2023 VCE German written external assessment report

General comments

The 2023 VCE German written examination was based on the *VCE German Study Design 2019–2027* and assessed a range of key knowledge and skills across Units 1 to 4.

In 2023, most students handled the examination well, attempting all questions within the timeframe.

Students who achieved higher scores:

* demonstrated a sound understanding of the listening and reading texts
* took detailed notes to include specific information in their responses
* identified and communicated the required key points accurately and clearly
* showed an understanding of the stimulus text and successfully incorporated the visual stimulus in their answer for Section 2, Part B. Students rephrased the content from the stimulus text, correctly addressing all key components included in the description task
* answered the questions with a very good command of grammar and correct and adequate vocabulary and spelling. A range of connectives was used to provide flow in their writing
* demonstrated a clear understanding of the context, purpose and audience, text type, and kind of writing required for Section 3 and provided a well-written, structured and interesting response, which engaged the reader.

Areas for improvement:

* Students need to develop confidence and accuracy with grammatical features, such as verb conjugation, correct use of pronouns, word order, and general vocabulary.
* Students must understand the purpose of the questions and extract relevant information from the reading and listening texts, and not add other information that is not included in the texts.
* Students should read the questions carefully and ensure that they address all aspects of the question. The information contained in the response needs to be relevant to the question.
* Students should ensure that their written response in Section 2 Part B does not contain large chunks of information from the stimulus text. Students should focus on the key components of the question and plan their response accordingly by incorporating ideas from the stimulus text/s and manipulating language.
* Students are encouraged to spend enough time reading the tasks carefully to make sure they fully understand the requirements of the topic they choose in Section 3. They also need to ensure that they address the specific audience, purpose and text type required. They should not rely on rote-learning or on prepared responses.

Students are encouraged to practise their listening and responding skills with a variety of texts in order to be familiar with the prescribed themes on page 11 in the study design.

In general, students should be advised to consolidate their knowledge of grammar that is expected at VCE level by referring to the list of grammatical concepts on pages 13–15 in the study design.

Specific information

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses. Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar and spelling.

Section 1

Part A – Listening and responding in English

This section assessed students’ capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of texts.

Question 1a.

* the city festival
* starts at 7pm

Question 1b.

* He has to do a project (that is due on Monday).
* He is (too) tired.

Question 1c.

* dance show (with a band)
* (stalls with) handmade things
* food
* fireworks

Question 1d.

* Max is doing the project tomorrow. / He will go with Anna tonight.
* Anna is doing his cleaning chores / the cleaning for him.

Part B – Listening and responding in German

In this part of the examination students were assessed on their understanding of the listening text and their ability to accurately convey appropriate information from the text in German. The information presented in the response needed to be relevant to the question. Students were not awarded separate marks for content and language. Responses that included the relevant information and were expressed clearly in German were awarded full marks.

Question 2a.

* *Erfindung eines der ersten Motoren vor fast 150 Jahren (durch Carl Benz)*. (Invention of one of the first engines almost 150 years ago [by Carl Benz].)
* Autos bedeuteten Freiheit / die Möglichkeit zu reisen. (Cars meant freedom / the opportunity to travel.)
* *Das Auto ist ein Statussymbol.* (The car is a status symbol.)
* *Die Menschen sind stolz auf die hohe Qualität deutscher Autos / den Ruf hoher Qualität*. (People are proud of the high quality of German cars / the reputation of high quality.)
* *Sie sind stolz auf die Innovationen der deutschen Autoindustrie.* (They are proud of the innovations of the Germany car industry.)
* *Autoindustrie ist ein wichtiger Arbeitgeber*. (The car industry is an important employer.)

Question 2b.

* Man spart Geld, weil es weniger Benzin verbraucht. (You save money because it uses less petrol.)
* *Es reduziert die CO2- Emissionen / Es ist besser für die Umwelt*. (It reduces the CO2 emissions / It is better for the environment.)
* *Es gibt weniger Unfälle / weniger Staus.* (There are fewer accidents / fewer traffic jams.)
* Es ist weniger stressing. (It is less stressful.)

Section 2

Part A – Reading, listening and responding in English

Question 3a.

* In the past, (all) students in German schools had to read a work of Faust / had to read Faust.
* People have heard about him / heard his name / are familiar with his name.
* People have heard of the Goethe-Institute (which offers languages internationally) / Goethe is a symbol for German culture.

Question 3b.

* He is seen as the most important German writer/poet.
* He was a genius/expert in other areas (e.g. botany, art, politics, mathematics).
* He wrote about 60 works.
* He fascinated his own generation.
* He inspires writers, composers and film makers today.

Question 3c.

* He has everything, but he is not happy.
* He is looking for the meaning of life.

Question 3d.

* The language is elegant/beautiful.
* Topics are still important/current today.
* Students can learn about (German) history/culture.
* Complex texts improve German language skills / you are only good at German if you read complex/complicated texts.

Question 3e.

* They find the texts (or Goethe) boring / Students can no longer relate to / identify with the themes of Goethe (in a multicultural society).
* Language is old-fashioned / too complicated.
* Especially challenging/difficult for non-native speakers / students with other language background.

Question 3f.

* Watch a videoclip together.
* Watch the play.
* Read the text in groups.

Part B – Reading and responding in German

Students were required to demonstrate an understanding of the stimulus material and to address the requirements of the task by conveying the relevant information from the materialthat was appropriate for the audience and the prescribed writing style and text type.

The reading text included a visual stimulus. High-scoring students were able to successfully incorporate information from the visual stimulus in their response.

Student responses were assessed holistically according to the assessment criteria and the expected qualities published on the VCAA website. Students were not awarded separate marks for content and language accuracy; however, language accuracy was an important expected quality that was considered in the assessment.

It was possible to achieve a high score for this question without exceeding the specified word limit, which is shorter than the limit specified for Section 3.

Question 4

Text type: blog

Kind of writing: informative

Audience: high school community

Points from the text to be included in student responses:

* *Die Geschichte des Originalkunstwerks* (Got to know / developed an interest in historical works of art)
* *Neuinterpretation des Kunstwerks.* (They had an opportunity to reinterpret the artwork.)
* *Techniken des Kunstwerks.* (They had an opportunity to work alongside artists and learn art techniques from them.)
* *Enstehung des neuen Kunstwerks*. (They contributed to a new artwork [mural] which takes the original image and adapts it to modern times. The new artwork can be looked at by anyone passing by.)
* *Neues Bewusstsein, Umweltkrise* (They were able to, through the new artwork, bring awareness to important issues such as the environmental crisis [image].)

In their response, students had to refer to five key points (the four stages of the project and the visual stimulus), incorporating a statement about their own experience while participating in this project. Most students used the correct text type features for a blog and the prescribed informative kind of writing and addressed the correct audience for a school’s website.

Higher-scoring responses addressed all key components of the task, explained their experience of being involved in this project and successfully integrated the visual stimulus (original painting and mural). They successfully linked the mural to the environmental crisis / modern society with the use of mobile phones and the role of the spectator. They successfully manipulated the language to convey meaning while displaying a very good and accurate range of grammatical features and vocabulary.

Average-scoring responses identified some of the relevant points of the stimulus text. They referred to one of the images or did not successfully integrate the second image (mural). In general, responses met the requirement of the task satisfactorily, but the lack of accuracy in the use of language, especially in the grammar components, impacted on their ability to reach a higher range.

These are examples of high-scoring responses.

Example 1

Ein Blogeintrag von Anna Schmidt 14.11.19

Vor kurzem hatte ich die Möglichkeit, in Köln bei dem „Wanderer-Projekt” in der Schule teilzunehmen. Das war persönlich eine ziemlich informative Erfahrung, weil ich dadurch mehr über historischen Kunstwerke kennen lernen konnte ….

(A blog entry from Anna Schmidt 14/11/19

Recently, I had the opportunity to participate in the ‘Wanderer-Project’ at the school in Cologne. It was a quite an informative experience for me, because I could learn more about historical artworks with this project …)

Example 2

… In 1818 hat Caspar David Friedrich das berühmte Bild, „Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer” gemalt. Das erste angehängte Bild ist das Bild von Caspar Friedrich. Ich glaube dass es zeigt wie einen Mann über die Zukunft der Welt denkt. Ich habe über die letzten paar Jahren mit einem Graffiti-Künstler und viele andere Schüler zussamenarbeitet um eine moderne Version von dieses Bild zu malen …

(… In 1818, Caspar David Friedrich created the famous painting ‘Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer’. The first picture in the attachment is the painting of Caspar Friedrich. I think that it shows how a man is reflecting about the future. Over the last few years, I have worked with Graffiti artists and many other students to paint a modern version of this painting …)

Example 3

… Wir haben alle bei vier verschiedene Workshops teilgenommen. Ehrlich gesagt, war der erste Workshop ein bisschen langweilig. Wir haben über das Originalkunstwerks gelernt und das fand ich ein bisschen langweilig …

(… We participated in four different workshops. To be honest, the first workshop was a bit boring. We learnt about the original artwork, and I found it a bit boring …)

Example 4

… Das Projekt besteht aus vier Workshops, woran die Schüler teilgenommen haben. Die Workshops waren: die Geschichte des Originalkunstwerkes, Neuinterpretation des Kunstwerkes, Techniken der Graffitikunst und Entstehung des neuen Kunstwerks. Sie waren alle sehr bereicherend, aber ich fand den zweiten Workshop besonders faszinierend. Dort haben wir viel diskutiert und eine neue Interpretation zusammen hervorgebracht …

(… The project consists of four workshops for the students to participate in. The four workshops were: the history of the original artwork, the new interpretation of the artwork, the techniques of graffiti art and the creation of the artwork. Each one of them was enriching, but I found the second workshop especially fascinating. In this workshop, we had many discussions and together we produced a new interpretation …)

Example 5

… Später malten wir das 260 Quadratmeter große Kunstwerk auf die Seite von einem Haus. Jetzt können alle Menschen der odern Wanderer sehen …

(… We then painted the 260 square metres big artwork on the side of a house. All people can now see the modern hiker …)

Example 6

… Mit unserem Projekt wollen wir ein Kommentar zur Umweltkrise machen. Wir wollen zeigen, wie wir, als junge Leute uns über Umweltkrise fühlen …

(… We want to make a comment about the environmental crisis with this project. We want to show how we, as young people, feel about the environmental crisis …)

Example 7

… Das Wandbild sieht riesig aus und zeigt ein Wanderer, der eine Welt voll mit Abgäse und zunehmenden Spiegel des Meeres mit Schiffbrüche und anderen Müll nachdenklich beobachtet….

(The mural looks huge and shows a hiker who is pensively observing a world full of exhaust fumes and an increasing sea level with shipwrecks and other waste …)

Example 8

… Auf der modernen Wandbild sehen wir den leichen Mann, aber das Bild drückt etwas ganz Neues aus. Der Mann benutzt ein Handy, und im Hintergründ zeigt es Gebaüde und Rauch. Das ist ein Kommentar zur Umweltkrise, und wie wir als Menschen fast nichts dagegen machen …

(… We can see the same man on the modern mural, but the picture expresses something totally new. The man uses a mobile phone, and the mural shows buildings and smoke in the background. It is a comment about environmental crisis, and we, the humans, we do nearly nothing about it …)

Example 9

Dann können die Leute, die jeden Tage bei unseres Projekts vorbei fahren, sehen wie junge Menschen unsere Welt sehen …

(People who are driving past our project every day, can then see how young people see our world …)

Example 10

… Ich habe es toll gefunden, eine odern Sache (Umweltkrise) mit einem alten Bild zu mischen. Es war wirklich eine Zeitreise! …

(… I found it great to bring together a modern thing (environmental crisis) with an old painting. It was really a time travel! …)

Example 11

… Insgesamt war dieses projekt eine wunderbaren Erfahrung und ich bin dankbar, dass ich bei dem mitmachen konnte …

(… Altogether, this project was a wonderful experience, and I am grateful that I could take part in it …)

Example 12

… ich bin also stolz auf meine Klasse, dass wir mit diesem Projekt etwas Positives erreichen konnten …

(… I am also proud of my class that we could achieve something positive with this project…)

Example 13

… Dieses Projekt habe ich total cool erfarhrt, und wurde bestimmt wieder machen. Wer kommt mit? …

(… I found this project really cool, and I would definitely participate again. Who will join? …)

Example 14

… Was sagt ihr zu solchen Projekten? Ich würde gerne von euch hören …

(… What do you think about such projects? I would like to hear back from you …)

Section 3 – Writing in German

Questions 5–8

Question 6 was the most popular choice, followed by Questions 5 and 7.

Question 8, which requires an imaginative piece, was chosen by a small number of students.

Higher-scoring students showed a well-planned and structured writing piece by using the correct text-type features and the required kind of writing. Furthermore, their writing displayed a very good knowledge of grammar concepts with sentence structures, conjugation, connectors and the correct use of pronouns for addressing the audience.

Lower-scoring responses showed that students need to take time to carefully examine the key components of the task and plan a response relevant to the task. While students were familiar with the topics in Questions 5, 6 and 7, some responses did not score highly because they appeared to include content that students practised in previous settings. It is commendable that students use their knowledge by drawing from previous practice, but they must fully address each key point in the task.

Lower-scoring responses also showed difficulties with expression and accuracy, which limited students’ ability to receive higher marks, despite addressing the correct audience and satisfactorily integrating a range of ideas.

[Assessment criteria and expected qualities](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/exams/VicSL-Written-CriteriaAndQualities-w.pdf) for the mark range can be found on the VCAA website.

Question 5

Text type: article

Kind of writing: evaluative

Audience: high school students

Higher-scoring responses may have included the following points.

Advantages:

* one can learn everywhere and anytime
* one is independent from class times and the teacher
* find your own rhythm, one can repeat the materials
* a vast selection of learning materials are available on the internet.
* more stimulating than sitting in class.

Disadvantages:

* no direct contact with the teacher and other learners
* a living language needs direct contact with a partner
* more fun to learn in a group
* you learn from other learners
* less/no encouragement and support from the teacher.

Students who wrote higher-scoring responses:

* produced a balanced piece of writing by listing and explaining several points about advantages and disadvantages
* used the correct features of an article and addressed the audience by using *ihr* (*euch/euer*)
* wrote a well-structured essay with paragraphs.

Areas for improvement:

* Students should list both aspects equally to produce an evaluative piece of writing.
* Students should be confident with using the correct pronouns to address the specified audience.

Question 6

Text type: e-mail

Kind of writing: persuasive

Audience: parents

Higher-scoring responses may have included the following points:

* can gain life experience with volunteer work
* can have time to reflect upon options regarding future studies
* gain experience in a workplace which can help you in your decisions; employers look favourably upon young people with work experience
* have time to try out a variety of work or living situations
* can earn money and independence.

Students who wrote higher-scoring responses:

* addressed their parents by using email features and correct greeting conventions
* addressed all relevant key components of the task
* used the features of a persuasive kind of writing in their email
* had a well-structured essay that allowed for a logical development of arguments.

Areas for improvement:

* Students should not use *Sie* when addressing parents.
* Students need to address all key components of the task (for example, a year off / before starting university / parents’ worries / volunteer work overseas / the year won’t be wasted) by giving reasoning for each point.

Question 7

Text type: speech

Kind of writing: personal

Audience: high school students

 Higher-scoring responses may have included the following points:

* learning a language is about more than the vocabulary and grammar
* learning a language is fun
* relate to personal experience with learning German at school
* learn about the world
* reflect on own language
* learning a language improves opportunities in the job market
* develop resilience.

Students who wrote higher-scoring responses:

* wrote a well-structured piece of writing to convey a personal experience
* addressed different aspects of pursuing study of German at VCE level (curriculum, cultural activities, exchanges)
* used the features of a speech and correct address.

Areas for improvement:

* Students should use a personal kind of writing and not a persuasive kind of writing.
* Students should refer to their own experience of learning German.
* Students should not focus only on their experience of going on exchange to a German-speaking country.

Question 8

Text type: short story

Kind of writing: imaginative

Audience: children

Students who achieved higher scores:

* created a fairy-tale that included the elements of imaginative writing (setting, creative plot and final resolution)
* successfully referred to the magical power given to them, and described the problem, and how the problem was resolved in just one day only.

Areas for improvement:

* Students should write a fairy-tale based on the given information in the task and not rewrite a fairy-tale that they have come across in the past.
* Students should write the story in the first person.
* Students should not use the fairy godmother as the main character.
* Students should create a strong sense of context and situation.