

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
THE MATRICULATION EXAMINATION

ADVANCED LEVEL

GERMAN

MAY 2014

EXAMINERS' REPORT

MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE

EXAMINATIONS BOARD

**AM GERMAN
MAY 2014 SESSION
EXAMINERS' REPORT**

Of the 30 candidates registered for Advanced German, only one was absent for all the components of the examination. The results achieved by the candidates are as follows:

GRADE	A	B	C	D	E	F	Abs	Total
Number of Candidates	10	5	6	1	5	2	1	30
% of Total	33.33	16.67	20.00	3.33	16.67	6.67	3.33	100

All scripts were seen by three markers. A marking scheme was used. Both new and old German orthography were accepted.

The examination consisted of three papers and an oral component.

The fact that a substantial number of candidates obtained Grades A-C this year, shows that, as last year, there are a number of candidates with a good to very good command of German at the level required. The candidates were also well prepared for the questions on German culture, history and literature as well as for the grammar, writing, listening and oral exercises.

The following is an assessment of the overall performance in the different sections of the written examination:

Paper I consists of two parts, **Essay** and **Communicative Writing**. In general, this is one of the more demanding parts of the examination since it requires skills in free composition. However, the essay topics allow for a wide range of answers, and the types of essay recurring in each exam (descriptive, narrative and argumentative) can be practised. In this session, one of the narrative topics and the two descriptive topics were chosen by a majority of the candidates, whilst the argumentative topics were chosen by fewer candidates.

In the second part, there was a higher number of candidates who chose to write a letter asking for information about a job, but a considerable number also chose to write an article. It proved helpful if candidates could show that they were aware of typical phrases used in the communicative writing types mentioned in the syllabus, for instance, typical beginning and ending phrases used in letters. In this context, it is important to insist on the fact that candidates should not sign these letters using their real names; this instruction was abided by candidates this year.

Typical mistakes in this paper were related to word order and phrases; sometimes the candidates' influence of English was evident in that constructions were used which would have been correct in English but which were not correct in German.

Paper II also consists of two parts, **Listening Comprehension** and **Reading Comprehension**.

In general, the performance in the listening part was satisfactory. In the second section, questions have to be answered in full sentences, which is more challenging than the multiple choice and true/false questions in the first part.

The Reading Comprehension part of the paper consists of several different types of questions which are all related to one text (400-500 words), and includes questions with the aim of understanding and summarising the text, and which test the candidates' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. Overall, candidates were able to understand the basic issues of the chosen text. Mistakes ranged from problems with vocabulary to general grammatical errors. Questions requiring full answers proved challenging as they combine reading comprehension

with skills in paraphrasing. The last section requiring a summary of the whole text also proved to be a challenge for some candidates.

Paper III is designed to test knowledge on *Landeskunde*, i.e. 'area studies', of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, including questions on feasts and traditions in Germany, modern history of Germany, German-speaking personalities as well as a whole section on literature (questions on the literary texts listed in the syllabus). For this paper, preparation according to the syllabus is essential to obtain a good result. The results obtained by the candidates show that the most difficult section was that on general knowledge about 'Germany', where candidates were supposed to describe one of the German federal states (*Bundesländer*). In the section on literature, most candidates chose the text "Ich fühl mich so fifty-fifty" by Karin König, followed by "Maya und Domenico" by Susanne Wittpennig; fewer candidates chose "Drei Männer im Schnee" by Erich Kästner; "Fast ein bisschen Frühling" by Alex Capus was not chosen by any candidate.

The following points are of a general nature:

- a) Candidates need to double check that they have replied in full sentences when required.
- b) In the section on communicative writing, candidates should not sign letters using their real name or write down their real postal or email address in the letter head. Candidates are meant to sign with the name indicated in the respective section or should sign with XXX.
- c) More preparation with regard to the content questions in Paper III according to the syllabus is encouraged.

Chairperson
2014 Examination Panel