

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Number of entries in 2012: 1118

- The Reading paper proved to be within the capabilities of most candidates.
- Centres are strongly advised to devote the appropriate amount of teaching time to the skill of translation.
- Too many candidates failed to read the directed writing tasks in full and so failed to respond to them appropriately. A minority of candidates used pre-prepared material that did not address the bullet points in the task. Centres should remind candidates that failure to address three bullet points results in the mark '0'.
- Some candidates were very well prepared, and there were some excellent examples of creative writing.
- In Listening the concept of a different uniform depending on the time or season of year proved to be too difficult.
- A number of candidates did not cope with vocabulary such as *Australien* or *einen knielangen, dunkelblauen Rock* or *vier oder fünf*, which is a matter for concern.
- A small number of centres expressed concerns about the topic of school uniform. However, the topic proved accessible to almost all candidates.

Candidate performance in Reading/Directed Writing and advice to centres

- Questions 1(a), 2, 3(a) and 3(b) were well done.
- Candidates found Questions 5 and 8(b) demanding. In some questions there was lack of attention to detail in the answer.
- Candidates should read the text carefully and pay attention to fine detail. Candidates' performance in this paper was marred by a lack of precision. E.g. Question 3 (a): omission of 'before they left', Question 4 (a): omission of an element of 'house and car', Question 4 (b): omission of an element of 'friends and family'
- Weak English also impacted on marks awarded at Question 4(a), where too many candidates rendered *sie haben die wichtigsten Sachen bei ihren Eltern eingelagert* as simply 'they gave the most important stuff to their parents'.
- Translation was, on the whole, not well done, and that the level of accuracy was in some cases very poor. Some examples that led to candidates losing marks were:
Lebensstil rendered as life, rather than lifestyle or way of life; **den** as translated as then/when; **ich möchte** as 'I want'; **ich arbeite** 'as 'I have to work'
- In the first and second bullet points, too many candidates lost marks by failing to address both parts of the bullet.
- In the final bullet point, candidates had to make reference to the fact they had been away for an extended period of time.
- Centres are reminded that failure to address three bullet points means that mark awarded is 0. Some candidates were well able to manipulate the language even in the less predictable bullet points.
- A minority of candidates appeared to ignore the tasks set and to produce a response that they had learned by heart but which did not address the tasks set.
- Centres should encourage more able candidates to use complex sentences; without them the best mark they can get is 12.

- Candidates should do the tasks in Paper 1 in the order in which they are presented.

Candidate performance in Listening and advice to centres

- Most candidates did well in Question 1(b) 2, 5, and 7 and question 10 was reasonably done.
- Candidates appeared to find Question 1(a), 4, and 11 demanding. Question 12 proved too much for all but the most able candidates.
- In Question 1(a), 1(b), 2 some candidates lost marks through lack of detail.
- More able pupils coped very well with this paper and noticed all the subtle answers. Less able candidates were still able to gain marks on easier questions but the more sophisticated language was beyond them.
- The Listening and the Writing are closely linked to each other for a very good reason — the less creative candidate can take the answers to the Listening section and re-use as many of them as are required in the Writing response. Candidates should be made aware of this strategy.
- Centres are urged to ensure that candidates are fully conversant with ‘**Vorteile**’ and ‘**Nachteile**’.
- Some candidates struggled with the gender of nouns, adjective endings, and the construction of present tense verbs.