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Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In German (1GN0) Paper 1H
Listening & Understanding in German

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Publications Code 1GN0_1H_1806_ER

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Paper 1H – Listening and Responding

Although there were some new question types in this paper the performance by the majority of students was encouraging. The questions that were intended to discriminate did so effectively. The new specification features some topics e.g. the environment which are new to GCSE listening. It was encouraging to see that for the most part students coped well with these.

There is now greater emphasis on open-ended questions in English. It is therefore crucial that students are able to express themselves clearly and precisely. Centres have clearly practised this type of question as student performance was stronger than it used to be on this question type in previous years. The strongest performances were characterised by an ability to recognise attitudes, opinions and emotions and to give precise answers. However, there were still weaker performances where answers were vague, often based on the identification of single words rather than listening to the extract as a whole. It is important to note that if students give three answers for a two mark question it is only the first two which will be assessed. Likewise for a one mark question only the first answer will be considered.

This year saw the reintroduction of some target language multiple-choice questions. Although they discriminated well it was clear that it will take time for some students to feel fully confident with the new test types.

Examiners are unable to award marks if they cannot read a student's handwriting. This is increasingly important now that the number of open-response questions has increased. When crossing out sections students must make it absolutely clear what their final answer is supposed to be.

Question 1 (Freiwillige Arbeit)

This new style of target language question poses significant challenges to students even at Higher Level. The first of these is to understand the possible answers in the box and the language in the questions. The listening passage often contains synonyms of the possible answers. For Q1 (a) the answer (*im Freien*) equates to *draußen* in the listening extract. The answer *schmutzig* for Q1 (e) is mirrored by *dreckig* in the listening passage. Other questions require simple deductions eg in Q1 (b) *wir konnten an der Haltestelle ... aussteigen* suggests that they travelled by bus. In Q1 (d) the fact that *unsere Chefin arbeitete zwölf Stunden täglich* suggests that she is fleißig.

Question 2 (Schultag)

This question requires students to choose the correct answer from a list of four possibilities. One of the four possible answers has to be used twice. Students do not have to supply their own words to complete the sentences but may only use one of the four words provided. This question involved drawing simple conclusions in order to choose the most suitable adjective e.g. in Q2 (a) *Die*

Schüler haben mich sofort angenommen und mir alles Wichtige erzählt implies that they were friendly. In Q2 (e) if Claudia fell asleep in front of the TV when she got home it suggests that she was tired. The majority of higher tier students scored well on this question. It is worth pointing out that although all examples of this question type hitherto have featured adjectives this need not necessarily be so in future.

Question 3 (At the travel agent)

This crossover question was answered well by most students who sat the higher tier paper. Q3 (ii), Q3 (iii) and Q3 (iv) were for the most part answered correctly. Students should note that information relevant to a particular answer is often clearly signposted. In Q3 (i) *das ist für uns am wichtigsten* clearly points to food (in this case *vegetarische Spezialitäten*) as the answer. Negatives such as *nicht* or *kein* are often crucial in determining the correct answer. Q3 (iv) was a good example of this. Some students heard the noun *Auto* and therefore assumed that car hire must be the right answer, failing to notice the inclusion of *kein*. The phrasing of the question (She enquires about...) suggests that the answer may come in the form of a question (*Können Sie uns über Ausflüge mit dem Bus informieren?*).

Question 4 (School trip to Poland)

This crossover question featuring a familiar test type proved accessible to most students. The question required students not only to understand the gist of the passage but also to deduce the positive elements of the trip signposted in many different ways eg *...war ausgezeichnet*.

Question 5 (Museum of German history)

This question featuring a familiar test type was well done by the majority of students. Weaker performances were characterised in particular by an inability to make the crucial distinction between small and large groups in Q5 (ii) and to understand *Ausstellungen* in Q5(iii).

Question 6 (An environmental organisation)

This open response question differentiated extremely well. The majority of students were able to score some marks but full marks were rare. Weaker performances were characterised by one word answers not always relevant to the question set. However, examiners were pleased to note that some students were clearly able to recognise attitudes and draw simple conclusions. In Q6 (a) some students failed to recognise the significance of the adjective "original" and therefore talked about gardens rather than housing or, more specifically, apartments. Some scripts included more than two answers for Q6 (b). In this case examiners mark the first two answers only, which may or may not be to students' advantage. There were many possible answers to this question and examiners saw the full range. However, there were some scripts where marks

were lost because of a lack of precision when writing English. Q6 (d) differentiated particularly well with only the best realising that because schools were on holiday results would have to wait until school started again. Some students lost marks by trying to be too precise and including details that were not present eg by assuming that it must be the summer holidays.

Question 7 (Employment)

Many of the more general comments on Q6 also apply here although this question proved rather more challenging to weaker students. Q7 (a) differentiated particularly well because it required students to understand the significance of the modal verb in *dass es in Südafrika gefährlich sein könnte*. Many students stated simply that South Africa **is** dangerous. Precision in written English was particularly important in Q7(c). One of the correct answers was that Mario corrected work for the teachers. However, examiners saw many answers which suggested that he corrected the teachers' work, which could of course not be credited. The majority of students were able to gain marks for Q7 (d), although some seemed to think that Mario was teaching a photography or German class after school.

Question 8 (Michael Teuber)

As this interview included many complex lexical items and sentence structures it was particularly pleasing to see how well most students fared. Q8 (a) (ii) and Q8 (b)(ii) were answered particularly well. In Q8 (a) (i) a number of students assumed that Michael had been injured in a surfing accident, failing to realise that it was a car accident on route to a surfing holiday. Q8 (a) (iii) proved challenging even to the highest achieving students. It required students to understand *Versicherung* and that Michael was able to buy a house with the insurance money immediately after his accident. In Q8 (b) (iii) a number of students failed to appreciate the significance of *ob* in *ob ich weitermache oder einen normalen Job im Büro suche, weiß ich nicht* and therefore concluded that Michael was looking for a full-time job.

Question 9 (At home with the children)

This question was targeted at the top grades and required clarity of expression from students if they were to access the highest marks. It was therefore pleasing that most students were able to score some marks here. The question proved particularly effective in differentiating excellent from good performances. Many students gained marks for Q9 (a)(i) although few mentioned that bosses are reluctant to give time off work. Q9 (a)(ii) was answered correctly only by a small minority of students. Most assumed that Christa was working for the money and did not realise the significance of *ich sehe es anders*, which preceded the correct answer. The crucial adjective *befriedigend* was often assumed to mean "freeing". In Q9(a)(iii) a crucial element was enjoyment, as indicated in *ich genieße es, mein eigener Chef zu sein*. *Chef* was often taken to mean cook.

In Q9 (b) some students assumed that grandparents must have a role to play or extended the *Ruhezeit* mentioned into weekends away from the children. This presumably stemmed from a misunderstanding of *Wochenkalender*. *Eine tägliche Pause* was understood by many although occasionally it was extended into taking a whole day off rather than a daily short break.

Question 10 (Ski-jumping)

The language in this question was demanding but the multi-choice test type enabled most students to gain marks. In Q10(i) most appreciated that no other Germans finished in the top ten but it was easy to overlook the significance of *eng* in *nach einem engen Wettkampf* and assume that Wellinger had an easy victory. Q10 (ii) was answered correctly by most students.

Advice for future performance

- Students should read all questions carefully, paying particular attention to question words.
- Students are advised to listen carefully for qualifying adjectives and adverbs, in particular for negatives *nicht* and *kein*, to help them in particular to eliminate distractors when answering multiple-choice questions.
- Simple synonyms are often the key to success in the target language questions.
- Students should ensure that they are familiar with vocabulary across the full range of topics.
- Students need to practise listening for gist to enable them to recognise attitudes, opinions and emotions and to draw simple conclusions.

