

# External Assessment Report 2013 – German Intermediate 1

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## Overall Performance

The overall performance of candidates was better than in previous years. Most notably, 'A' passes rose from 39.8% to 54.7%, while the percentage of candidates achieving a 'No Award' fell from 7.9% to 2.7%. Improvement was reflected in all four skills with listening reaching its highest average score ever.

## Reading

- Text 1 and Text 2 were very well done and there was sustained improvement in candidates' ability to engage with the third text.
- There were some surprises in candidates' responses. For example, in text 2, question 2(a) candidates were asked where the people like to spend their summer holidays. One of the answers, *draußen am Rhein*, was poorly done.
- Many candidates struggled to demonstrate their comprehension in the more challenging questions of the longer fourth text. Common areas of difficulty were;
  - Failing to understand "*aber meine Mutter sagt nichts dazu*" in response to question (i) and "*gemein*" in question (n).
  - Not giving specific details (*sieben Jahre jünger/in den Sommerferien*) as required by the question thus losing marks.

## Listening

- Most candidates had been well prepared for this paper and were able to understand the majority of vocabulary used.
- Lexical items such as "*Hochhaus, Elektronik, and Schuhgeschäft*" caused problems, even though it was felt that these should have been within the understanding of most candidates.
- The sentence "*Ein Mädchen in der Wohnung nebenan ist unser Babysitter*" was poorly handled by many candidates as was "*Ich fahre mit der Straßenbahn*" which was often rendered as train, bus and car.

## Writing

- It was felt that the majority of centres had prepared the candidates properly to write three sentences under each of the main headings.
- A range of verbs were evident in most scripts, showing that verb work has improved.
- Having said this, sometimes the work was let down by a number of other mistakes in gender, case, spelling, and word order.

- A lot of work was considered 'safe', with few candidates attempting *weil/dass* clauses which make the difference in the complexity of the work, especially for a mark of 15.
- It appears that a few centres are still under-preparing their candidates for the writing paper as there were a number of very poor quality responses.

### **Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates**

- Centres should continue to ensure that all four skills are adequately covered during the teaching and learning of the course.
- There was concern that perhaps some candidates are not given adequate practice in writing in the final three months of the course, and thus do not have the capacity to cope in the final examination. This has been underlined by the examining team's experience at Appeals where, in some centres, it seems little feedback is given to the candidates between their prelim and the actual exam. It follows that positive constructive feedback on their practice performance would certainly help candidates improve their performance in May.
- Candidates continue to lose marks in both the Reading and Listening papers for failing to give all the information required by questions. Centres should therefore encourage candidates to read questions carefully and to be guided by the number of points awarded for each one.