

## GERMAN B

### Overall grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	E	D	C	B	A
<b>Mark range:</b>	0-7	8-15	16-22	23-28	29-36

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

As in previous years there was a wide range of topics investigated, although firm favourites such as *Goodbye Lenin* and *Parfum* remain. Very few students chose linguistic aspects of German to investigate, with the majority of candidates opting to pursue a category 2 EE.

A number of schools are not clear about the significance or even definition of the "cultural artefact". Guidance on what constitutes an artefact, and what does not, can be found in the most recent Coordinator Notes. Simple interviews with family members do not constitute an artefact upon which a group 2 EE can be based. The car industry and football as reflection of culture were examples of well used artefacts.

Some high marks were scored in essays that dealt with literary analysis as a group 2 category 3 EE.

Language use was generally very competent - there were numerous (near-) native speaker level essays. However, there appears to be a new phenomenon on the rise, which involves students whose linguistic ability in the language of submission is relatively weak, simply feeding a mother tongue version of their essay into an online translator which is not in line with the ethos of a group 2 EE. Candidates who feel the need to do this should consider an EE in a subject in which they can ensure fluency of both language and ideas, so as to not self-penalise. Referencing skills were generally appropriate, but some candidates still struggled with the basics which are outlined in the document entitled *Effective citing and referencing*.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

### Criterion A: research question

Most candidates formulated a clear research question. It was helpful to see this set out in bold, or underlined. In some cases the research questions were too simple, even naive; as this is the focal point of the essay, it pays off to spend some time in honing and refining the wording.

### Criterion B: introduction

Most candidates presented a clear and well set out introduction. In one or two cases it was difficult to determine where the introduction ended and the essay started. The academic context was usually clear, some personal motivation was presented, as well as methodology, but, again, not all candidates were clear about this.

### Criterion C: investigation

The investigation was usually planned, and there was an appropriate range of sources. However, in some cases the material seemed randomly selected and there still is a predominance of Wikipedia - supervisors should remind candidates that this can be the starting point of research, but should not be an end in itself.

### Criterion D: knowledge and understanding of the topic studied

Knowledge and understanding were generally very good, but some candidates found it hard to place their topic into an academic context. The supervisor should assist candidates in locating and understanding the academic context in which their topic sits - such conversations should take place from the start of the supervision process.

### Criterion E: reasoned argument

Developing a reasoned argument is clearly defined as needing to be logical and coherent. This means that points follow from one another, and that they are organised in a way that makes sense. Candidates did not always find this easy, but it should be seen as positive that there was always at least an attempt to do so.

### Criterion F: application of analytical and evaluative skills

In many essays there was simple description with very little analysis or reflection; although this is certainly not easy, students should understand that criterion F is really what the exercise is about. A few essays scored top marks on this criterion, and were a pleasure to read.

### Criterion G: use of language appropriate to the subject:

The use of language was generally very good. It seemed that only the more confident language learners would be attempting a group 2 EE, and it was therefore most gratifying to see genuine language B level students embark on this adventure. They were usually the ones with interesting topics, obviously determined to work in a language they loved. In a very few

isolated cases was the language so weak, that the essay was barely comprehensible - in such cases all criteria are affected.

#### Criterion H: conclusion

Most candidates produced a satisfactory conclusion relating to the research question.

#### Criterion I: formal presentation

As in previous years the formal presentation was generally very good, ranging from excellent clear academic presentation to poor presentation with missing elements, such as no table of content, or missing page numbers.

#### Criterion J: abstract

Most candidates provided an abstract, but in some cases they had not understood its purpose and the conclusion was missing.

#### Criterion K: holistic judgement

This criterion is really hard to assess without a supervisor comment; it seems unclear why they are still missing in some cases.

### Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

Recommendations will be similar to previous reports: supervisors need to play a stronger part in selection of topic and research question, to ensure that in category 2B essays, for example, that the question is based on a cultural artefact, as well as being sharply focused and precisely worded.

If possible, candidates should have a genuine interest in their topic of choice. Literary essays are a good example of this; they are generally not chosen as emergency topics, but here candidates have valid and interesting points to make about works of literature they have enjoyed. One warning should be given about too much biographical information about the author, or general background information to setting or plot.

It is always hard to teach students focused analysis, but in an extended essay this really is at the heart of the exercise. Supervisors should make sure they make this a central issue of their feedback.

Supervisors are advised to re-read the EE guide for their subject group each year and any updating items in the Coordinator Notes; there are many details that tend to fade into the background and can lead to candidates losing marks.