

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

GERMAN

MAY 2015

EXAMINERS' REPORT

MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE

EXAMINATIONS' BOARD

**SEC GERMAN
MAY 2015 SESSION
EXAMINERS' REPORT**

Introduction

A total of 288 candidates sat for SEC German in May 2015 (there were 378 Candidates in 2014, 346 in 2013, 378 in 2012, 469 in 2011 and 473 in 2010.) With the exception of what occurred in 2014, the number of candidates is continuously decreasing.

This year 196 candidates registered for Paper 2A while 92 registered for Paper 2B.

Table 1 shows the number of candidates who registered for SEC German from 2010 to 2015 per paper.

| Year | Total | Paper 2A | Paper 2B |
|------|-------|----------|----------|
| 2015 | 288 | 196 | 92 |
| 2014 | 378 | 262 | 116 |
| 2013 | 346 | 216 | 130 |
| 2012 | 378 | 236 | 142 |
| 2011 | 469 | 295 | 174 |
| 2010 | 473 | 259 | 214 |

Table 1: Number of candidates who registered for SEC German Paper 2A and 2B between 2010 and 2015

The examination papers had the same format as the last four years. All the written sections in Paper 2A and Paper 2B were marked separately by two different markers and the final mark in each case was calculated taking both marks into consideration. In cases where a discrepancy was noted, the opinion of a third marker was decisive.

Overall Performance

Table 2 below outlines the distribution of grades obtained in the May 2015 session.

| GRADE | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | U | ABS | TOTAL |
|------------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|------|-------|
| PAPER A | 21 | 24 | 42 | 32 | 41 | | | 35 | 1 | 196 |
| PAPER B | | | | 9 | 27 | 24 | 15 | 16 | 1 | 92 |
| TOTAL | 21 | 24 | 42 | 41 | 68 | 24 | 15 | 51 | 2 | 288 |
| % OF TOTAL | 7.29 | 8.33 | 14.58 | 14.24 | 23.61 | 8.33 | 5.21 | 17.71 | 0.69 | 100 |

Table 2: Distribution of grades in May 2015

Tables 3 enables a comparison of grades from 2011 to 2015.

| | Grade | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | U | Abs | Total |
|------|---------|----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|-------|
| 2015 | I & IIA | 21 | 24 | 42 | 32 | 41 | -- | -- | 35 | 1 | 196 |
| | I & IIB | -- | -- | -- | 9 | 27 | 24 | 15 | 17 | -- | 92 |
| | Total N | 21 | 24 | 42 | 41 | 68 | 24 | 15 | 52 | 1 | 288 |
| 2014 | I & IIA | 25 | 34 | 47 | 45 | 56 | -- | -- | 53 | 2 | 262 |
| | I & IIB | -- | -- | -- | 11 | 33 | 29 | 17 | 25 | 1 | 116 |
| | Total N | 25 | 34 | 47 | 56 | 89 | 29 | 17 | 78 | 3 | 378 |
| 2013 | I & IIA | 18 | 27 | 40 | 35 | 48 | -- | -- | 45 | 3 | 216 |
| | I & IIB | -- | -- | -- | 10 | 24 | 34 | 37 | 25 | 0 | 130 |
| | Total N | 18 | 27 | 40 | 45 | 72 | 34 | 37 | 70 | 3 | 346 |
| 2012 | I & IIA | 20 | 35 | 37 | 39 | 47 | -- | -- | 55 | 3 | 236 |
| | I & IIB | -- | -- | -- | 11 | 25 | 37 | 33 | 30 | 6 | 142 |
| | Total N | 20 | 35 | 37 | 50 | 72 | 37 | 33 | 85 | 9 | 378 |
| 2011 | I & IIA | 30 | 36 | 44 | 35 | 75 | -- | -- | 70 | 5 | 295 |
| | I & IIB | -- | -- | -- | 12 | 30 | 34 | 52 | 38 | 8 | 174 |
| | Total N | 30 | 36 | 44 | 47 | 105 | 34 | 52 | 108 | 13 | 469 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

Table 3: Grades obtained between 2011 and 2015

All papers were checked to ensure that they abided by the syllabus as well as to ensure that questions were not repeated from previous years.

Part 1

Spoken Interaction

The oral examination consisted of three parts and two candidates had to interact to perform the tasks. The majority of Paper A candidates and nearly half the Paper B candidates were able to carry out a basic conversation.

Listening Comprehension

The instructions and the Listening Comprehension texts were presented in recorded format. Care was taken to have suitable topics for the candidates. In this component, the results achieved this year were better than those obtained last year.

Paper 1 – Grammar (Sprachbausteine and Satzbau)

In this section, the results were varied.

In both Paper A and Paper B, candidates did better last year than this year in Parts 1 (Letter) and 4 (Building Sentences). On the other hand, in both Paper A and Paper B, candidates did better this year than last year in Parts 2 (Article) and 3 (Text).

All in all, many of the candidates were still not able to read simple German texts and to write simple sentences in German correctly. This problem has already been observed in previous years.

Paper 2A and Paper 2B

Paper 2A and Paper 2B are made up of a reading comprehension section and a written section, the latter consisting of a letter or an e-mail, and a report in Paper 2A and a note in Paper 2B.

Reading Comprehension Section

The texts were interesting and suitable for the candidates' age. All in all, the candidates who opted for Paper 2A performed better than those who opted for Paper 2B.

Written Section

Paper 2A

Letter to a pen friend and Report on a cycling tour

In this section, candidates are required to express themselves freely.

The theme of the letter was within the candidates' competence. As last year, very often the candidates' syntax was influenced by that in English. The candidates demonstrated difficulty with the position of the conjugated verb. Prepositions were often used as in English. Often candidates did not write the first letter of nouns with a capital letter. Lastly, the candidates' grammar was often influenced by English grammar.

As noted in previous years, various candidates used incorrect phrases "Ich bin gut / Meine Familie ist gut" or "Ich gehe gut" instead of "Mir geht es gut/ Meiner Familie geht es gut." This wrong idiomatic form is also a result of being influenced by the English language and should be avoided in future.

Overall the results showed that some candidates still have issues with basic concepts of German as a foreign language. One must mention, however, that some candidates did use some very good phrases, and many candidates wrote an answer which was acceptable to the tasks set.

Paper 2B

E-Mail and „Nachricht“

This year the results in this section were not better than those achieved in Paper 2A.

Conclusion

Table 4 outlines the percentage of candidates who obtained each grade, between 2013 and 2015.

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| Grade | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|--------|------|------|------|
| 1 | 5.2 | 6.6 | 7.3 |
| 2 | 7.8 | 9.0 | 8.3 |
| 3 | 11.6 | 12.4 | 14.6 |
| 4 | 13.0 | 14.8 | 14.2 |
| 5 | 20.8 | 23.5 | 23.6 |
| 6 | 9.8 | 7.7 | 8.3 |
| 7 | 10.7 | 4.5 | 5.2 |
| U | 20.2 | 20.6 | 17.7 |
| Absent | 0.9 | 0.8 | 0.7 |

Table 4: Percentage of candidates who obtained each grade from 2013 to 2015

The number of candidates achieving the higher grades seems to be on the increase. However, there are a number of candidates who still do not have a grasp of some of the basic skills of the language.

*Chairperson
2015 Examination Panel*