



AS Level German

7661_3V and 7661_3T

Report on the examination

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General Points and Administration

In 2025 the overall number of students taking the exam at AS Level was rather small. Most students seemed to have prepared well for the test. There were very few instances where examiners reported that students appeared uncertain of what was expected of them. Overall, examiners commented that the standard of performance in the tests was pleasingly high. There were many marks awarded in the top bands of the published mark scheme. Visiting examiners also reported that most students relished the opportunity of discussing what they had learnt with a stranger. Most responded very well to the challenge of doing so, with high levels of subject knowledge. Arrangements in centres for the tests were without exception better than satisfactory. This was greatly appreciated by all visiting examiners.

Teacher conducted tests, however, continued to give rise to problems with respect to administration, deadlines and conduct. The practice of uploading media files to the Digital Media Portal has become established over the last three years. Nevertheless, too many centres did not adhere to deadlines as in the published instructions for the conduct of the test. This causes problems for the Board and examiners alike. Teachers are strongly encouraged to follow the advice given in these reports in order to avoid such issues. It is accepted that centres with single figure numbers of students will choose this option for the tests. Teachers therefore often benefit from smaller numbers of cards to prepare, and this was evident in some very good tests this year. These teacher examiners were fully conversant with the content of the card and had considered supplementary questions carefully. Unfortunately, evidence showed conclusively that this practice was not universally followed. As a result, there were too many examples of poor and at times inadequate or poor questioning by teachers. This often had a negative impact on marks awarded, especially for AO1, AO2 and AO4, as summarised here:

- Many teachers continue not to ask any supplementary questions between the printed questions on the card. This is an issue raised every year in this report, and it is difficult to understand why such practice remains. This suggests that teachers conducting the tests do not look at the front cover of the Examiner's Material which contains the phrase '[you] ... should ask follow-up questions to develop discussion of the sub-themes.' As AO2 marks are awarded for an 'understanding of the material on the card', this is essential. In the absence of any demonstrable understanding, marks could not be and were not awarded, so students were disadvantaged. Reading out information from the card does not demonstrate 'understanding', simply the ability to read, which is not being tested. Inviting students to explain, comment upon, express an opinion about and react to the stimulus material is expected and required. Students who were challenged in this way were almost always rewarded with marks in the higher bands for their responses. Teachers who prepared properly for the test were able to prompt students to engage in a meaningful exchange of information. This was far more preferable to the often passive acceptance of lengthy monologues delivering all details given on the card.
- Because marks for AO1 are awarded when 'students respond to ... unpredictable elements, marking examiners rely on teachers to provide some. Visiting examiners

who follow up the points raised by students are often pleasantly surprised by their reactions. Conversely, teachers who ask no follow-up questions do not give students an opportunity to do this, and so marks cannot be awarded by examiners. Consequently, teachers who largely ignored instructions on the Examiner's Material caused students to lose marks for both AO1 and AO2.

- Marks for AO4 are awarded for knowledge and understanding of those aspects of the sub-theme covered in the discussion. The third printed question serves as an introduction to this discussion; it is not meant to be the last question on the topic. Teachers who prepared properly for the tests were able to expand on the sub-theme successfully, and students responded well. Unfortunately, some teachers frequently asked series of random, unrelated questions. In the discussion it is far better to explore a student's knowledge of one or two aspects of the sub-theme in some depth. A single sentence response on *gleichgeschlechtliche Ehe* and a non sequitur question on the *Scheidungsrate* hardly helps as the student can only show rather superficial 'knowledge and understanding'.
- Once again, as consistently noted in previous years, teachers sometimes found it difficult to maintain the focus of the discussion. To score marks for AO4, the discussion must relate to the German-speaking world. Clear reference to this should be included in the teacher's questions as well as in students' answers which should also offer concrete evidence and examples from a German-speaking country. Teachers are again reminded that personal questions to the student cannot attract marks at AO4, so they should be avoided. It is far better to prompt students to comment about what young people in Germany do and give their reaction. Teachers are advised that there are 10 marks available for AO4, and occasionally these were left unexploited by the end of the test.
- Teachers are again reminded of the timing of the test, which lasts for a maximum of 7 minutes on each of the two cards. Overall centres fared better this year than in the past, with the majority of tests clearing this hurdle. However, teachers are also reminded that the student's question must be asked within the 7 minute time limit for it to count. On several occasions, teachers prompted the student's question at the last available opportunity, only for the student to hesitate or mis-phrase it. Best practice is to follow the strategy most often employed by visiting examiners and to prompt the student to ask their question after their answer to the second printed question on the card. Doing this means that (teacher) examiners then know how much time remains for the wider discussion for AO4. Adopting this strategy might also lead some teachers to adopt the habit of asking supplementary questions after all printed questions.
- As in previous years, there was still evidence of teachers alternating between the *Sie* and *du* forms in their questions. Although all questions on the stimulus cards are phrased using *Sie*, it is perfectly acceptable to use the *du* form and to adapt the printed questions accordingly to ensure consistency in the use of address throughout the test. There is also no 'penalty' for students who use the *du* form for their question.

Students' performance

AO1: Most students spoke with good or acceptable fluency which is to the great credit of their teachers in classrooms. Many were able to develop and extend their responses well, with or without prompts from (teacher) examiners. In many cases, however, teachers might have provided significantly more opportunities for them to do so. Spontaneity was a key feature of higher marks awarded at AO1.

AO2: In general, students found the cards accessible; a more detailed analysis of individual cards is given below. The format of the cards was familiar to all students without exception, resulting in some outstanding performances. As noted earlier, some teacher-conducted tests did not allow students to perform to the best of their abilities. As a rule, a single supplementary question between the printed questions on the card proved inadequate to exploit the material fully.

AO3: As in previous years, the range of performance for AO3 was quite wide, but marks in the lower bands were not common. The most challenging aspect of grammar for students remained word order in both main and subordinate clauses. Some of the most common issues are listed below for reference. Overall, the standard of pronunciation and intonation was pleasingly high, with some students making exceptional efforts to sound German.

Common grammatical errors:

- word order with *aber / oder / und* e.g. *aber das nicht richtig ist; und denke ich*
- word order with *dass / weil / wenn* e.g. *dass es gibt; weil sie finden es schwer*
- confusion of *also / auch*, and their position e.g. *das ist also gut; ich auch denke*
- word order with other conjunctions e.g. *deshalb ich glaube; jedoch man kann*
- modals *können / müssen / wollen / mögen* e.g. *wir kann; sie (pl) muss; er wollen; wir magen*
- prepositions and cases e.g. *für mir; auf dem Internet; an dem Konzert; zu Deutschland*

Common vocabulary errors:

- *wissen / kennen*
- *helfen / Hilfe*
- *schauen / zeigen*
- *sagen / sprechen*
- *ich gern; ich fern*
- *in meiner Meinung*
- *interessant / interessiert; and ich interessiere (mich) in / an*

AO4: As already mentioned above, performance for AO4 showed perhaps the greatest spectrum of success (or failure), with 10 marks available. Many students were not helped by teachers to focus on the points they wanted to make on the German-speaking world. Many teachers resorted to personal and very general questions in the discussion, which were not appropriate for scoring marks for AO4. Students often found it difficult to support general observations by including evidence from a German-speaking society or culture.

Stimulus Cards

Examiners reported that all cards were found to be accessible by the vast majority of students. The prescribed order of cards to be offered to students in tests obviously meant that some cards enjoyed greater circulation than others. Examiners marking teacher conducted tests reported frequent cases where students simply recited all information in answer to the first printed question. Prepared monologues of this kind often went unchallenged, despite the student covering material required for the second printed question. This caused problems for both teacher and student as the test continued, with repetition of content and no real discussion. Inevitably tests of this kind moved to the discussion of the wider sub-theme far too early. This occasionally caused additional problems, when teachers returned to the content of the card much later and a muddled discussion ensued. Alternatively, lack of suitable preparation meant that teachers ran out of appropriate questions before the end of the test. Resorting to personal questions to fill the time simply did not allow the student any further marks for AO4. Several students were significantly disadvantaged as a result, and teachers are strongly encouraged to avoid such pitfalls.

Card A: Alleinerziehend, aber nicht allein

This card was a popular choice at the top of the sequence grid. Answers generally involved a lot of detail, although extended presentations were often not challenged by teachers. Where students did not refer to the quotes on the card teachers often failed to introduce them. Knowledge of alternative family structures was often good, but some students struggled to relate this to the German-speaking world.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: higher rate of mothers in full-time work; difficulty of balancing career and family; attitudes in different parts of the German-speaking world.

Card B: Schokoladenmuseum statt Kirche

Paired with Card A at the beginning of the series this card often lost out. When students did choose this card, they generally performed quite well, although some had difficulty interpreting the initial statistics. Answers to the third printed question often struggled to focus on the German speaking world. Again, this was not helped by poor quality questioning on the part of teacher examiners.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: increasing popularity of living together and partnerships outside marriage; trend to getting married at an older age; still existing belief that marriage is best for bringing up children.

Card C: Digitales Lernen

The wealth of information on this card made it a popular choice, although students struggled at times to convey it. Reading the material from the card resulted in poor sentence structure, and teacher examiners regularly provided only limited help with their questions. There was surprisingly little discussion of the boxed elements of the programme at the foot of the card.

Students found it difficult to focus answers in the wider discussion on the German speaking world. Poor questioning from teacher examiners often gave little assistance, as they resorted to personal questions about phone use, etc.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: use of computers in schools in Germany; measures to keep young people in the German speaking world safe online; use of internet and social media among young people in the German speaking world.

Card D: Das Smartphone – der neue Teddybär

Again, this card often lost out to Card C, and many who did choose it simply read out the statistics. Lack of follow-up challenge from teacher examiners limited the development of readily accessible information. Most students reacted in support of the headteacher's comment, but Paul's contribution often went unmentioned and was, again, missed by teachers. The wider discussion tended to focus on WhatsApp as the preferred social medium for German teenagers but then petered out. Stimulus cards from previous years often provide useful information to help with this; centres and students are advised to make use of these.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: the growing use of smart phone technology among young people in Germany; measures to keep young people in the German speaking world safe from online dangers; influence of social media on young people in Germany.

Card E: Stirbt das Fernsehen?

Few students attempted this card. Some apparently did not understand the title and many did not use the statistics in a meaningful way. Answers to the third printed question also varied widely, as the focus drifted and responses became vague and general.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: examples of reality TV shows that are popular in the German speaking world; popularity of fantasy series; wide availability of streaming platforms in the German speaking world, and their impact on young people.

Card F: Deutsche Rap-Musik

Most students who attempted this card were able to exploit the material about Nina in the bullet points well. As already stated, many teachers simply listened to all the information without any follow-up before asking the second printed question which often had a detrimental effect on marks. More able students spoke with some conviction about the significance of music for young Germans of today. Others tended to offer rather vague examples of preferences which were not well exploited by teacher examiners.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: styles of music and their popularity among German speaking teenagers; ways in which young people in the German speaking world access their music; popularity of live music events in German speaking countries.

Card G: Ein Feuerfest im Winter

Overall, this was one of the most successful cards this year. The information was clearly accessible to a wide profile of students who were not fazed by the unknown word *Biike*. Bizarrely, this caused fewer problems than the more conventional German adjective *friesisch*, which was often mispronounced. Although most students offered knowledge in answer to the third printed question, the predominance of *Oktoberfest* and *Karneval* was a little disappointing. Many teachers failed to follow up pre-learnt soliloquies thus preventing students from adding evaluation and personal opinions on familiar information and gaining higher AO4 marks.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: Christmas and New Year traditions such as *Sankt Nikolaus*, *Adventskranz*, *Bleigießen*; *Karneval* traditions and *Maitagsfeste*; regional customs such as *Almabtrieb* in Austria and *Leonhardi-Ritt* in Bavaria.

Card H: Eine lange Tradition

Again, students dealt with this card well, accessing the wealth of information provided. Teacher examiners fared less well, ignoring opportunities to challenge points made and secure marks for AO1 and AO2. Responses to printed question three were very similar to those for card G. It must be stressed that there is nothing inherently wrong about referencing *Oktoberfest* and/or *Karneval* for this sub-theme. However, the exploitation of the information by the teacher is often minimal and focused only on factual information rather than offering opportunities for critical evaluation.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: the importance of regional festivals; the relevance of traditional festivals; the economic and social significance of large festivals.

Card I: Kunstmeile Krems

As centres needed five students or more to offer this card, there were not very many students who chose it. Those who did found the material accessible, although many read out all the information without providing meaningful evaluation. Very few understood the rather idiosyncratic *Artothek*, and answers to printed question three varied widely. Some students were well aware of artistic movements and their members in the German-speaking world, others offered vague contributions.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: influential German artistic movements e.g. *Der Blaue Reiter*, *Die Brücke*; renowned artists e.g. Gustav Klimt, Franz Marc; the role of art in public spaces in the German speaking world.

Card J: Lübeck – Stadt der sieben Türme

The pairing of this card with card I inevitably meant that even fewer students attempted it. Discussions of the city stemming from the first two printed questions were generally based on the descriptions given on the card. The wider discussion was variable in quality, but some knew of German and/or Austrian architects, and examples of their work.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: knowledge of styles of architecture e.g. *Spätgotik, Renaissance*; well-known architectural masterpieces e.g. *Kölner Dom, Reichstagsgebäude, Schloss Schönbrunn*; place of modern architecture in German society.

Card K: Eine Kultfigur aus Ostberlin

Due to its high profile in the prescribed sequence, this was a popular card and handled with varying degrees of success. Some students thought the picture on the left was the old *Ampelmann* and the one on the right the new. This was not always challenged by teachers, who let the misunderstanding go and moved on to the second question. This card was one of the clear examples of why supplementary questions are so important to the discussion. Directing the student to the material at the top of the card would have clarified some of the confusion. Focusing on the information about the shops would have prepared students for their answer to printed question two. In the wider discussion, most students knew some history, and suitable references were made to buildings and attractions in Berlin.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: the way Berlin puts great emphasis on remembering its past and that of Germany; the diversity of the modern population; the development of the city both before and after *Wiedervereinigung*; important museums and galleries; the diverse music culture in the capital.

Card L: Die „Lange Nacht der Familie“

This card was generally well done by students, although many simply read out most of the plentiful information. Where this was challenged, students often added good opinions about the activities and thoughtful comments about locations. Where this was accepted at face value, opportunities to develop the sub-theme were badly missed. By the time students arrived at the third printed question, some simply reeled off sights and buildings in Berlin. The relevance of some of these to the specific question *etwas für Jung und Alt* was usually not challenged either.

Suggested points for the wider discussion included: the vast number of museums and galleries e.g. *die Museuminsel*; interesting architectural style of some buildings e.g. *Jüdisches Museum*; the large number of parks and green spaces in the city.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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