

**UNIVERSITY OF MALTA**  
**THE MATRICULATION EXAMINATION**

**ADVANCED LEVEL**

**GERMAN**

**MAY 2016**

**EXAMINERS' REPORT**

**MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE  
EXAMINATIONS BOARD**

**AM GERMAN  
MAY 2016 SESSION  
EXAMINERS' REPORT**

Seventeen (17) candidates registered for the Advanced German examination. The examination consists of three papers (I-III) and an oral component. No candidates were absent for any of the papers. The table below outlines the candidates' results:

*Table 1: Candidates' distribution of grades*

GRADE	A	B	C	D	E	F	Abs	Total
<b>Number of Candidates</b>	5	2	4	3	3	0	0	17
<b>% of Total</b>	29.41	11.76	23.53	17.65	17.65	0	0	100

All scripts were seen by two markers.

Nearly two thirds of the candidates achieved a grade between A and C, implying that the majority of the candidates have a good command of German at this level, with more than a quarter having a very good command of the subject. The following is an assessment of the candidates' overall performance in the different sections of the written examination:

**Paper I** consists of two parts, **Essay** and **Communicative Writing**. This section requires skills in free writing.

As regards the Essay, the questions mostly chosen were Question 3, which was a narrative task and Question 5, which was argumentative. Three candidates chose Question 6, while Questions 2 and 4 were each chosen by one candidate. Question 1 was not selected. Although the descriptive titles were generic, the candidates needed to possess specific descriptive vocabulary. It is suggested that candidates practise the different genres so that their choice in the exam is not limited.

With respect to Communicative Writing, all the candidates chose to write a letter to apply for a dancing course. None of the candidates chose to write a reaction to an article which was about online social media. Candidates need to learn how to write letters or emails as a reaction to a newspaper article in which they would have to express their opinion about something, argue and make suggestions.

This section was characterised by quite a number of orthographic and punctuation mistakes. Some candidates wrote certain words phonetically leading to orthographic mistakes and in certain cases did not use capital letters for nouns. Grammatical mistakes such as ones related to gender and case markings were also evident. All this was ironically noted in written productions having a good repertoire of vocabulary and expressions. The examination panel would like to stress the importance of writing skills, besides spoken and listening skills.

There were instances where candidates were not consistent with the tense used and continuously switched from the Perfekt to the Präteritum and vice-versa. There were also instances of interference of Maltese and English in some sentence constructions as well as in some expressions.

As regards the email, some candidates did not use the correct way of greeting and ending and used the familiar form instead of the polite form as is the norm in a semi-formal email. Others were not consistent throughout and switched between the familiar form and the formal one.

**Paper II** also consists of two parts, the **Listening Comprehension** and the **Reading Comprehension**. Overall candidates did well in the listening component.

There was a noted improvement in the candidates' performance in the Reading Comprehension. In this section a text between 400 and 500 words is given, on which questions are set testing understanding, vocabulary and grammar. The text was about food

## AM EXAMINERS' REPORT MAY 2016

trucks. Section A, however, still poses a problem to the majority of the candidates. In fact 60% of the candidates failed to attain an acceptable mark in this section. Although the candidates performed quite well in the second part in which they were requested to provide the opposite of a given word (*Gegenteile*), they did not do so well in the *Umformungen*. The examination panel therefore recommends that candidates are trained in re-writing sentences in other words.

Part 2 Section B (answering questions) was tackled much better. Candidates should be reminded to paraphrase their answers and to produce grammatically correct sentences. The candidates' performance in the grammar section (Part 2 Section C) was good with the majority achieving high marks, however there were still 18% of the candidates who failed to attain an acceptable mark in this section. The candidates lost most of the marks in the last exercise i.e. in the joining of sentences using conjunctions.

Section D requiring a summary of the whole text was tackled well by most of the candidates, implying that the candidates had understood the text.

**Paper III** is designed to test knowledge on *Landeskunde* i.e culture of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and knowledge on *Literatur*. In part I questions are set on the geographical aspects of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, feasts and traditions in Germany, modern history of Germany and German-speaking personalities. In part II questions on the literature texts listed in the syllabus are set.

The examination panel is noting an increased trend of candidates not preparing themselves sufficiently for the *Landeskunde* section and relying very much on personal knowledge. This is resulting in answers which are either incomplete or which lack the necessary information. A good number of candidates scored a zero in theme 2 (*Moderne deutsche Geschichte*), theme 3 (*In Österreich und in der Schweiz*) and in theme 4 (*Deutschland aktuell*). Another question in which some of the candidates did not attain high marks was question 10, in which candidates were asked to choose a famous German author and write about him. Many candidates chose to write about Martin Luther. The examination panel accepted this choice, however, marks were deducted if his literary achievements were not mentioned. Candidates should be encouraged not to underestimate this part of the exam. Besides gaining an insight into the cultural life of the German-speaking countries, they could gain considerable marks and improve their grades.

In the section on literature, most candidates chose to tackle the novel "Maya und Domenico" by Susanne Wittpennig. "Drei Männer im Schnee" by Erich Kästner was chosen by four candidates, while "Ich fühl mich fifty-fifty" by Karin König was chosen by only one candidate. Once again no one chose to tackle the questions on "Fast ein bisschen Frühling" by Alex Capus. The questions were tackled quite satisfactorily, however, candidates should improve their character and text interpretation skills since this is where they are losing most of the marks.

*Chairperson*  
*2016 Examination Panel*