GERMAN

Paper 0525/12
Listening

Question Number	Key	Question Number	Key	Question Number	Key	Question Number	Key
1	B	11	B	21	C	31	C
2	A	12	A	22	B	32	B
3	C	13	D	23	A	33	B
4	C	14	C	24	B	34	A
5	D	15	D	25	B	35	D / E
6	B	16	E	26	C	36	D / E
7	A	17	F	27	A	37	C / D
8	C	18	A	28	C	38	C / D
9	C	19	C	29	B	39	A / C
10	A	20	C	30	D	40	A / C

General comments

The listening examination consists entirely of multiple-choice items. The difficulty of the recorded material gradually increases in terms of length, complexity of language and density of information. The emphasis of the questions moves from targeting candidates' ability to pick out information contained in short factual statements to testing their comprehension of specific information, opinions and explanations in longer discussions.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1–8

Candidates performed well in this part of the examination, which is intended to be easy. The proportion of correct answers was slightly lower for **Question 3** (*wandern*) and **Question 7** (*mit der Bahn*), where around 10% of candidates chose climbing and bus travel.

Questions 9–14

Most candidates scored well in this section about school holidays. There was, however, some misunderstanding of common words such as *Pferde* (**Question 9**) and *langweilig* (**Question 11**).

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Questions 15–19

This was a matching exercise in which candidates heard a conversation about a new house. Knowledge of related words was advantageous (e.g. **Question 15**: *Kino/Filme*, **Question 18**: *Hauspflanzen/grün*, **Question 19**: *winzig … nur Platz, um die Wäsche auszuhängen/nicht viel Platz*).

Questions 20–28

The second half of the paper discriminated well and presented a challenge to the cohort. Text-based distractors were chosen by the majority of candidates who selected an incorrect answer (e.g. **Question 20**, **Question 21** and **Question 22**). Candidates should aim to focus on the overall meaning of statements rather than listening only for language repeated in the question. For example, a small amount of inference was needed to answer **Question 26**.

Questions 29–34

The correct answer was the most popular choice for each question, although the distribution of incorrect answers suggests some level of guesswork for **Question 30** and **Question 33**. In **Question 33**, the answer appears before the word *Kompetenzen* in the transcript, which may have thrown candidates.

Questions 35–37

For each question, there were two correct statements from a choice of five. The most straightforward items were **Question 35E** and **Question 36D** and **Question 37C**, while there was no particularly striking pattern to the incorrect options chosen. Many candidates were attracted to the text-based distractors provided under **Question 35A** and **Question 37E** (participants in Germany versus Europe).

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Paper 0525/22
Reading

Key messages

For **Question groups 4** and **6** careful reading of the text and the questions is required and candidates should be aware that what they write should be a precise answer to the question including using the correct person of the verb and possessive adjective. They should be aware that the inclusion of extraneous material might invalidate their answer.

Question group 1

Candidates match a series of short statements with the correct pictures.

Question group 2

Candidates match a series of short notices or signs commonly found in public places with an explanatory statement. The texts are all set in the same context.

For **Question groups 1** and **2** candidates need to be familiar with a range of basic vocabulary in particular nouns.

Question group 3

Candidates answer multiple-choice questions with three options on a short text. Candidates should read the text and multiple questions carefully and avoid simply 'word-spotting'.

Question group 4

Candidates demonstrate understanding of a text, by answering straightforward, open questions. The emphasis is on answer location and not on precise lifting; however, the subject, personal pronouns and possessives need to be unambiguous. Manipulations must be correct. The inclusion of extraneous material might invalidate their answer.

Question group 5

Candidates match a series of descriptions of the requirements, interests, or skills of different people with the correct description of places, events, services, or activities. All texts are on a common theme. Word-spotting should be avoided in this matching task.

Question group 6

Candidates are asked to respond to questions requiring both gist and detailed understanding. Whilst selective lifting may be appropriate to answer some questions, mere location and transcription indicating vague understanding is not. Candidates should be aware that the inclusion of extraneous material might invalidate their answer. The subject, personal pronouns and possessives need to be unambiguous. Manipulations must be correct.

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General comments

The paper was tackled very well by many of the candidates. Candidates should be aware that in the case of **Question groups 4** and **6**, the subject needs to be unambiguous and personal pronouns/possessives need to be used in such a way as to make the answer unambiguous. Attention should be paid to the position and form of verbs. Manipulations must be correct including when a candidate adds extra material not needed to answer the Question. For **Question group 5** those candidates who read the texts carefully rather than word-spot performed well in this task.

Question group 1

Many candidates performed well in matching pictures and sentences. Very occasionally candidates did not seem to know the nouns and made random matches. *Die Arbeit mit Tieren gefällt mir* did not seem to be understood by some candidates.

Question group 2

Many candidates matched correctly. Some matched *Die Kinder haben Durst* with *Spielplatz* suggesting that they had homed in on *Kinder* and not read the whole sentence. Other mismatching did not have an obvious pattern.

Question group 3

Accomplishment for this Question group was mixed. The most frequent errors were for **3(a)** and **3(d)** where candidates may have been word spotting and matched a word that they saw in the text with a multiple-choice answer rather than reading carefully. Other erroneous choices did not show any recognisable pattern.

Question group 4

There was a wide range of success with this question. The most successful candidates gave short, succinct answers and did not therefore lose marks through unsuccessful manipulation. There were not many who failed completely to locate the answer, and there was a significant number who gained full, or nearly full marks. However, there was a large number who successfully located the answer but lost marks chiefly through faulty manipulation. Most mistakes occurred where students used the incorrect possessive or failed to manipulate the verb from the first to the third person.

(a) This was mostly very well answered, although some candidates omitted *über* before *Berufe.*

(b) This was mostly very well answered.

(c) There were many good answers. Occasionally candidates omitted *ob* at the beginning of their answer.

(d) (i) Many candidates could not be credited for their responses. Some candidates provided grammatically incorrect phrases. Others used *sein* rather than *ihr*.

(ii) Some candidates omitted *bei der* and simply wrote *Stadtzeitung*.

(e) Answers were mostly correct, but some candidates wrote *sie* (rather than *er*) *war freundlich.*

(f) This was generally well answered, but some answers could not be credited as candidates supplied a present- rather than past-tense answer.

(g) This was answered appropriately by most candidates, but some wrote *Informationen über die Mannschaften* and failed to add *zu suchen*.

(h) This was generally well answered. Some candidates reiterated *Er/Ein Spieler warf den Ball in die falsche Richtung* and failed to explain the consequence.

(i) Many candidates provided correct answers. Some responses suggested that some candidates may not have understood *geschah*.

(j) Most candidates provided correct answers.

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(k) This was generally well answered.

Question group 5

Many candidates achieved full marks on this question. Where errors occurred, there was no particularly perceivable pattern to the incorrectly selected answers.

Question group 6

There were some very good scripts with correct, accurately formulated responses to the questions. In some cases, candidates did not look closely at the precise question and lifted a piece of text which did not answer what had been asked. Inaccurate tense, grammar and syntax sometimes meant the answer could not be credited.

Word order, in particular incorrect position of the verb, and apparent lack of knowledge of personal and possessive pronouns were the biggest issues. Many candidates did not grasp the need to manipulate from first person to third person and answered some questions in the first person.

(a) There were many completely correct answers to this question.

(b) There were some good answers, but some candidates did not seem to understand what was being asked and simply wrote *Nordrhein-Westfalen* as an answer or began their answer with *z.B. Nordrhein-Westfalen*.

(c) There were many correct answers here.

(d) (i) (ii) There were many completely correct answers to this question. Some answers did not make sense as *was* and *welche* were omitted.

(e) There were many completely correct answers to this question, but some candidates did not appear to understand the question and / or the text as they supplied the answer *persönlich*.

(f) There were many good answers, but some candidates failed to use a verb to answer the question appropriately or else placed the verb at the end without having used *weil* at the beginning of the clause.

(g) There were very many good answers, but some candidates failed to use a verb to answer the question appropriately.

(h) (i) (ii) There were many good answers, but a notable number of candidates did not use the correct part of *haben* when saying that Thomas has tasks to fulfil as a citizen.

(i) There were some correct answers, but many answers began *Sollten sich Teenager* and other answers omitted the reflexive pronoun.

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Paper 0525/03
Speaking

Key messages

- The emphasis of this syllabus is on successful communication within familiar situations.
- All tasks in this Speaking exam are genuine communication exercises, in which candidates can show that they can understand and produce the target language.
- The structure of the Role Plays and Topic Conversations requires good understanding of the spoken language and an ability to respond appropriately.
- Successful communication can often be achieved even without absolute grammatical accuracy, as long as the language employed is appropriate to the situation and clear enough to be understood.
- In the role plays successful communication can be achieved in relatively short responses, but for higher marks in the conversations the language offered must be more expansive. Throughout the topic conversations, ideas and opinions should be expressed, developed and justified.
- Candidates should be able to converse on familiar topics, to describe events, experiences and ambitions in some detail and in narrative form. They should be able to give reasons, evaluations and explanations for their ideas and plans.

General Comments

These comments should be read in conjunction with the Instructions for Teachers/Examiners for October/November 2025.

Most centres conducted this Speaking Test very well indeed. Most candidates seemed very well prepared for the demands set in this exam and the large majority of examiners conducted the exam in the spirit in which it was intended. Most examiners displayed confident awareness of the structure and timing of the various sections of the examination. They were patient, allowed time for the candidates to think, and prompted them to give fuller responses and to develop their ideas further, when that was needed.

In the Role Plays most examiners complied with the instructions as to how many times a question can be repeated; and in the Topic Conversations, as to when the alternative questions provided should be used. Most examiners are using the technique of encouraging fuller responses by asking extension questions very effectively, either using the example extension questions, such as „Erzähl mir bitte etwas mehr", or providing appropriate alternatives of their own. Any question that will encourage a candidate to be more expansive in the topic conversations is welcome, especially if it looks as if the candidate will provide only brief answers and rush though the topic. On the other hand, asking closed questions as extension questions is counterproductive, as it does not encourage candidates to expand on what they have said already.

In this session, the subject area of planning for the future (for next weekend, for the next holiday, or for a future career) appeared in several topics. Candidates were asked to describe their plans for the coming weekend (Topic 3), who they wanted to spend their next holidays with and what their plans for these holidays were (Topic 1). Another area of discussion was general plans for the future (Topic 7) and what kind of work they envisaged doing in their dream job in future (Topic 5). Similar learning strategies can be applied when candidates are prepared for talking about more general topics, like how we will do our shopping in the future (Topic 4).

On the whole, candidates convey future time frames quite well through phrases like „ich werde", „ich möchte", or „ich will". It would also be an excellent teaching tool, if phrases like „Ich hoffe, … zu machen" or „ich plane, … zu sehen", or even „ich habe die Absicht, …zu besuchen" etc. were learnt and practised.

Similarly, candidates can be trained to talk about events in the past in some detail, and situations set in the papers of the last few years can certainly serve as examples as to what type of questions will be asked.

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Teaching subject-specific vocabulary is also a really useful teaching tool, which would help candidates greatly.

Another useful strategy for preparing candidates well for this exam is to make sure that they are very familiar with basic question words. One situation in the current session where misunderstanding question words occurred was in Role play 1, where in the second question („Wer macht bei dir zu Hause die meiste Arbeit?") the question word „wer" was not understood by a few candidates. Even more surprisingly, the question word „wo" in the second question of Topic 4 („Wo kaufst du normalerweise deine Kleidung?") also caused difficulties to a few candidates, who responded by saying who bought their clothes.

Many examiners were able to conduct successful conversations – lasting approximately 4 minutes – on each individual topic by using only the five questions provided in the Teachers' Instructions. Others ensured that the topic conversations provided enough material for accurate marking by asking up to two further questions of their own choice. This is particularly important in cases where candidates have been rather brief in their answers to the five scripted questions and have thus not provided enough evidence of the quality of their communication and language.

Further questions should encourage candidates to elaborate, expand, narrate and/or explain. As teacher/examiners have become more familiar with this specification, there is now a growing number of examiners who use the 'further' questions as a natural development of the conversation and not as arbitrary bolt-on questions. All the best conversations have such a natural flow.

Both tasks in this exam are designed to simulate a natural conversation that could actually take place. They are not designed to sound like an interrogation of the candidate. A small number of examiners make the conversations completely unnatural by prefacing each question with „Frage 1, Frage 2" (etc.). Apart from not being in the spirit of the exam, this type of interrogation does not help to put the candidates at their ease.

In the interest of fairness to all candidates, it is important that questions are asked exactly as written in the paper. Thus, if an examiner feeds a candidate possible vocabulary that a candidate could then use in their response, this response cannot be credited. For example, if the question „Wer macht bei dir zu Hause die meiste Arbeit?" is supplemented by a suggestion like "deine Mutter oder dein Vater?" even a response of "nein, meine Schwester" cannot be credited, as this candidate gained an unfair advantage through the extra question.

Comments on specific questions

Role Plays

There were many lively performances from candidates, and nearly all examiners followed instructions and asked the questions exactly as they were printed. The first two questions are designed to elicit straightforward (often very brief, possibly even just one-word) answers within a present tense time frame. The remaining three questions are intended to produce responses that produce at least one past time frame, one future time frame and at least one response that requires an opinion or justification of a statement. Here also, the length of the answer is not important. Full marks are given for all full and appropriate answers, where the meaning is clear and unambiguous. The best responses in the role play are often brief, but in a natural spoken idiom, and it is rare that more than one sentence (often with a subordinate clause, though) is required for full marks on any particular question.

As shown in the example above, it is important for examiners to stick exactly to the script as given, as this ensures equality of opportunity for all candidates. If a candidate does not understand (or comprehend) a question the first time it is asked, it can be repeated once. Most examiners did this very well and very few either failed to repeat the question or, at the other extreme, repeated it several times.

Mostly, the marking of the role plays was very accurate. Occasionally, examiners were slightly harsh in their interpretation as to what constitutes a minor error. Thus, an incorrect auxiliary („ich habe gegangen") or incorrect endings („ich möchte in die Schwimmbad gehen") will often be part of a clearly understandable response, where the information is communicated, as the mark scheme descriptor for two marks states. The important criterion for awarding a mark of one is that errors impede communication. As stated in the General Marking Principles, if as part of a normal conversation one receives a response which would prompt one to ask a further question in order to clarify what a candidate meant to say, then 1 mark (rather than 2) would be the correct mark.

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An incorrect time frame usually obscures meaning (Question: „Erzähl mir, was du letzte Woche gelesen hast?" Response: „Ich möchte einen interessanten Roman gelesen"), as does an incomplete answer. For example, in a two–part question, both parts of the question must be answered, as otherwise the response can, at best, be partial.

There were relatively few marks of zero (no creditable response), as all the role plays proved to be accessible to the majority of candidates.

It is also worth mentioning that two-part role play tasks are marked globally: this means that candidates do not automatically get a mark if they answer the first part of a closed question (for example: „Bekommst du genug Geld?") with „ja" or „nein" but cannot give a reason to the following „warum?" question.

There was no appreciable difference in difficulty between the nine role plays. Although the role plays are not timed, they should ideally be completed in two to three minutes and the whole test should not be longer than ten or eleven minutes. Most centres achieved this successfully. A number of centres did not stick to the recommended timings and exams became far too long for the candidates' comfort. The longest individual exam in this session was over 23 minutes, including a role play lasting 8 minutes.

Comments on the individual Role Plays

Card 1: (Zu Hause)

As there were many centres in this session who entered just a single candidate, this was the role play which was heard most often. It proved straightforward and, for the large majority of candidates, caused few problems. Most candidates had no difficulty describing their house/flat in response to **Question 1**. The second question („Wer macht bei dir zu Hause die meiste Arbeit?") produced a range of responses. The most commonly heard response was „meine Mutter", but a good number of candidates also mentioned how they or their brothers or sisters helped. As mentioned above, the question word „wer" did cause problems to some candidates. The third question („Und wie hast du zuletzt bei dir zu Hause geholfen?") produced some very fine responses, with candidates detailing what work they might have done in the house or the garden. As in other role plays, a common reason for being awarded just 1 mark for this question was an incorrect time frame. The fourth question asking candidates whether it was important for young people to learn to cook drew a range of really interesting and, at times, funny responses, which showed that the responses were genuinely spontaneous. It was really good to see that the present format of the role plays, which allows candidates to be creative and come up with personalised responses, encourages candidates to think on their feet and to use their sense of humour. The last question, asking candidates what jobs their children might have to do when the candidates had their own families, likewise brought a range of good answers: expected ones like „sie werden ihr Bett machen" or „sie werden den Müll rausbringen" and less expected ones like „keinen Job - ihre Hausaufgaben für die Schule sind viel wichtiger".

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Card 2: (ein Gespräch über Lesen)

Similarly, this role play proved very accessible and was generally well done. None of the questions caused undue problems. **Question 1**, („Wie oft liest du in deiner Freizeit ein Buch”?) drew a variety of responses: from „Ich lese jeden Tag bevor ich ins Bett gehe“ to „nie“. All these answers were, of course, accepted. It is maybe worth mentioning here again, that one–word responses are perfectly acceptable for full marks in the role plays (they are not suitable for the Topic Conversations) if they are appropriate responses. For **Question 4** („Findest du es eine gute Idee, in der Freizeit etwas zu lesen? Warum (nicht)?”) any conceivable answer was accepted, provided it was expressed clearly. Again, the variety of responses was good to see, from „Ja, weil es sehr interessant ist/weil es entspannt” to „eine sehr gute Idee, weil das hilft mit Kreativität”, which obviously was given full marks in spite of the word order mistake, as there was no ambiguity of meaning at all.

Card 3: (Geburtstage und Andere Feste)

This role play was also generally done well. The first question, „Wann hast du denn Geburtstag?” drew mainly clear and brief responses. **Question 2** brought a good variety of responses: from very brief ones, like „zu Hause”, to much more elaborate ones like „ich gehe normalerweise mit meiner Familie/ mit meinen Freunden in ein Restaurant”. In order to get full marks for **Question 3**, a verb in a past tense time frame was needed. **Question 4** („Was ist für dich das schönste Fest in deiner Familie?“) brought an interesting variety of responses from candidates in different countries and the explanations given to the second part of this question („Warum gerade dieses Fest?”) were often very interesting, but also at times amusing. The last question about candidates’ plans for celebrating the end of their school year was also answered well by many candidates. However, responses that did not make clear which time frame was being used could not be credited fully. One candidate’s response of „ich habe noch keine Ahnung“ was also credited fully, as it was completely appropriate in this context.

Card 4: (ein Gespräch über (klassische) Musik)

Again, this role play encouraged creative responses and was generally done very well. Brief responses sufficed in **Question 1** („Seit wann bist du denn schon hier in Österreich?”), but there were also more complex responses like „ich bin schon seit ein paar Monaten hier”. A variety of answers were accepted, like „seit gestern”, „seit einer Woche” and even „seit vier Jahren”, although this might be unlikely. However, responses like „nächsten Woche” or „in zwei Tagen” could not be credited, as the main question phrase („seit wann”) was not responded to. **Question 2**, („Und was denkst du über klassische Musik und klassische Konzerte?“) drew responses from „klassische Musik ist meine Lieblingsmusik“ to „ich finde klassische Musik total langweilig“. All these responses were fully credited. The most creative responses in this role play situation were given to **Question 3** („Glaubst du, alle jungen Leute sollten in der Schule etwas über die traditionelle oder klassische Musik ihres Landes lernen? Warum (nicht)?”). There were similarly interesting responses to the last question („Und welche Musik wird es bei deiner nächsten Familienfeier geben”?), when, in some cases, candidates gave very interesting reasons why certain types of music were used for different types of festivities.

Card 5: (eine Diskussion über Umweltfragen)

This role play proved to be straightforward, although there were some candidates who had difficulties with the question words „seit wann” in **Question 1**, even though this phrase recurs in nearly every speaking exam. Candidates generally coped very well with the situation of answering questions on protecting our environment. **Question 3** (“Was ist deine Meinung: Wer kann die Umwelt am besten schützen?”) drew a large variety of responses, which were often quite thought provoking, including the response „Jugendliche”. When asked why they thought so, this candidate responded: „weil wir in der Schule lernen, was wir machen sollen”.The last question („Welches Thema wollen wir nächste Woche diskutieren?”) again was dealt with creatively by a lot of candidates, and any answer that could be deemed an appropriate response to the question was credited, if it was about an environmental issue in the widest sense of the word.

Card 6: (Geld)

In many ways, this specific situation was answered very well, as very interesting and varied responses were given. Brief responses were perfectly appropriate for the first two questions, although it should be mentioned again that the question word „wer?” did cause problems to a few candidates. **Question 3** („Was hast du denn im letzten Monat mit deinem Geld alles gekauft?“) brought a range of very interesting responsesIt seems that the majority of candidates thought they had enough money in response to **Question 4**.

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Nevertheless, most of them thought it would be a good idea to supplement the money they had with a job of some description, whether at home, like washing their car or mowing their lawn, or in a holiday job.

As there were fewer centres with more than six candidates, the following role plays were not heard so quite frequently, so the notes on them will be briefer.

Card 7: (Transportmittel und Reisen)

Similarly, there were few problems and candidates coped well with the demands of this situation. Referring again to the importance of responding to the main question word, in **Question 1** („Wie oft benutzt denn deine Familie das Auto in einer typischen Woche?") simple responses like „einmal", „nie", „sehr oft" or „jeden Tag" could be accepted as correct responses. There were particularly interesting responses to **Question 4** („Ist Radfahren ein praktisches Transportmittel? Warum (nicht)?"), which varied considerably from country to country.

Card 8: (Ein Gespräch über Fernsehen, Filme und Freizeit)

Similarly, this role play proved fairly straightforward to candidates. They were able to communicate which programmes were their favourites on TV or the internet. Interesting discussions developed about where they preferred to watch films and why that was their favourite location. **Question 4** („Erzähl mir etwas über einen Film, den du in letzter Zeit gesehen hast.") elicited very interesting and creative responses. However, this question showed again clearly that it is important for candidates at this level to be able to give a brief narrative in a past time frame. As this is clearly stated in the syllabus, this skill can be trained in classroom practice on a large variety of different topics.

Card 9: (Zu Hause)

This role play was heard least often, but it was completed fairly well by the candidates heard. Brief responses were fine again for **Question 1** („Wie viele Zimmer gibt es denn bei dir zu Hause?"), for example, the response „drei" was perfectly sufficient for full marks. For **Question 2**, any room in the house was accepted, even „in meinem Zimmer". However, „in dem Lebenszimmer" was not accepted.

Topic Conversations

As with the Role Plays, both candidates and examiners coped well with the requirements for the Topic Conversations, and a lot of complex and meaningful conversations were developed. The fact that the questions to the conversations are scripted offers several advantages, especially that of fairness, as every candidate is asked the same questions. This means that there is a genuine comparability of standards.

Most examiners asked questions exactly as printed, the majority also repeated questions when required and continued to ask the alternative questions, when no answers (or indeed inappropriate or rudimentary answers) were forthcoming to the original questions.

It is also worth pointing out here, that examiners need to make sure that they read the questions correctly. In Topic 3, **Question 3**, for example, there were a number of examiners who misread the question. They read: „Sind für dich Schultage oder Wochentage schöner?" thus making the question fairly meaningless, as „Schultage" are „Wochentage; instead the question should have read: „Sind für dich Schultage oder Wochen**end**tage schöner?"

Also, examiners encouraged candidates to expand on their answers with phrases like „Kannst du mehr darüber sagen?", with the effect that most candidates managed to produce sufficiently long and meaningful conversations by answering the five questions in some detail. Good use was also made of the fact that examiners can ask up to two further questions, if the conversation is too short or insubstantial and again the majority of centres did this very well. Only a very small minority of examiners asked closed further questions, which did not help candidates to use expansive language and thus hindered rather than helped them.

Many candidates produced interesting content and ambitious language, including subordinating conjunctions (for example, obwohl, weil, bevor, indem, nachdem, damit, sobald) which helped them develop, justify and/or explain their statements. The most successful candidates also used structures like passives and subjunctives with confidence. Similarly, words and phrases like 'außerdem' 'eigentlich' and 'aus diesem Grund' were used by candidates who ended up being marked at the top of the range for Quality of language. It is also worth pointing out again that candidates are encouraged in this part of the exam to be expansive, to tell stories, to give evaluations and to describe events.

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A candidate's use of tenses is marked as part of the general impression for Quality of language, using the descriptors provided in the mark scheme. This means that accurate use of tenses is only one aspect of the range of structures listed in the syllabus that the final Quality of language mark will be based on. The Quality of language mark also takes into account other aspects of language use, like the range of vocabulary used (for example, whether the candidate also uses some vocabulary that is less common at this level) and the intonation (whether the conversation sounds natural and spontaneous, with the voice rising and falling as in a genuine dialogue) and fluency (whether the candidate can put sentences together in a natural way, allowing for pauses to think) of a candidate.

On the whole, the descriptors in the mark scheme for both 'Communication' and 'Quality of language' were used accurately by examiners in deciding on the mark bands and marks they awarded. Nearly the same number of centres marked too severely as too leniently. However, if the marks awarded by a centre are consistent, then appropriate scaling is not a problem. There were only a very few centres where marking was clearly inconsistent and the descriptors in the mark scheme were not used appropriately.

The „Alternative Frage(n)" for **Question 3**, **4** and **5** of the topics proved a very useful tool, as those alternative questions, which were formulated using more accessible language and linguistic concepts, made it possible even for weaker candidates to have a relevant attempt at answering the respective questions. Thus, these questions also proved to be a very good differentiating tool.

Like in the role play situations, there was no appreciable difference in difficulty between the seven topics. After hearing a great variety of responses from candidates from different educational and cultural backgrounds, it is safe to say that there was not a single question in any of the seven topics that caused any particular difficulties. The responses to the questions asking for opinions and evaluations (**Question 3** in Topics 1 to 3 and 5 to 7, **Question 4** in Topic 4) showed the candidates' creativity and spontaneity at its very best. Those imaginative responses were a further indication that encouraging candidates to answer spontaneously to questions that are of genuine interest to them allows them to converse successfully.

No comments on the individual topics are included in this report due to the reasons given above and the fact that overall marks achieved in the different topics were totally comparable.

Randomisation

The randomisation guidelines given in the Teachers' Notes were generally followed exactly. This is very important both for reasons of fairness and confidentiality (in centres with many candidates), but the pairing of role plays and topics given in the Randomisation sheet also makes sure that candidates are given the opportunity to show what they are capable of in a variety of topic areas.

Recordings/audio files

The system of uploading both audio files and exam paperwork to Submit for Assessment worked well again during this session. Most centres uploaded their files straight after the exam had taken place and thus enabled a speedy completion of the moderation process.

Before recordings are uploaded, spot checks must be made to ensure that every candidate is clearly audible. This year, there appeared to be far fewer problems with poor recordings. Even though the majority of recordings were of a good quality, a small minority of centres continue to place the microphone too far from the candidates, so that it is difficult to hear them.

Administration

Administration in centres was generally good and, in this session, very few centres made errors in the addition of the candidates' marks on the working mark sheet (WMS). Using the electronic Centre Mark Sheet gives an extra advantage here, as marks are automatically added up correctly.

Marking by centres

Most centres made very good use of the mark descriptors in the mark schemes for both parts of the exam and thus managed to mark their candidates accurately. Reasons for excessive generosity included awarding high marks for Communication, when candidates had not offered ideas and opinions, as answers had been too factual.

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Paper 0525/42
Writing

Key messages

Candidates are advised to read each question carefully before starting their answer. The task set in each bullet point should be attempted, and the same tense should be used in the answer. Even when the tasks refer to an activity the candidate does not engage with, the specific tasks set should be attempted using the vocabulary and structures which have been learned. Credit cannot be given for answers which do not address the exact tasks.

No credit will be given for answers or parts of answers written in a language other than German.

In **Question 2**, candidates will usually be required to demonstrate the use of present and future tenses, and in **Question 3**, they will need to use past, present and future tenses in different tasks. In both questions, candidates will need to express opinions and give reasons for their choices.

General comments

There was little evidence of candidates being short of time. The correct number of questions was answered by all candidates, and most answers were of an appropriate length.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates had to complete an electronic form by filling in the answers to five questions. Part of an application form to participate in the Berlin Marathon had to be completed.

A significant majority of candidates achieved 5/5. Marks were lost for a variety of reasons. Some candidates used the same vocabulary item twice, but a repeated item can only gain credit once. Some left the meaning of the word unclear because of spelling errors, while others chose a wrong word entirely.

Task 1 required candidates to give their nationality. The mark was generally awarded because the attempts to express a nationality or a country were understood, even though many of these attempts were spelled incorrectly. It would be helpful if candidates could learn to write one nationality or one country accurately in German.

Task 2 asked how often candidates trained. A single-word answer (*Tag, Monat, Woche*) gained the mark.

Task 3 asked where candidates trained. A wide range of answers indicating a place was accepted, including *Schule, mein Haus, Stadion, Sportzentrum.* While *Gymnasium* was accepted because it is a type of school, *Gym* was not because it is not a German word. The question word was *Wo?* and so any reference to a person (trainer, parent, teacher) did not gain credit.

Task 4 required the answer to the question 'how' (*Wie?*) candidates intended to travel to Berlin and so a mode of transport was expected – *Zug, Bahn, Flugzeug, Auto.* The person with whom they travelled (e.g. *Freund*) did not answer the question and so was not accepted.

Task 5 asked where (*Wo?*) candidates would stay. *Hotel, Jugendherberge, Camping, bei meiner Tante* were good answers. Towns were only accepted when they were in Germany.

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Question 2

The topic of this task was a new leisure centre. Five points had to be made in response to four bullet points. This question was assessed out of a maximum of 12 marks, using a single set of grade descriptors.

Task 1 was a straightforward introduction to the topic and asked what there was to do in the new leisure centre. The question was in the present tense and so answers had to be in the present tense to be valid. A number of candidates wrote in the past tense about their recent visit and so their responses were not accepted. This task offered the opportunity to give a general answer using *man kann* and the infinitive. A range of vocabulary was used with references to sports centres as well as to centres offering a wider range of activities.

Task 2 asked for information about the cost of activities. Most candidates were able to produce a relevant response although some lacked the vocabulary to do so accurately. Good answers included the cost of an entrance ticket, the cost of individual activities, the cost of items bought in the shops, or the cost of food and drink.

Task 3 resulted in some unexpected answers. An opinion was sought about the café in the leisure centre. Many answered this well, with a range of opinions. However, the verb *finden* turned out to be confusing for some candidates, with a some failing to interpret the question as seeking an opinion (i.e. *how do you find/what is your opinion …)* about the café and, instead, interpreting it in the literal sense of finding, as in where to locate the café.

Task 4 required an explanation for the opinion expressed in **Task 3** and was generally well answered with descriptions of the food, the décor, the staff and the ambiance of the café.

Task 5 gave candidates the opportunity to write in the future tense and to describe their plans for their free-time in the following week. This was mostly answered well with confident use of the future tense. However, some candidates who started with *ich werde/ich möchte* then contradicted themselves by completing their answer with a past participle (e.g. *gespielt, gekauft*). Note that *mochte* and *wurde* are both past tenses and so cannot gain credit here.

Question 3

In **Question 3**, there was a choice between writing an email about a school party **(3a)** and an article for the school magazine about winning a prize **(3b)**. **3a** was a much more popular choice than **3b** and was attempted by the large majority of candidates.

Question 3 is assessed in banded mark schemes under three headings: Task Completion, Range and Accuracy.

Question 3

(a) ***Task 1*** gave candidates the opportunity to write about their preparations for a party in school. There were many clear, detailed answers in the past tense, most of which mentioned food purchases and cooking, as well as sending invitations. Some candidates did not understand *vorbereiten* and either guessed an incorrect meaning or wrote generally on the topic. A few simply omitted this task. The accurate use of the verb *vorbereiten* and deciding whether it was separable or whether '*ge-*' was needed to form the past proved difficult.

Task 2 asked who came to the party. There were instances of *wer* being misunderstood as *wo* but most candidates were able to provide an appropriate answer, usually mentioning teachers and schoolfriends. Manipulating *kommen* and changing from the singular of the question (*gekommen ist*) to the plural (*gekommen sind*) proved more complex than expected.

Task 3 needed an opinion about the music at the party. There were many good answers, giving clear opinions on the music, with many referring to their preferred style or artist. However, a number of candidates read the question literally to mean 'how' or 'where' they located the music.

Task 4 gave candidates the opportunity to develop their ideas about the importance or otherwise of parties in school and many rose to the challenge, using structures and vocabulary they had learned about getting to know people, developing friendships, having the opportunity to relax, but also not wasting time which should be used for learning and revising.

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Task 5 asked for details about how candidates would celebrate a future important moment in school. While some candidates tackled this well, there were a number who did not attempt it at all, and others who talked generally about the future but did not address the actual task. Others wrote about an important moment but referred to the past rather than to the future. Candidates would do well to read the specifics of the task and be sure to check the tense needed before answering.

(b) ***Task 1*** asked candidates to explain how they had won a prize, and most were able to provide detailed, interesting answers about what they had done.

Task 2 required a description of the prize. Although the specific vocabulary for 'trophy', 'cup' or 'medal' was often not known, most candidates succeeded in describing some aspect of their prize, such as money, a holiday, a car, and so gained full credit for Task Completion.

Task 3 gave candidates the opportunity to describe their reaction to their win. Many did so clearly and concisely, but some got rather caught up in the excitement of the moment and tried to say more than the level of their German permitted.

Task 4 asked whether prizes are good motivators. There were many interesting and thoughtful replies ranging from those who thought that a prize should not be necessary to encourage hard work to those who explained how they were now motivated to win other prizes.

Task 5 turned to the future and asked what sort of prize candidates would like to win. Most were able to describe the sort of competition they would like to enter, and most used the future tense successfully to express their ideas.

Question 3 Range

In terms of vocabulary, **Question 3a** required the use of a range of vocabulary on the topic of parties and school, while **Question 3b** sought vocabulary on the topic of winning a prize. Many candidates demonstrated a good range of vocabulary, as well as the ability to express clear opinions and reasons on the particular aspects of the specific topics.

Overall, many candidates had been well-trained in the need for a range of language, including adjectives and adverbs, and some more sophisticated verb structures. Candidates used negatives and made efforts to include connectives, such as: *wenn, aber, oder, weil, denn, entweder ... oder, und, sowohl ... als auch.* A few candidates used relative clauses successfully. Successful responses showed clear use of a variety of time frames, the inclusion of conjunctions that require the manipulation of word order, *wenn* clauses with conditional constructions, modal verbs used correctly, *um…zu…* and other higher structures.

However, some candidates had difficulty expressing specific concepts, such the details of having prepared for a party, or planning to celebrate a key moment in **Question 3a**, or in conveying the specifics of winning a prize in **Question 3b**.

The issues regarding the understanding and use of *finden* also resulted in some confusion. Centres would do well to train their candidates in the use of the different meanings of this verb, in both the present and the past tenses.

Answers which relied on a large number of non-German words did not gain much credit for Range.

Question 3 Accuracy

There was evidence of careful preparation, and basic structures were generally sound. Many candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of basic verbs in past, present and future tenses, but there were many examples of candidates not checking verb agreements and appropriate tenses. The formation of the perfect tense seemed to present a particular challenge, especially with the verbs conjugated with *sein*. The mismatch between the subject and the verb (as in *ich gehen, ich hat gekauft*) and the inaccurate formation of the past participle (*gesprecht, gegeht*) 'frequently impeded communication'.

Candidates using more complex structures often struggled with accurate word order. Some candidates tried to use adjectives but agreement with the noun was frequently inaccurate.

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The use of capital letters was patchy and inconsistent with some candidates seemingly unaware of the need for their use.

Despite such challenges, many candidates worked hard to complete the tasks set. The most successful candidates were, as ever, highly accurate, demonstrating an impressive ability to use a wide range of language structures. Less successful candidates were also still working hard to convey the messages.

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