskranz*, *Nikolaus* or *Heiliger Abend*. Some thought that *Bleigießen* was a Christmas custom. Good knowledge about other festivals from the German-speaking world was evident among most students. Many were, however, allowed by teachers to give merely narrative descriptions rather than evaluations or views.

Suitable points for discussion of the stimulus card included: reasons why some people feel lonely at Christmas; the importance of the service being free of charge; whether contact via social media is appropriate for everybody; the reasons why a prior meeting is recommended; comments on the photographs.

**Card E: Ein Muss für Kunstliebhaber**

This card produced widely differing performances. Many students simply read out the information below the three photographs and the bullet points in the left box without an attempt at summarising or evaluating. A surprising number of candidates missed the fact that the three *Pinakotheken* were in close vicinity to each other and why this is may be an advantage. Many students commented on the free admission charges on Sundays and for young persons, but very few appreciated the fact that paintings are being restored or expressed a view on Ulrike Fischer's statement. Knowledge of the sub-theme was also varied. Students usually named one or two artists or artistic movements from the German-speaking world; *Der blaue Reiter* and *Die Brücke* were mentioned most frequently. However, this knowledge was rarely supported by naming, describing, and evaluating certain works of art and teachers often failed to elicit such evidence.

Suitable points for discussion of the stimulus card included: whether separating different epochs of art across three different galleries is a good idea; the meaning of '*kunsthistorische Forschung*'; the benefits of free admission for everybody on Sundays and generally for young people; why restoration of paintings is necessary.

**Card F: Ein Schloss für die Kulturen der Welt**

This card was handled with varying success. Surprisingly, many students did not seem to understand the special architecture of the *Forum* ie the combination of the old rebuilt palace with a modern façade facing the river. Only very few referred to the destruction of the *Stadtschloss* in the war. Although some candidates mentioned the value of learning about different cultures of the world, the general purpose of

the *Humboldt-Forum* was often not explained well and detailed discussions about what it offers, and its aims did often not take place. Many teachers quickly went on to the third question about cultural life in Berlin about which most students had good knowledge. Some students interpreted *vielfältig* in the question as referring exclusively to the mix of different ethnic communities in the capital. As with other stimulus cards, many teacher-examiners did not probe further into facts about Berlin to elicit evaluation and views.

Suitable points for discussion of the stimulus card included: the unusual architecture of the *Humboldt-Forum*; what the *Berlin-Global* exhibition could contain; the importance of learning about other cultures and exchanging ideas; the advantage of the *Innenhof* being open for all.

### **Card G: Zuwanderung nach Österreich**

A popular card which was generally handed well. Not all candidates understood the main message of the card ie that this was about regulating the immigration of qualified workers into Austria. Many thought that the *Rot-Weiß-Rot-Karte* applied to refugees and asylum seekers and, therefore, often were of the opinion that the *Kriterien zur Punkteberechnung* were very unfair. The purpose of the *Rot-Weiß-Rot-Karte-plus* was also not always understood. Some students realised that the colours of the Austrian flag were used for the name of this card; when asked about *Mangelberufe* many students could give examples, usually helped by the photographs. The fact that the card was only valid for 24 months was frequently criticised. This card provided a good number of points for discussion, but many teacher-examiners made too little use of them. Students' knowledge about the wider sub-theme was good; many showed awareness of issues relating to immigration into German-speaking countries. Teacher-examiners could often have invited students to add evaluation and views to their factual knowledge.

Suitable points for discussion of the stimulus card included: why the immigrants need to have sufficient income; the importance the *Rot-Weiß-Rot-Karte-plus*; which of the listed criteria may be most important for employers; reasons for the insufficient numbers of *Fachkräfte* in some areas.

### **Card H: Vorbilder für Solidarität und Menschlichkeit**

As this card appeared very low down in the sequencing grid it was hardly ever discussed. It is, therefore, not possible to give relevant feedback on it.

### **Card I: Wege aus dem Rechtsextremismus**

This was a fairly popular card, but some aspects of it were misunderstood by a number of students. Although the general idea of combating far right views was clear to all candidates who chose the card the main focus of the card ie helping people leave the right-wing scene was grasped only by the best candidates; many thought that *U-Turn* was a general project against racism and struggled when the title *U-Turn* was pointed out by examiners. Likewise, the reasons for developing radical attitudes were often not fully comprehended. In teacher-conducted tests these reasons as well as the aims of the project as presented on the card generally remained under-exploited. For question 3 and in the ensuing wider

discussion all students had something to say about racism in the German-speaking world. Highest AO4 marks were achieved when students did not only present facts, for instance about the popularity of the AfD or about racist or xenophobic attacks, but also evaluated possible causes for the rise of far-right tendencies, reactions from citizens and politicians or some measures and initiatives against it.

Suitable points for discussion of the stimulus card included: what kinds of prejudices could exist in families/among friends; what *demokratische Werte* are; why the protection of young people is especially important; how helpful advice for parents and teachers can be; why the project is called *U-turn*.

### **Card J: Studieren in Europa**

Due to the prescribed sequencing this card was one of the most frequently discussed. Most students had good understanding of what *Erasmus* is and its benefits for students. In many teacher-conducted tests students read out everything in their first answer without adding anything of their own and without teachers intervening to pursue and clarify some points further. Not all students seemed to understand the option of doing work experience instead of university studies; with the exception of *Verbesserung der Sprachkenntnisse*, some could not clearly explain the *Inhalte und Ziele*. The wider discussion about the sub-theme was usually done well as most students knew something about the role Germany plays within the EU and could often back up their points with facts and figures. Teachers needed to be careful not to steer the conversation into a general discourse about the EU but stay within German-related matters.

Suitable points for discussion of the stimulus card included: who may pay for the financial support that *Erasmus* students receive; opinions about the ideal length of stay abroad; the meaning of *Erweiterung des Horizonts*; why *Erasmus* students can benefit for their future career prospects.

### **Card K: Wahlrecht ab 16?**

The card was generally well understood and offered a good basis for discussion. Rather than giving a relevant and succinct answer to the first question many students read out everything on the card. Too few teacher-examiners then entered into a detailed discussion about the arguments against a lower voting age. It was difficult for some students to paraphrase the three opinions in the speech bubbles and to use them as arguments for giving 16-year-olds the right to vote. Students' knowledge about political engagement among young people in German-speaking countries was fairly limited, many could only name 'Fridays for Future.' On the other hand, a few students talked about youth sections in the main political parties or the institution of *Jugend-* or *Schülerparlamente* as evidence of political activities. Many teacher-examiners asked what should be done to increase political awareness rather than what is actually done in Germany, Austria, or Switzerland. Only the latter was likely to attract AO4 marks.

Suitable points for discussion of the stimulus card included: what young people's *Interessen und Probleme* are; the meaning of *mit der Demokratie identifizieren*; reasons for tending towards more extreme positions; why it is difficult nowadays to separate facts from fake news.

### Card L: Von Ost nach West – und zurück

A fairly popular card which was handled with mixed success. Not all candidates had fully grasped the essence of the card ie the change after 2017 in the flow of Germans moving between the two parts of the united country. Many candidates only focused on the wave of migration from East to West after the *Wende*. Students usually explained the limited job opportunities and lower incomes in the East as the main reasons, but they often struggled to talk lucidly about the reasons for the reversal of the movement between East and West. Teachers were often reluctant to explore these issues sufficiently. Most candidates had quite a lot to say about the sub-theme but tended to present facts rather than evaluation and conclusions. Information about life in the *DDR* before reunification generally seemed to exceed knowledge about life in the united Germany after 1990.

Suitable points for discussion of the stimulus card included: the consequences for East Germany of many young and highly qualified people migrating to the West; reasons for better opportunities in major East German cities; possible reasons for East German universities being so popular now.

### Individual Research Project

As in previous years, the range of topics was very wide, and the personal interest shown by the vast majority of students in their chosen topic was evident. Most IRP titles were adequately phrased; they indicated the breadth and the main focus of a critical and analytical research. Examiners also reported on titles that were too broad in scope and carried the risk of a superficial rather than in-depth and critical discussion. Centres are again reminded that guidance for choosing topics and phrasing IRP titles is available on the AQA website and can also be sought from one of the IRP advisers.

All students must complete and submit a signed Candidate Record Form. This can be either in typed or in handwritten format. It is helpful for examiners if the content and scope of the student's research is clearly set out with up to eight sub-headings. If sub-headings exclusively contain website addresses, they are not useful for examiners. It is also important that handwritten CRFs are easily legible. A few IRP titles and sub-headings were still given in German rather than in English.

Popular IRP topic areas included:

- German football / the *Bundesliga*
- immigration / integration of immigrants
- the German car industry
- energy policy in Germany
- rise of populism / far right groups in Germany / the AfD.
- German reunification and its aftermaths / continuing East-West divide
- Grimms' Fairy Tales
- aspects of the Nazi period eg propaganda, science and technology, the arts.

Unusual topics included:

- graffiti in Switzerland
- hiking as a popular sport in Germany
- the German Fire Brigade
- the company Lindt
- Borussia Dortmund's youth programme
- *Elterngeld* in Germany
- *Anders als die Andern* (German film)

### Presentation

Many students delivered a well-structured presentation that clearly outlined the main findings along with brief explanations, evaluations, or personal comments. Examiners were often able to award the highest mark for excellent introductions into a topic. Most presentations adhered to the prescribed time of 2 minutes maximum; there were, however, a good number of rather short presentations ie 1 ½ minutes or less. Candidates should be encouraged to use the time available for their speech and to deliver it at a normal speed. A few students spoke so quickly that the content of the presentation was hard to follow and understand clearly.

When planning their presentation students should bear in mind:

- to avoid lengthy factual background eg historical, biographical before talking about the actual remit in the title
- to ensure that the presentation is fully relevant the IRP title
- to avoid talking at length about what aspects they researched and now intend to talk about
- not to take up too much time for explaining why the topic was chosen
- not to list many source materials used for the research.

### Discussion

Most students had done thorough research and could demonstrate good, often excellent knowledge as well as showing a good degree of critical insight into their topic. They were able to interpret and evaluate facts and events and expressed well founded personal opinions. It is important for achieving higher AO4 marks that views and conclusions are backed up by relevant evidence from findings. Good conduct of examining helped students in this, and many teacher-examiners followed good examining technique. However, marking examiners listened to many IRP discussions where shortcomings in the conduct prevented students from reaching the higher AO1 and AO4 bands. This happened when

- the discussion consisted of a series of largely pre-learnt and uninterrupted 'mini-presentations' from students following each question from the teacher. Students who were not involved in a genuine and often spontaneous discussion lost out on AO1 marks.

- the teacher appeared to operate from a pre-set list of questions and did not react to student's responses in order to develop points and ask for clarification and justification. It cannot be stressed enough that candidates must not have prior knowledge of the examiner's questions.
- the teacher-examiner covered each sub-heading with just one question and then went on to the next sub-heading on the CRF. This again prevented a deeper and spontaneous discussion of aspects of the topic and did not provide elements of unpredictability. AO1 and AO4 were frequently affected. Centres are reminded that when the student has written a full list of subheadings it is neither necessary nor usually advisable to cover all of these. An in-depth discussion of fewer sub-headings is preferable to superficial coverage of many aspects.

Aspects of good conduct of the IRP discussion include:

- going beyond factual information; regularly asking for evaluation, views, and analysis
- following up on the student's answers
- keeping the discussion relevant to the topic title
- avoiding discourses about the student's motives for choosing the topic
- avoiding very general questions like *Was können Sie mir über .....erzählen?*
- having a pool of appropriate 'starter-questions' for aspects of the topic in order to avoid awkward pauses while searching for a question
- asking brief and clear questions.

As in previous years, student's hard work is to be commended and the enthusiasm for the German language that was shown by the majority of candidates was appreciated by examiners of both the visiting and the centre-conducting option.

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

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