

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
THE MATRICULATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

ADVANCED LEVEL

GERMAN

MAY 2012

EXAMINERS' REPORT

**MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE
EXAMINATIONS BOARD**

AM Examiners' Report – May 2012

AM GERMAN MAY 2012 SESSION EXAMINERS' REPORT

Of the 33 candidates registered for the MATSEC Advanced Level Examination in German, 2 candidates were absent for the whole exam and 1 was absent for Paper III only. The following Table outlines the distribution of grades:

Grade	A	B	C	D	E	F	Abs	Total
No. of candidates	8	8	2	5	1	7	2	33
Percentage	24.2%	24.2%	6.1%	15.2%	3.0%	21.2%	6.1%	100.0%

All scripts were marked according to a marking scheme. Both the new and the old orthography were accepted.

Candidates who achieved a Grade A at Advanced Level demonstrated very good general knowledge, and their command of the German language and grammar was quite satisfactory. Some of these candidates appeared to have a German speaking background.

To some extent, the same could be stated about some of the candidates who achieved a Grade B. Quite a few students lost marks by not adhering to the instructions given in the titles, such as when the titles required replies to be phrased in complete sentences and just one or two words were offered as answers.

The six Essay titles offered in Paper I were chosen as follows:

“Musik in meinem Leben.“ - 15 candidates

(The role of Music in my life.)

“Immer mehr Kinder leiden an Übergewicht.“ - 7 candidates

(More and more children are suffering from obesity.)

“Der erste Arbeitstag in meinem ersten Ferienjob.“ - 5 candidates

(The first working day in my first summer job.)

“Eine sehr kalte Nacht im letzten Winter.“ - 3 candidates

(A very cold night last winter.)

“Ist es wichtig, das Mittelmeer sauber zu halten?“ - 1 candidate

(Is it important to keep the Mediterranean Sea clean?)

“Was bieten maltesische Zeitungen ihren Lesern?“ - 0 candidates

(What information is offered by Maltese newspapers to their readers?)

In order to be in keeping with the new Syllabus, questions on grammar were reduced and more emphasis was placed on understanding the given text. Thus Paper II places greater focus on vocabulary and deals, to a large extent, with questions and answers on the Reading Comprehension text. Most of the humorous replies – though unfortunately mistakes – were given here, and were due to the candidate not having understood the text / a certain word:

Gegenteil von (opposite of):

ehemalig (*former times*) = Knopfaugen (*button eyes*)
Freiheit (freedom) = Behälter (container)

There were similar misunderstandings and misinterpretations in the “Landeskunde” component – Geography, History, Civilisation – of Paper III. Some strange replies were given here.

A misunderstanding occurred in relation to the German word “die Wende” (the turn of events), today practically exclusively used for the changeover from the DDR to a united Germany. Another German word “die Wände” (the walls) with a very similar pronunciation led to praise for all the new buildings in the former DDR as a reply to:

Question No. 3) “Was versteht man unter dem Begriff “die Wende” in Bezug auf Deutschland und seine Geschichte?”
(*What is understood by the phrase „die Wende“ in relation to Germany and its history?*)

A similar misunderstanding, related to the German word “bauen” (to build) not to be mixed up with the word “der Bauer” (the farmer), occurred in

Question No. 4) „Was war die DDR und warum wurde sie “Arbeiter- und Bauernstaat genannt?”
(*What was the DDR and why was it called the „State of workers and Farmers?”*)

In reply, credit was given to the DDR for the building of schools and universities.

Another misunderstanding was tied to divorce, introduced in Malta in the current year. There was a misconception that it was introduced in Germany at the same time when in fact divorce has been permitted in Germany since the eighteenth century.

All above examples show a general lack of the basic universal knowledge eighteen year old Matriculation students should have, reaching beyond the Maltese shores.

In the same Paper III:

Question 10) Wofür ist Goethe besonders bekannt...
(*What are specific features of Goethe?*)

was acceptably answered well by most students. However, answers like “It is not known who he really was.” or “Goethe has written *Sturm und Drang*“ are sad examples.

Also in Paper III, in response to a “typical German festivity”, most candidates answered the Oktober-Fest in Munich, with its beer and costumes. However, some students saw it celebrated over the entire German Republic, whereas in fact, and as a pleasant surprise, two students mentioned the *original* reason, i.e. a Bavarian wedding in the Bavarian ruling higher nobility in the early nineteenth century.

AM Examiners' Report – May 2012

Of the prescribed books for Literature most candidates chose “Ich fühl mich so fifty-fifty”. Very few chose “MAYA AND DOMINICO” and “DREI MÄNNER IM SCHNEE” and no candidates opted for the latest book “FAST EIN BISSCHEN FRÜHLING”. Generally speaking, the candidates showed thorough knowledge of the book chosen and wrote the two short essays requested well.

The **Oral Examinations** rendered fairly satisfactory results again. Most candidates achieved marks between 15 and 30 (highest) which showed that they were generally prepared for free conversation.

The following points are of a general nature and apply to **Advanced Level** as well as **Intermediate Level** May 2012 examinations:

- a) Candidates should be encouraged to double check that they replied to *all* the questions to avoid getting a zero mark for questions they would have known the answer to. Candidates should also write the correct numbers of the questions answered.
- b) As the booklets provided for the candidates to write their answers in contain an ample number of pages, students should leave some lines of spacing between the individual sections as well as just one line between the different questions.
- c) Candidates should write their answers in ball point taking care it is not the “bold” type which renders the text on the reverse side nearly illegible. It is acceptable for candidates to draft some points, i.e. for essays, in pencil and cross them out in one neat line after having made use of them. No other colours should be used.
- d) Students should be made aware of the fact that the phrase “usw” (and so on) is not considered to be a sign of knowledge and is thus unacceptable as part of an answer in any examination. The marker is aware of the buildings, festivities ... that exist in a particular city or time and it is the student who needs to name them.
- e) When writing letters and e-mails, students are advised not to use their own names and addresses or e-mail addresses as sender. The universal “XX” is quite sufficient.

Chairperson
Board of Examiners

July 2012