2024 VCE German written external assessment report

General comments

In the 2024 VCE German written examination, students generally demonstrated good knowledge of the task requirements for the examination. Most students completed the exam on time, and the vast majority of handwritten responses were legible.

Students who scored highly:

* provided clear and accurate responses that met the task criteria
* demonstrated very good comprehension skills for listening and reading questions
* demonstrated a very solid command of the rules of grammar and a good knowledge of relevant vocabulary as required for the task
* used a broad range of expressions
* used correct sentence structures
* used correct spelling
* maintained correct register throughout their responses
* accurately included the correct information in clear and complete German sentences in their response to Section 1, Part B
* produced a well-developed written response in Section 2, Part B, by applying the correct text type features and type of writing throughout their response, and including the information contained in the reading text and the visual stimulus
* developed well-structured and coherent essays in Section C by meeting the task requirements and incorporating ideas and information that showed depth.

Areas for improvement:

* Students need to pay closer attention to the wording of questions.
* Students should support their response with evidence from the text.
* Students need to use correct spelling.
* Students need to employ correct syntax, especially in verb inversion and relative clauses.
* Students should avoid anglicised syntax and structures.
* Students need to answer Section 1, Part B in clear and complete sentences, for example, by including subjects and verbs.
* Students need to plan their responses effectively and order them logically.
* Students should avoid the inclusion of pre-learnt material irrelevant to the task.
* Students should avoid repeating the same ideas or information across their written responses.
* Students need to take time to edit their work, including checking their verb conjugations and use of tense.

Specific information

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual 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.

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.

* Go to the city / into town.
* Buy a coat and boots.

Two marks were allocated for this question. ‘Boots’ and ‘coat’ were both needed to be awarded a mark. Some students did not recognise the word Mantel and translated it as ‘jacket’.

Question 1b.

* Chloe can’t buy what she wants / clothes today / can’t go shopping.
* The shops are closed.

Some responses missed the second mark as they included ‘It is Sunday’ instead of ‘The shops are closed’.

Question 1c.

* It is a day of rest. / People rest.
* People spend time with their families.
* People go to church.

While the majority of responses were awarded full marks for this question, others only received two marks because they wrongly translated Ruhetag as ‘quiet day’.

Question 1d.

* going to the Christmas market
* eating a sausage / bratwurst
* buying a (Christmas) present

Most responses were awarded full marks for this question. Responses that answered the question with ‘buying Christmas presents and sausages’ were only awarded one mark as they did not write **eat** sausages.

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.

* Der Wald liefert Holz. (The forest supplies wood.)
* Er verbessert die Luftqualität / produziert Sauerstoff / Es gibt bessere Luft. (It improves air quality / produces oxygen / the air is better.)
* Es ist eine Reise in das Land der Märchen (und Mythen). (It is a journey to the land of fairy tales [and myths].)
* Er bietet Lebensraum für Tiere. (It is a habitat for animals.)
* Es ist ein Ort zur Erholung. / Man kann da Picknick machen. (It is a place to relax. / People can have a picnic there.)

While most responses listed all five pieces of information, some did not include a reference to the land of fairy tales. In order to gain five marks, students needed to write in complete sentences and clear German about each one of the five pieces of information contained in the spoken text: wood supply, air quality, land of fairy tales, animal habitat and a place to relax.

Question 2b.

* Immer mehr Menschen benutzen recyceltes Papier. (More and more people use recycled paper.)
* Neue Baumsorten werden gepflanzt. (New tree varieties are planted.)
* Man sollte keine Feuer machen. (Do not light fires.)
* Man sollte auf markierten Wegen bleiben. (Stay on the walking trails.)
* Man sollte seinen Müll wieder (nach dem Picknick) nach Hause mitnehmen. (Take your rubbish home with you [after the picnic].)

Most responses correctly referred to the information about the walking trails, rubbish to be taken back home and that no fires could be lit. However, some responses did not demonstrate a thorough understanding of the point about new tree varieties being planted and only stated that more trees are planted, for which no mark was awarded. No marks were awarded for responses stating that ‘more and more people should use recycled paper’, as the correct answer was ‘more and more people **use** recycled paper’.

Section 2

Part A – Reading, listening and responding in English

Question 3a.

Three of the following:

* They (the schools/students and teachers) have to adapt to this big change.
* Students need to learn how to use AI responsibly.
* Teachers need to support their students in learning how to do this.
* Teachers also need to learn how AI can help them teach better.

In their responses to this question, students needed to clearly state who was doing the action, that is, students, teachers or both. ‘Responsibly’ needed to be mentioned to gain the mark.

Question 3b.

Students:

* suggesting a good structure for writing essays
* receiving an answer when you can’t ask the teacher in the classroom
* interpreting poems/texts
* using it for job applications
* translating texts in a foreign language.

Teachers:

* getting inspiration for topic/lesson planning.
* writing texts with questions and answers / generating assessments/tests.

Most students were able to answer this question well. No marks were awarded for the response ‘using it for CV’, as the correct response was ‘using it for job applications’.

Question 3c.

* What can AI do?
* Who is cleverer, AI or the students?

The response ‘Who is cleverer?’ was not sufficient to be awarded a mark.

Question 3d.

* The class discussed the poem.
* The class had to write a test interpreting the poem.
* The class put the same task to AI.
* AI delivered the wrong result / analysed the wrong poem.

Students needed to list the three logical steps that led to the result. Some responses incorrectly translated the word Gedicht as history/story.

Question 3e.

* The class feeds AI the poem.
* The class feeds AI more information about the task.

The majority of responses were awarded full marks for this question.

Question 3f.

* Annotate the use of AI.
* Conduct oral assessments.

In their responses to this question, students needed to refer to the annotation of AI, as stated in the last paragraph in Text 3A, and to the suggestion of having oral exams, as stated at the end in Text 3B. This question was not answered as well, and responses often demonstrated a misunderstanding of the use of the annotation or did not refer to the suggestion about the oral exam.

Part B – Reading and responding in German

In Section 2, Part B, students were required to demonstrate an understanding of the stimulus text/texts and to address the requirements of the task by conveying the relevant information from the text/texts that was appropriate for the audience and the prescribed writing style and text type.

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

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/character limit, which is shorter than the limit specified for Section 3.

Question 4

Text type: email

Type of writing: persuasive

Audience: German high school teacher

Higher-scoring responses included the following points:

* Die Verwendung von ‘Sie’ und nicht ‘du’ in der E-mail (the use of ‘Sie’ and not ‘du’ in the email)
* Bezugnahme auf die Internationale Frauenwoche (reference to International Women’s Week)
* Bewunderung für Hildegard von Bingen (admiration for Hildegard of Bingen)
* Diskussion ihrer Leistungen in den Bereichen Musik, Religion, Beratung, Naturheilkunde, Kosmologie (discussion of her achievements in the fields of music, religion, counselling, natural medicine, cosmology)
* Bezugnahme auf das Bild, mit Fokus auf die Leistungen von Hildegard von Bingen und die zentrale Rolle von Religion in ihrem Leben (reference to the picture, with a focus on the achievements of Hildegard von Bingen and the central role of religion in her life)
* Unterstützung durch den Papst / Rolle der Visionen (support from the pope / role of visions)
* Bezugnahme auf die Biographie und den Familienhintergrund, hohes Alter (reference to biography and family background, lived to an old age)
* Starke und imposante Frau des Mittelalters, untypisch für ihr Zeitalter/Körpergröße (strong and imposing woman of the Middle Ages, atypical for her age/height)
* Betonung auf die Relevanz und Bedeutung bis heute: Musik, Naturheilkunde, Heiligsprechung 2012 (emphasis on the relevance and significance of this day: music, naturopathy, canonisation in 2012).

Areas for improvement:

* Students need to use the format of an email.
* Students should commence and conclude their email appropriately.
* Students need to maintain the formal register throughout the response.
* Students should refer to all parts of the reading text and include a reference to the visual stimulus.
* Students need to apply basic vocabulary and grammar rules.

The following are examples of high-scoring responses:

... Kürzlich haben mein Gastbruder und ich einen großartigen Vortrag über Hildegard von Bingen gehört …

(… Recently, my host brother and I listened to a great lecture about Hildegard von Bingen …)

... Sie haben sicherlich schonmal den Namen, ‘Hildegard von Bingen’ gehört, besonders da sie erst 2012 von Papst Benedikt XVI heiliggesprochen wurde …

(… You have certainly already heard the name ‘Hildegard von Bingen’, especially as she was first canonised in 2012 by Pope Benedict XVI …)

... Sie hat im Mittelalter gelebt, und obwohl sie Nonne war, hat sie tolle Beiträge nicht nur im Bereich der Religion, sondern auch in der Musik, Naturheilkunde, und auch andere Sache gemacht …

(… She lived in the Middle Ages, and although she was a nun, she contributed greatly not only in the area of religion, but also in music, naturopathy and other things …)

… Im Anhang dieser Email schicke ich ihnen ein Bild … darauf sieht mann ihre Talente, aber auch, wie wichtig Religion für sie war, denn ihre Visionen von Gott waren die Basis für ihre Aktivitäten …

(… Please find an image attached … people can see her talents in it, but also how important religion was to her, because God’s visions were the basis of all her activities …)

… Sie war für eine Frau zu der Zeit sehr vielseitig, ist das nicht toll?

(… She was a well-rounded person in her time, isn‘t that great?)

… Ich hoffe, ich habe Sie überzeugt, Hildegard von Bingen in der Schule zu feiern, denn sie war wirklich eine ungewohnlich tolle Frau.

(… I hope that I have convinced you to celebrate Hildegard von Bingen at school, because she really was a unique, great woman.)

Section 3 – Writing in German

Questions 5–8

Questions 6 and 7 were the most popular questions in Section 3, followed by Questions 5 and 8.

Higher-scoring responses presented a well-planned and well-structured piece of writing by using the correct text type features and the required kind of writing. The content of these responses included a good range of ideas and information, and the writing demonstrated an excellent knowledge of grammar and syntax, for example, through the correct use of conjugation, connectors and pronouns for addressing the audience.

Lower-scoring responses indicated that some students need to focus on delivering a written response with accurate basic grammar components, such as agreement between subject and verb, and sentence structure when using modal verbs and conjunctions. The lack of grammatical accuracy, together with the incorrect spelling of common words, prevented some students from attaining higher marks, despite their responses including appropriate content and being well structured. Students also need to adhere to the prescribed writing style and write from a particular perspective, as required by the question. Taking time to plan the response before starting to write will also allow for a more coherent response.

Question 5

For this question, students were required to write the script of a speech to be delivered to their peers at a school assembly. In their speech, they had to explain the purpose of this project (to support elderly people) and the reasons for taking part in the project. Students also needed to describe the activities planned and how their participation in the project made a difference to elderly people, as well as what they gained from the project.

Text type: speech

Type of writing: informative

Audience: high school students

Responses may have included the following:

* an explanation of the project, scope, purpose and goals, and what made the project special to them
* an explanation of how involvement in the project is valuable to both the elderly and young people (sharing experiences through companionship and learning for life for the students)

High-scoring responses:

* provided detailed descriptions of the project activities
* described the personal gains out of this project for both parties
* consistently used a broad range of appropriate vocabulary to convey their personal experience and to inform their peers.

Areas for improvement:

* Students should plan their responses well and order them logically.
* Students need to adhere to the conventions of informative writing.
* Students should provide relevant and detailed information.

Question 6

For this question, students were required to write a report for a student magazine to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using modern-day devices to access entertainment anytime and anywhere.

Text type: report

Type of writing: evaluative

Audience: high school students

Responses may have included the following points:

* Advantages:
* convenient to access
* always up to date
* more flexibility
* might save time and money
* more variety.
* Disadvantages:
* can be isolating
* too much choice
* one can get addicted when things are available all the time
* wastes time
* less time for physical activities
* fewer social interactions.

High-scoring responses:

* correctly addressed all requirements of the task
* conveyed highly relevant information by elaborating on three or more advantages and disadvantages
* used a broad range of expressions and elements of evaluative language throughout.

Areas for improvement:

* Students need to identify the correct audience.
* Students should carefully read the question to ensure that the content of their response is relevant.
* Students need to list both advantages and disadvantages equally to ensure a well-balanced evaluative response.

Question 7

For this question, students were required to write three journal entries that extended over a period of four weeks. In these journal entries, students had to document their experience – including the challenges and successes – of preparing themselves for a charity run for which they had registered.

Text type: journal entry

Kind of writing: personal

Audience: young people / themselves

Responses may have included the following points:

* discussion of the type of charity run and the purpose of taking part in the run
* reference to the challenge of fitting preparation/training into a busy schedule
* three journal entries
* a highlight of both successes and setbacks
* a conclusion at the end of the four weeks explaining any personal development that was evident (or didn’t take place).

High-scoring responses:

* produced three journal entries containing information relevant to each one
* included specific details about the charity run (cause, money raised) and explained their reasons for participating
* used appropriate features of emotive language to express feelings and ideas in describing their experience.

Areas for improvement:

* Students should use the correct kind of writing by including the expressions commonly used in personal writing.
* Students need to demonstrate depth in their responses by including sufficient detail.
* Students should avoid excessive repetition of similar sentences across the three entries.

Question 8

For this question, students were required to write an imaginative short story for a children’s magazine about the writer being stuck in the zoo on their own after the zoo had closed.

Text type: short story

Type of writing: imaginative

Audience: children

Responses may have included the following points.

* discussion of various animals encountered, as well as unexpected/surprising encounters/events
* use of the past tense correctly
* a demonstration of the ability to develop a story line with a beginning, middle and end that provides a resolution.

High-scoring responses:

* continued the story in line with the task description
* included all elements of imaginative writing, such as a creative plot, interesting characters and final resolution
* used creativity and imagination to entertain the reader.

Areas for improvement:

* Students need to take on the persona of the writer.
* Students need to write a clear story line.
* Students should avoid the inclusion of content not relevant to the requirements of the task.