

FOREIGN LANGUAGE GERMAN

Paper 0525/11

Listening

General comments

It is pleasing to note that the majority of candidates demonstrated a good understanding of spoken German. As the quality of a candidate's written German is not being assessed in this examination, he or she merely needs to communicate the answer to a sympathetic native speaker / Examiner in the target language to gain the mark. It is important, nevertheless, in the written answers to address the question being asked, so it is essential that all candidates are familiar with the question words in order to select the correct information for their answer. The answers required are mostly very short, so it seems reasonable to ask that candidates make an effort to write legibly and, in the tasks where they are required to tick boxes, to make their intentions clear.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Task 1 Questions 1 - 8

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

Most candidates performed well in this introductory series of questions. A few candidates were not familiar with *Erdbeeren* in **Question 7** and opted for the pears. *Teller* in **Question 8** was also identified as the knife by some candidates.

Task 2 Questions 9 - 16

This task concerned publicity material for a department store. The multiple choice answers with visual options proved to be accessible to almost all the candidates, apart from **Question 10** where many candidates interpreted *Erdgeschoss* as the basement (**A**) rather than the correct answer (**B**) the ground floor. The number 50 in **Question 9** was usually successfully communicated but candidates had some difficulties picking out that the clothing on the first floor was for *Damen* in **Question 11**. *Frauen* was an acceptable answer but not *Damen an*, as it did not adequately demonstrate comprehension. Most candidates who understood *gratis* found an acceptable way of expressing 'nothing'.

Section 2

All material in this section is also drawn from the Defined Content vocabulary.

Task 1 Question 17

Candidates were required to identify 6 correct statements from a choice of 12 by listening to four interviews with young people about friends and friendship. Many candidates (but by no means all) identified all 6 statements correctly. There was no distinct pattern to the incorrect answers. A very few candidates inserted either too many or too few ticks which meant that they could not obtain full marks. The rubric suggests ticks but crosses are equally acceptable to indicate the answers, as long as the candidates make it very clear which boxes are their final choice.

Task 2 First Part Questions 18 – 22

In the first part of this task most candidates are now clear that they merely have to replace the word that has been crossed out with the correct word or phrase that they hear. The date caused very few problems to

candidates, far fewer than the colour *hellblau* in **Question 19**. *Schreibtisch* **Question 20** was generally well done and generally spelt recognisably. **Question 21** and **Question 22** were well done.

Task 2 Second Part Questions 23 – 27

Candidates clearly understood the gist of this interview with Lutz about his memories of his first day at School. **Question 23** and **Question 24** were well answered but in **Question 25** a number of candidates described the teacher rather than giving his reaction to her, which lost them the mark. In **Question 26** *rote Hose* was sufficient to gain the mark which was within the scope of most candidates. There appeared to be some candidates who interpreted *wo* in **Question 27** as ‘who’ and gave incorrect information.

Section 3

The vocabulary for the tasks in **Section 3** is drawn from the Defined Content List but the content of the Listening texts may include words that do not appear there.

Task 1 Questions 28 – 33

Although it is a multiple choice task, the complexity of the text in this last section combined with the four option format makes it challenging. The candidate is required to listen for details which are often quite subtle so it was pleasing that many candidates scored well. This year’s interview was with an elderly mountaineer about his recent mishap in the mountains. There was no distinct pattern to the incorrect answers but candidates had the least difficulty with **Question 29** and the most with **Question 32** about the consequences of his accident.

Task 2 Questions 34 – 43

This final interview was with a boy living on an isolated farm in the Black Forest with very few modern conveniences. At this stage in the examination not only is the text challenging but the questions are more searching and require detailed understanding to answer satisfactorily. Nevertheless, it is worth reminding those candidates who feel that **Section 3** is beyond their competence and who do not even attempt to provide answers that they should try to respond, as a blank line will certainly score no marks and there are no minus marks for incorrect answers. Almost all candidates picked up a couple of marks in this task by answering **Question 37** and **Question 42** correctly.

Only the most able candidates were able to answer **Question 34** sufficiently clearly to gain a mark. Although it was possible to summarise and write *Ihr Leben ist altmodisch*, few did.

Question 35 was answered competently by many candidates. For those who were familiar with *Holz* as an item of vocabulary **Question 36** was fairly straightforward. In **Question 38** many candidates listed the foodstuffs mentioned rather than answering the question. **Question 39** was generally answered well but in **Question 40** some candidates wrote only *viel Freiheit* which did not provide a clear answer to the question. There was also some confusion between *Freiheit* and *Freizeit*. In **Question 41** most understood that Anton’s sister was not enthusiastic about life on the farm and managed to convey this. Some candidates seemed to have difficulties with *Wer?* in **Question 43** and failed to give *besuchen* a subject.

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FOREIGN LANGUAGE GERMAN

Paper 0525/21
Reading and Directed Writing

Key message:

In **Section 1** the candidate needs to understand simple messages, signs, advertisements and a short text and to write a short message all dealing with everyday life.

In **Section 2** Exercise 1 the candidate is required to locate information in a straightforward passage.

Text rephrasing is not required, but the answer should be unambiguous. In Exercise 2 of this Section the candidate is asked to write a short guided essay on a topic relating to his/her everyday life.

In **Section 3** the candidate is 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. Exercise 1 requires candidates to decide whether statements are true or false and to justify the false ones. In **Section 2** the candidate is required to answer open questions.

General observations:

The Paper was tackled well by the greater majority of candidates. One or two less able candidates omitted **Question 16** and also **Question 27**, the more challenging writing task. In some cases poor handwriting and crossing out made the tasks difficult to read and candidates should be aware that this may be to their disadvantage.

Question 1-5

No problems were encountered here.

Question 6-10

Question 10 was answered incorrectly suggesting that *Kuchen* and/or *Konditorei* were unknown.

Question 11-15

This third exercise posed no problems.

Question 16

Full marks were scored for both communication and language. Candidates do not always seem aware that additional material cannot be credited, and that supplying this is not a good use of time.

Question 17-26

This first element of the **Zweiter Teil** was tackled very well.

Question 27

The writing task was tackled well: all aspects of the task were covered to form a relevant, coherent piece of German. The language was very accurate.

Question 28-33

This Exercise proved to be slightly challenging.

Question 28 was deemed to be true, presumably because the statement had not been read correctly or because the distinction between 'cinema' and 'film studio' had not been made.

Question 33 was considered false, despite the text's stating that Emma did know what she wanted to do in the future.

The incorrect justification **Question 31** suggested that *Mitglieder* was not understood.

Question 34-42

Responses to this Section were clear and precise and the no Question was problematic.

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Paper 0525/22

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In a significant number of cases poor handwriting and crossing out made the tasks difficult to read and candidates should be aware that this may be to their disadvantage.

Questions 1-5

Most candidates performed very well on these questions; those who did not lacked perhaps the necessary vocabulary of simple items. In particular, some did not understand *Kartoffeln* in **Question 5** and chose shops other than green grocer's.

Questions 6-10

Most candidates had no problems at all with this second exercise, and most scored full marks.

Questions 11-15

This third exercise generally did not cause many problems to candidates. Most scored full marks on this. **Question 11** occasionally had **(b)** as the answer, suggesting possible misunderstanding of the second line of the text: *Alle meine Freunde machen eine Party, wenn sie Geburtstag haben*. **Question 13** often had **(a)** as the answer, possibly with candidates automatically connecting buying with anything to do with birthday.

Question 16

Although many candidates scored 3/3 and 2/2 there was frequent failure to use prepositions correctly (*im/ins; nach/zu*), or the right tense and even simple words like *Schwimmbad*.

Some did not appear to have read the rubric closely enough; too often these particular candidates wrote the whole task in the past tense, thereby reducing their language score. A few framed the message as an invitation. A few candidates use the *Sie*-form, which penalised them.

There were some incorrect renderings of the time including *sieben Uhr*, none of which could be accepted.

Some candidates did not appear to be aware that there is no credit for extra detail in this exercise and wrote a great deal of information which is irrelevant to the message.

Zweiter Teil was typically approached in a very straightforward manner.

Questions 17-25

Questions 17-20 was answered appropriately by almost all candidates.

Question 21 was answered appropriately by most. A few weaker candidates gave chocolate ice cream, the sister's preference, as the answer.

Questions 22 and 23 proved to be straightforward for the majority of candidates.

Question 24 proved to be problematic for a significant number of candidates.

Candidates failed to spot the small 'm' at the beginning of *morgen*, and so wanted to add a preposition in their answer, thereby invalidating it. Others homed in to the word *Woche* and either lifted *Sie ist für eine Woche bei uns zu Besuch* or simply wrote (*in*) *eine Woche*.

For **Question 25** it is essential for candidates not to abbreviate the answer so much that it is no longer clear who is doing the action. These answers needed a *sie* or *Seine Tante* at the start.

Question 26

The topic seemed to enthuse candidates to write at length. From the scripts, it seems clear that the popularity of television is waning in favour of other media or activities. Those who fulfilled this part of the question – surprisingly, some candidates ignored it completely – supported their views well and with a good range of vocabulary and structures. All candidates attempted the second part, and the Examiners gain an insight as to what is popular in the cinemas shortly before the exam. It is important for candidates to make use of language given to them in the rubric (here *gesehen* and *gefallen*).

For task (c) some candidates made a very good effort to describe the content of the film/programme, mostly giving opinions about why the film was their favourite, a frequent reason being that their favourite actor, generally written *Lieblingsactor*, was in it.

Most candidates scored 4 or 5/5 for the language side of this exercise. The overabundance of English words, sometimes Germanified (e.g. *gewatched*), sometimes not, resulted in candidates not reaching those top marks. Some candidates seemed to have been trained to write in paragraphs to ensure that they wrote something on each section.

Some candidates wasted time and effort introducing themselves and saying how old they were. Candidates are advised to restrict their writing to what is required by the rubric.

The story appeared accessible to virtually all candidates. Again, the majority scored full marks on the true or false section. There were a few candidates who ticked only one box for every answer (*JA* in almost all cases for these candidates).

Questions 27-33

Answers to **Question 31** were often incorrect as candidates failed to link *am nächsten Tag* with *es war Samstag*.

On the corrections of wrong answers **Question 27** proved most difficult of the three, as a significant number of candidates thought that the family was playing ice hockey rather than watching a match i.e. failing to spot the difference between *Eishockeyspiel* and *Eishockey spielen*. Closer reading of text and Questions is recommended.

On **Question 29**, those who seemed to find it hard looked at the weather angle (irrelevant for the answer) rather than the reason why the ski lift did not work.

Question 30 allowed for several possible answers and most candidates who gave an answer for this used one of the correct options.

Although there were many good responses to **Questions** in this Exercise, some candidates were advised to look more closely at the interrogative, so that they provide the information requested. Candidates are reminded that at this stage of the Examination, indiscriminate lifting is unlikely to demonstrate the required indication of genuine comprehension.

Questions 34-42

Question 34

A *warum* question usually requires an answer beginning with *weil* rather than *als*, and the appropriate word order. Some candidates either just gave the first half of the first sentence, or gave it, with *als*. Both were wrong.

Question 35

Many candidates DID NOT read the question carefully; they failed to spot *NACH dem Studium*, and just gave *er hat Medizin studiert*. Those who did spot this needed to use the past tense of something that Peter had done; (*Er wollte*) *etwas von der Welt sehen* did not convey that.

Question 36

Many candidates found it difficult to express themselves accurately enough, or failed to understand what *wovon* meant, thinking it meant *wie lange*.

Question 37

Many candidates scored the mark here, but usually those who did not, did not give enough information, e.g. just *Länder* was not enough.

Question 38

Most candidates knew where to find the information and lifted it directly from the text. Lifting from the text can have its pitfalls, if the candidate does not know when to stop. Judicious lifting is acceptable, but many added in *stimmt aber nicht*, which invalidated the answer.

Question 39

This was done generally successfully by the majority of candidates, only a few forgetting to use the comparison between Peter and other candidates for the job.

Question 40

Most candidates scored full marks here but very few candidates could spell *spricht* correctly.

Question 41

Candidates often overcomplicated their answer to this straightforward Question lifted from the text, by including in it *vor allem* which meant that the answer did not actually answer the Question and could not be credited.

Question 42

As with the previous Question this was an easy end to the exam, but extraneous material or starting the answer with *um sich...* without an infinitive ending meant that some responses could not be credited.

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Candidates often overcomplicated their answer to this straightforward Question lifted from the text, by including in it *vor allem* which meant that the answer did not actually answer the Question and could not be credited.

Question 42

As with the previous Question this was an easy end to the exam, but extraneous material or starting the answer with *um sich...* without an infinitive ending meant that some responses could not be credited.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE GERMAN

Paper 0525/03

Speaking

General Comments

These comments are to be read in conjunction with the **Teachers' Notes** for 1 March – April 2014.

The excellent performance of many candidates this year showed that they had thoroughly prepared themselves for the examination and were able to score marks in the high bands. The general standard was similar to previous years. Moderators listened to a wide range of performances but they gained a favourable impression of the majority of candidates.

A high number of centres are fully conversant with the demands of the Speaking Test and must be congratulated on their excellent administration and accurate assessment. However, there are still some centres that do not seem to have taken on board advice offered in previous reports. Examiners in a few centres had not prepared themselves carefully for the Role Play situations, which sometimes led to candidates being disadvantaged and not being given the opportunity to score marks for a task. It is vital that Examiners keep to the prompts given in the role plays. They must not miss out tasks or create additional ones. It is also essential that Examiners prepare well for the Topic and General Conversation sections of the test by thinking about appropriate questions prior to the examination. Some Examiners did not ask relevant questions which allow the candidates to produce well-developed answers showing they can competently handle a variety of complex structures and use varied vocabulary. As is explained on pages 9 and 10 of the Teachers' Notes, Examiners must ensure that they ask questions in BOTH conversation sections, which give candidates a chance to show that they can use both past and future tenses accurately. Otherwise a candidate cannot be awarded a mark of above 6 on scale (b) linguistic content. Some Examiners awarded candidates marks in the higher bands, even though they have not managed to produce any correct past and future tenses.

Most Centres adhered to the stipulated timings. In the interest of fairness to the candidates, it is important in the conversation sections to keep to the timings as set out in the Teachers' Notes. A candidate, whose Topic or General Conversation is significantly curtailed by the Examiner, cannot be awarded full marks, if he/she does not have time to demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and language structure. Even though the Topic Conversation and General Conversation are assessed separately, some Examiners do not make a distinction between the two conversations. Instead, it is one lengthy conversation which makes it difficult to award marks appropriately for the two different conversations.

Most centres forwarded a well-chosen sample (outlined on pages 3 and 4 of the Teachers' Notes) on CDs with recorded files. There were only a few schools/colleges who still used cassettes this year and centres are encouraged to use CDs for all future examinations. The recording quality was generally very good but occasionally there was excessive traffic noise as well as squeaking doors or other extraneous noises. There were also quite a lot of examples of the teacher being loud and clear but the candidate very faint. Please ensure that the microphone is directed to the candidate. Where poor recordings/recording conditions prevent the Moderator from hearing what the candidate says, it can affect his/her mark.

Centres are reminded that MS1 copies, Working Mark sheets and the Cover Sheet should be sent with the recordings. Several centres did not complete their MS1 forms fully; the lozenges were usually correctly completed but the column for confirmation of the marks in numerals was left empty. A few larger centres sent the whole set of recordings rather than the sample, as requested on pages 3 and 4. Most centres, which had requested permission from the Board to use more than one Examiner to conduct/assess the Speaking exam, submitted a very detailed explanation of how they carried out Internal Moderation. In the case of some centres, however, that had used more than one Examiner, permission had not been requested and it was unclear whether or not internal moderation had been carried out. Guidelines for centres that need to undertake internal standardization/moderation are available from Cambridge. Furthermore, clerical errors involving incorrect additions on the Working Mark Sheet, occurred too frequently this session. By signing their cover sheet, centres are confirming that all the additions at the centre have been checked.

Assessment was generally consistent and the order of merit in the centre was correct. If it was appropriate to make adjustments, these tended to be due to inadequate completion of the Role Play or an absence of both past and future tenses in each of the conversations.

Most teachers conducted the Speaking exams well, following good practice by keeping to the prompts given in the Role Plays, allowing the candidate to speak for at least a minute on their chosen topic in the Topic Presentation before asking questions and covering two or three different topic areas in the General Conversation. Those Examiners who do not seem to carefully prepare for the exam and do not closely follow the instructions in the Teachers' notes can prevent their candidates from achieving their true potential.

Comments on Specific Questions

Role Plays

The majority of candidates were able to successfully handle the tasks in the Role Plays.

Most Examiners had clearly prepared the Role Plays extremely well and prompted candidates to attempt tasks again, if their responses were ambiguous or if they omitted part of the task. It is pleasing that this year there were fewer Examiners who created additional tasks, which can confuse candidates. However, some Examiners did not adhere to the rubrics/printed stimuli, still missed out whole tasks or did not insist on candidates completing both elements of a task. If the candidate is clearly struggling with a task, it can help him/her considerably if Role Play questions are rephrased.

Some Centres marked the Role Plays too leniently. Candidates can only be awarded 3 marks for a correct and appropriate answer, if any errors are only minor. Candidates are not required to use full sentences but if a verb is used, it must be correct for 3 marks. When the answer is clear but it contains a major error, candidates can be awarded 2 marks. If an inappropriate register is used the maximum mark is 2, but the candidates are only penalised once in the whole Role Play. When the answer is ambiguous or only addresses part of the task, 1 mark should be awarded. Particularly in Role Play B many candidates at moderation had their mark reduced to 1 because they did not give a reaction. Examiners must also be wary of feeding tested vocabulary to the candidates by offering them a choice of options, as the word cannot be credited, if they merely repeat one of these.

Role Plays A

Page 15, A1, 2, 3

Most candidates performed well as the situation was quite straightforward. There were some errors of pronunciation with *Konzert* and *Theater* and a number of candidates did not seem to notice (or understand) the word *ob* and asked: *Wo kann man am Theater parken?*

Page 16, A4, 5, 6

This Role Play was generally well answered, although quite a few candidates confused types of fruit with types of vegetables. Some candidates also lost marks by incorrectly forming the final question or by simply repeating the word order on the Role Play card.

Page 17, A7, 8, 9

The information required was also straightforward. The pronunciation of *Frühstückskarte* was not always totally clear.

Role Plays B

These tasks require the ability to use a range of time frames, to give explanations and justifications, and a **reaction**. It is assumed that candidates are aware of the *Sie*-form of address. It is quite acceptable for the two-part task to be split by the Examiner.

Page 18, B1, 4, 7

For most candidates this task was quite straightforward although a few made it harder for themselves by describing other symptoms to the ones given in the rubric. A number of candidates did not include their response to L2 and mispronounced *England*. Some did not attempt the second task in K3. Examiners did not always give the necessary prompt. Formulating the final question caused difficulties with some candidates but many communicated successfully. An appropriate reaction to L4 was often missing with many candidates failing to understand *überrascht*.

Page 19, B2, 5, 8

Most candidates coped well with this Role Play although some struggled to give a second problem after the obvious *zu klein/gross*. The formulation of the question was generally well done, although there were occasional problems with the number '40' and the pronunciation of *Größe*. Many candidates did not appear to understand *enttäuscht*, or failed to respond.

Page 20, B3, 6, 9

This Role Play was generally well answered although a few candidates struggled to convey two answers successfully for K2. English pronunciation of *Euros* was quite a common error and formulating the question in the past tense posed some difficulty for a few candidates. The absence of a reaction was often apparent.

Topic Presentation/Conversation

Most candidates were well prepared producing fluent presentations on a wide variety of topics. A very small minority struggled with pronunciation or rushed their prepared material and occasionally appeared to have little understanding of what they had prepared. Candidates in some Centres spoke convincingly on challenging topics which seemed close to their hearts e.g. the environment, healthy living, whilst others had chosen less involved subjects such as holidays, hometown, school etc. The subsequent discussion was sometimes less fluent and accurate but in many cases the candidate maintained the same high standard with a spontaneous and confident response to the Examiner's questions. Occasionally the Examiner seemed to struggle to ask appropriate questions if the topic required the use of specialist vocabulary. It is always better if the Examiner knows in advance what topic the candidate has chosen so he/she can prepare him/herself.

There were some Centres where every candidate spoke on the same topic, which tended to render individual candidates' performances less impressive because of the repetition of replies to similar questions.

A high number of candidates lost marks heavily on **(b)** linguistic content because they failed to use correctly, or even attempt, past and future tenses. This was exacerbated by the fact that many Examiners did not ask appropriate questions in these tenses.

General Conversation

Many candidates performed well in this section of the test and produced natural, spontaneous conversations. However, like in the Topic Conversation, a high proportion of both weak and good candidates failed to cross the 'tense hurdle' by not using the past and future tense correctly. This limited the marks of many candidates on scale **(b)** linguistic content and did unfortunately include some native speakers who responded in the present tense to future questions or with incomplete sentences. This may be normal in natural conversation, but in an examination it is important for both Examiners and candidates to understand the requirements of the test, if they are to achieve their full potential.

A majority of centres conducted this part of the examination well, but some centres ignored the fact that discussion on just **two or three** Defined Content Topics is recommended. Covering more topics at a more superficial level, whilst recommended for weaker candidates, will not give better candidates the opportunity to do themselves justice. In addition, a small minority of Examiners do ask questions which are rather too demanding for the average candidate, thus not allowing the candidate the opportunity to show what they could offer with a more basic level of vocabulary and structure.

Examiners are reminded to not ask 'closed' questions, denying the candidates the opportunity to speak at length. The Examiners should encourage their candidates to produce full responses, justifying opinions and showing a wide range of structures.

General Impression

On occasions the award of an impression mark appeared rather haphazard, but in general the impression mark was appropriately assessed.

Internal Moderation

In most centres where more than one Examiner had been used, internal moderation had clearly been carried out before marks were submitted and assessment was generally consistent across the whole entry.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE GERMAN

Paper 0525/42
Continuous Writing

General comments

In this session many candidates produced answers using German of a high standard and demonstrating a clear knowledge of the language and an understanding of the complexities of German grammar. This year there was more evidence of candidates being aware of the demands of the mark scheme. There were examples of some impressive German being used and many of the candidates with high scores had a sound basis for further study of the language. Once again, however, there were a number of candidates for whom the demands of this paper were evidently too high and there was a small number of candidates who left some or all of the paper blank.

Spelling errors continue to be a problem. Candidates should check their spellings carefully and should pay particular attention to the use of capital letters in German. This remains a particular issue which results in loss of marks right across the ability range: many language ticks were lost as a result of uncapitalised nouns or because of capitalised adjectives/adverbs/verbs/pronouns (e.g. *ich* written with capital *I*). It is essential that centres address this issue. Some candidates need to adjust their handwriting style in order to ensure that small/capital letters are easily distinguishable. Indeed, all candidates should be reminded about the importance of clear handwriting and appropriate presentation: a number of candidates produced work which was very difficult to read. At times this resulted in the Examiner being unsure of a candidate's intentions.

Candidates should be reminded not to copy large chunks of language from the rubric on the exam paper. Language structures which have been lifted cannot be credited as a candidate's own.

It is important that candidates pay attention to the tense of each verb they use, as a wrong tense can affect both Language ticks and Communication marks. Candidates should also be reminded that infinitives and past participles must be correctly located in the sentence, if Language credit is to be given to a verb in a particular tense. If candidates cross out words (e.g. to address a word count issue) they need to consider also the impact this has on the grammatical accuracy of their sentences. Some candidates show evidence of having been prepared to cover all 3 time frames in a given question. However, it is important that the candidates pay attention to when/where the different time frames are needed. In **Question 1** candidates should look carefully at the tense required by each bullet point, and in **Question 2** candidates must demonstrate accurate and consistent use of the past tense. If present/future tenses are used where the past tense narrative calls for a past tense, then a significant loss of marks can occur. Overall there was a need for more accurate handling of the past tenses, in particular with strong verbs.

A significant number of candidates across the ability range again failed to observe the word count: 130-140 words for each question. Examiners do not mark for either Communication or Accuracy after the 140th word and so candidates giving too much preamble used up valuable words with the result that marks were lost later in the task, if Communication points were made after the word count. Sometimes the most able and fluent candidates needlessly lost Communication marks in this way.

In this session, the quality of German produced by a candidate was frequently comparable across **Questions 1** and **2**. However, some candidates again seemed to be better prepared for the more directed/email style of **Question 1** and were less well-prepared for the more creative/free style of writing required for **Question 2**. This sometimes resulted in the overall mark for **Question 2** being lower than that gained by the same candidate in **Question 1**.

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)** was slightly favoured over **Question 1(b)**, though it was not clear whether this

was due to the question topic or simply due to it appearing first on the paper. The subject matter for **Question 1 (a)** seemed accessible to all and candidates responded well to this task. Answers were generally full in content, though candidates who were familiar with the topic of holidays sometimes wrote generally on the topic rather than responding to the specific tasks set. It is important to remind candidates that they should not pre-learn set essays on a given topic but should address the particular tasks, as set in the rubric. The subject matter for **Question 1 (b)** also seemed accessible to those who attempted this question. For this question there was greater variation in content than that given for the answers to **Question 1 (a)**.

Question 1(a) *Ihre Familie möchte nächsten Sommer in einem Ferienhaus in Österreich wohnen. Sie schreiben eine E-Mail an Frau Hübner, die ein Ferienhaus in den Alpen hat.*

Candidates who chose this question were generally able to write in detail on the topic of holidays. Weaker candidates sometimes struggled with the time frame of the question and wrote instead about a previous holiday or wrote in the present as if currently on holiday.

Candidates generally dealt well with the email format and liked the informal style that was required. Many had appropriate starts/ends to their emails, though candidates should avoid too much unnecessary preamble at the start of an email as this takes away valuable words from the word count. Candidates should also be reminded to decide on the use of *Sie/du* and to be consistent in their choice of register.

Overall most candidates had the necessary language at their disposal, though a significant number appeared not to understand *Stellen Sie sich vor* and so did not tackle this first bullet point.

- This was the most challenging task of the question as many candidates either did not understand what was being asked or simply forgot to present themselves at the start of their response. Those who understood the task were able to respond effectively. However some wrote rather lengthy responses, giving detailed self portraits or even going beyond to give detailed portraits also of family members. Relevancy and word count issues were sometimes affected as a result.
- Most candidates were able to say when they wanted to stay in the house and so gained the point. Some candidates struggled with how to give dates accurately in German. There were a few candidates who referred to having stayed in the house previously and so could not score the Communication point as the tense was not correct.
- Generally this task was answered well, with candidates giving the number of people in their family. Sometimes this was extended with lengthy and unnecessary portraits of family members and this used up valuable words.
- Many candidates responded well to this task and explained why they liked the area, though some candidates had already gone beyond the word limit and so were not able to score. Some candidates had misunderstood the word *Gegend* and instead gave reasons for liking the *Ferienhaus*.
- As long as there was sufficient word limit, candidates did well on this task with most being able to describe in detail where they spent their last holidays. Most candidates handled the past tense successfully here.

Question 1(b) *In Ihrer Freizeit hören sie gern Musik. Sie schreiben einen Artikel für ein Jugendmagazin über das Thema **Musik und Freizeit**.*

Candidates choosing this question generally wrote well and there were many successful answers with candidates writing enthusiastically and with good detail about their music preferences. Most candidates had the vocabulary needed for this topic area, though at times their choice of vocabulary became rather repetitive in this question.

- Most candidates were able to describe what sort of music they like to listen to and many gave detailed responses to this task. Sometimes the answers consisted of lists of music types which did not result in many language marks being awarded here.
- Generally this task was answered well and most candidates gave detailed accounts of when they listened to music. However a few candidates had misunderstood *wann* for *wo* and described where they listened to music rather than when.
- Candidates usually tackled this task well and enjoyed being able to include personal experience in their answers. The past tense did present difficulties for some candidates but most were able to give some account or description of a past concert, even if it was just a simple sentence using an adjective to describe what the concert was like.
- This task was the most challenging in this question, with many candidates seeming not to understand the word *wichtig*. Some candidates missed the task out entirely. There were also a number of

candidates who had already passed the word count and so could not gain marks here.

- In general candidates were successful in this task, if they still had enough word count to write an answer. The future time frame did not present too much difficulty, though some candidates spoke more generally about their future plans, rather than give specific detail about future plans for the time.

Question 2

Als Sie letzte Woche im Kaufhaus waren, haben Sie gesehen, wie eine Person einen iPod in die Tasche gesteckt hat. Beschreiben Sie:

- *Ihre Reaktion, als Sie den Dieb gesehen haben*
- *Was danach passierte*

Question 2 is an open-ended task but the guidance bullet points give candidates a structure to their writing and aim to prevent candidates from writing off-topic. In order to gain all Communication marks, candidates need to ensure that they address both bullet points in their answers.

Many candidates understood the task and wrote successful responses, giving an account of the theft, and describing some sort of shocked/anxious reaction, then explaining how the thief was chased/caught and how the iPod was returned to its owner. Some candidates failed to develop the story with much interest, and merely reported on the incident they witnessed before going on to report on a rather predictable day when they went home/went shopping/went out etc. There were some examples of more creative answers produced and these were characterised by more detailed and exciting, even entertaining, development of the story. Such examples often included the candidate being part of the chase, receiving a reward for catching the thief and using the reward to purchase an expensive item (often another iPod!) or a holiday abroad.

Less able candidates struggled with some vocabulary in this question. Many candidates misunderstood the use of the verb *stecken* in the rubric and seemed to confuse this verb with the verb *stehlen*. Hence there were many examples of the word *gesteckt* being incorrectly used in the responses given. The word *Tasche* was sometimes understood as bag rather than pocket, and the word *Dieb* was not always known. Many candidates were unsure how to refer to the police in German and there were frequent misspellings given. Some candidates seemed confused as to who was the thief or who was stolen from and these candidates then wrote about themselves as the thieves or as the victims. Others had not understood that here had been a theft and wrote instead about a lost iPod. There were also candidates who wrote a lengthy account of a trip to the *Kaufhaus* but, since they were asked to give a reaction to the theft and then describe '*was danach passierte*', they were unable to gain any Communication points until after the theft itself. Candidates are reminded that they should begin their account as the rubric states, in this case at the point of the iPod being stolen.

Reactions to the theft were often communicated clearly, though *schockiert* was frequently misspelt. There was evidence of pre-learnt or rehearsed responses being used by some candidates and this frequently resulted in a string of reactions which were not necessarily appropriate to the incident itself. Such practice goes against the spirit of the examination and should be discouraged.

Question 2 requires the use of past tenses. Many candidates were successful in their command of the past tense and any present tense use was appropriate (e.g. in descriptions of the thief, the *Kaufhaus*, etc). However, some candidates progressed quickly to an account of what they now do with the money they gained as a reward, while others wrote the entire account in the present tense and so were unable to gain Communication points for this. Others tried to avoid using the past tense by using an excess of direct speech and hence recounting the story in dialogue form in the present. Since, in **Question 2**, Communication points can only be awarded for events which are described in attempts at the past, many candidates gained fewer marks than they might have done, had they at least attempted the use of the past tense. Candidates who did use past tenses were usually successful in their communication but many could have gained more language ticks, had their use of the past tenses been more accurate.

A small minority of candidates used the guidance phrase *Was danach passierte* as an opportunity to write an entirely different story. Such examples usually resulted in a case of irrelevancy. Although creative and imaginative accounts are encouraged, candidates should be reminded to keep to the specifics of the situation that is described in the rubric, in this case the theft of an iPod which the candidate witnessed on a visit last week to a department store.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE GERMAN

Paper 0525/43
Continuous Writing

General comments

In this session many candidates produced answers using German of a high standard and demonstrating a clear knowledge of the language and an understanding of the complexities of German grammar. This year there was more evidence of candidates being aware of the demands of the mark scheme. There were examples of some impressive German being used and many of the candidates with high scores had a sound basis for further study of the language. Once again, however, there were a number of candidates for whom the demands of this paper were evidently too high and there was a small number of candidates who left some or all of the paper blank.

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Many candidates understood the task and wrote successful responses, giving an account of the theft, and describing some sort of shocked/anxious reaction, then explaining how the thief was chased/caught and how the iPod was returned to its owner. Some candidates failed to develop the story with much interest, and merely reported on the incident they witnessed before going on to report on a rather predictable day when they went home/went shopping/went out etc. There were some examples of more creative answers produced and these were characterised by more detailed and exciting, even entertaining, development of the story. Such examples often included the candidate being part of the chase, receiving a reward for catching the thief and using the reward to purchase an expensive item (often another iPod!) or a holiday abroad.

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Reactions to the theft were often communicated clearly, though *schockiert* was frequently misspelt. There was evidence of pre-learnt or rehearsed responses being used by some candidates and this frequently resulted in a string of reactions which were not necessarily appropriate to the incident itself. Such practice goes against the spirit of the examination and should be discouraged.

Question 2 requires the use of past tenses. Many candidates were successful in their command of the past tense and any present tense use was appropriate (e.g. in descriptions of the thief, the *Kaufhaus*, etc). However, some candidates progressed quickly to an account of what they now do with the money they gained as a reward, while others wrote the entire account in the present tense and so were unable to gain Communication points for this. Others tried to avoid using the past tense by using an excess of direct speech and hence recounting the story in dialogue form in the present. Since, in **Question 2**, Communication points can only be awarded for events which are described in attempts at the past, many candidates gained fewer marks than they might have done, had they at least attempted the use of the past tense. Candidates who did use past tenses were usually successful in their communication but many could have gained more language ticks, had their use of the past tenses been more accurate.

A small minority of candidates used the guidance phrase *Was danach passierte* as an opportunity to write an entirely different story. Such examples usually resulted in a case of irrelevancy. Although creative and imaginative accounts are encouraged, candidates should be reminded to keep to the specifics of the situation that is described in the rubric, in this case the theft of an iPod which the candidate witnessed on a visit last week to a department store.