

2018 VCE German written examination report

General comments

In the 2018 VCE German written examination, students demonstrated very good skills in listening and responding. Students were able to demonstrate their capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of texts. This was most evident in the Listening and Responding part of Section 1. It is worth noting, however, that many students did not answer Question 1a. correctly. This clearly indicated a need for more thorough revision of all numbers in preparation for the examination.

The importance of careful time management during the examination was also evident, as a number of students either did not attempt or only partially completed Section 3. Section 3 was worth 15 marks and, as the final task, it is particularly important that adequate time is left to devote to it. Students should practise keeping to the time allotted for each section as suggested on the cover of the examination. There were some students who did not answer some questions. Students should be reminded that it is always better to attempt a question than to leave it blank. Students should also check carefully that they have responded to the question in the required language as there were instances in which students responded to Question 4 in German instead of English. Highlighting the language at the top of the page as a reminder may assist.

It is most important for students to focus on answering the question asked without also including all possible variables in their response. Sometimes too much information was given, part of which was incorrect, resulting in an invalid response. There were also occasions when additional information was incorrectly read into a text, thereby also negating an answer. For example, in Question 4b., 'she must be a botanist of German wine plants' was provided as part of a response, which was incorrect because nowhere in the text was 'botanist' mentioned. Students should base their responses on the text provided and not include further information unless instructed to do so.

Text 4, worth 20 marks, required responses in English and although full sentences were not required, the responses needed to be clear and unambiguous. Some responses were too brief and some were so abbreviated that the meaning was obscured and therefore could not be accepted. It would be wise for responses to be given in sentences rather than just key phrases where possible.

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 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 1

Question 1a.

The event being celebrated was the 750th birthday of Dortmund.

Question 1b.

In the past, Dortmund:

- was industrial
- was dark/depressing/grey (buildings/city)
- had a historic/beautiful castle

Question 1c.

Today, visitors would be attracted by:

- (huge/modern) shopping centre(s)
- national park(s) (the qualifier 'national' was required)
- (European) sporting competition (the qualifier 'competition' was required)
- cultural and musical (events)/the city is more attractive and international ('international' on its own was not enough).

Text 2

Question 2a.

The problems Claudia identified were:

- teachers not always using interactive whiteboards/WiFi/WLAN
- no tablets ('not enough tablets' was incorrect)
- lessons using technology were mediocre/the school's use of technology was mediocre ('the school was mediocre' was incorrect)
- teachers were old-fashioned/afraid of technology
- computers and internet don't always work.

Question 2b.

According to Karsten, Claudia's school could learn from other schools that:

- Students teach teachers about IT.
- Teachers have further training in IT to improve their digital competence.

Part B – Answer in German

Text 3

Responses indicated that students understood this text very well. Students are reminded of the importance of listening to voices in order to gauge the mood and/or dynamics between parties; it was clear by the tone of her voice that the lady in the restaurant was a difficult customer.

Question 3a.

We know that the lady in the restaurant is a difficult customer because:

- she demanded a specific spot (near the window)
- she demanded that the music be turned off
- she rejected all offers from the menu/she demanded individual choices
- she insisted her (fur) coat be treated with special care
- she is very assertive/rude/fussy in her tone and is impatient
- she orders precise measurements.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Die Dame besteht auf einen Fensterplatz und beauftragte die Musik auf der Stelle abzustellen. Sie trägt einen wertvollen Pelzmantel, auf den das Restaurant sehr aufpassen soll. Außerdem wählt sie keine von den vorgeschlagenen Gerichten aber wählt Essen, welches nicht auf der Speisekarte ist. Sie behandelt den Kelner sehr schlecht, indem sie ihn nicht freundlich behandelt wie er es macht, aber ihn unverschämt sagt, er soll sich beeilen. Sie ist auch eine schwierige Kundin, denn sie bestellt ein Rindersteak, welches 155g wiegen soll.

Question 3b.

- not too many calories/fat
- looks after her health/figure
- treating herself sometimes/hates fruit salad
- keep a clear head

The following is the example of a high-scoring response.

Die Dame meint, dass sie zu viel Fett nicht essen kann, denn sie muss auf ihre Figur achten. Sie meint auch, dass, weil sie auf ihre Figur achten muss, sie nicht so viel Butter und Kalorien essen kann. Ihre Entscheidung, Wasser anstatt Wein zu bestellen, rechtfertigt sie, indem sie sagt, dass sie klar denken muss. Zum Nachtsch will sie aber keinen Obstsalat, denn sie mag Obst nicht, stattdessen bestellt sie unter anderem Schokoladencreme mit extra Sahne, denn laut ihr, muss man sich ab und zu etwas gönnen.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 4

Question 4a.

- male-dominated world/man's world
- women confined to children, the kitchen and church
- it was about her beauty/looks
- be single
- didn't need to know about wine/pour wine

Question 4b.

Today's Wine Queen needs to be able to demonstrate knowledge of:

- types of wines
- wine cultivation
- all aspects of law regarding wine/wine rights/wine regulations/EU regulations.

Question 4c.

The communication skills essential for the duties of today's Wine Queen are:

- speaking and writing skills
- attending many (200) engagements in Germany and other countries

- holding/giving speeches about the wine regions in Germany
- conducting wine tastings
- giving interviews
- presenting/hosting at the annual Wine Ball ('attending' or 'organising' were incorrect)
- writing a blog
- appearing in advertisements.

Question 4d.

Evidence that the Wine Queen contest is still popular in Germany today can be seen in the following ways:

- every region sends a candidate
- the yearly selection of the Wine Queen is a spectacle/the whole country is excited
- it is sponsored by big/national companies
- it is broadcast on regional radio/on social media
- it is televised (SWR-Fernsehen)
- stars and celebrities give their views on who should win.

Part B – Answer in German

Text 5

Question 5

The task in Question 5 was to convince Jascha to follow his chosen career path. Highlighting the key word 'convince' would have been particularly useful. Although generally answered well, a significant number of students did not write to Jascha, but rather made suggestions in the third person. Some students merely transcribed the five reasons without attempting persuasive speech, which required the use of such modals as *sollen*, *müssen* and *wollen*, and therefore did not score highly.

The five reasons were:

- Jascha always wanted to be a vet (had worked at a zoo for a year)
- the atmosphere and teamwork suited him
- taking care of the animals/has grown up around animals
- don't need to write very much/don't need to write brochures
- don't need to work with big/school groups.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Jascha, Tierarzt zu werden wolltest du doch immer schon. Die gute Atmosphäre und Teamarbeit im Zoo, ähnelt der bei einer Tierarztpraxis sehr. Die Liebe zu den Tieren wird bedeuten, dass du ganz viel Spaß beim Job haben wirst. Du bist schon sehr vertraut mit der täglichen Pflege von Tieren, dies wird dir bei der Ausbildung sehr helfen. Als Tierarzt wirst du dich auch weiter um die spezielle Pflege von exotischen Tieren kümmern und das hat dir doch so gut gefallen. Als Tierarzt musst du auch keine Informationsbroschüren schreiben, dort kümmerst du dich hauptsächlich um die Tiere. Im Gegensatz zum Zoo, musst du als Tierarzt nicht vor Schulgruppen sprechen, sondern nur mit den Tierbesitzern. Das ist kaum anstrengend, im Vergleich zu großen Besuchergruppen.

Section 3 – Writing in German

Mentioned already is the concern with regard to students who seemingly left little time for Section 3 of the paper resulting in hurried, incomplete and difficult to read responses. The importance of thorough practice in time management cannot be emphasised enough. On the other hand, the

quality of written responses was good. Question 7 was the most popular topic. Responses were generally well planned and thoughtful and demonstrated a clear understanding of text type requirements and writing styles. In general, student responses addressed the questions appropriately; however, it is still important to emphasise the need to highlight key words to ensure the question is answered correctly. Students must demonstrate accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar. Students are reminded of the importance of thorough revision of the fundamentals of grammar, together with a broad scope of vocabulary and a bank of useful German expressions. This will enable students to express their ideas clearly and succinctly.

Question 6

This question required students to write a formal letter in the school newsletter, as the school principal, evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of social media, in support of the school's policy of forbidding social media during the school day. It can be assumed that the audience would be parents as well as students and so adopting a formal register would be most appropriate. This was the second-most popular topic and students demonstrated the ability to intelligently, clearly and succinctly separate the general advantages of social media from its possible detrimental effects on student learning and relationships in a school and classroom setting.

Question 7

This question required students to write a diary entry about their experiences after having won a ticket to a destination of their dreams. It was therefore a personal and reflective piece of writing. Students were required to reflect on what they had seen and experienced and in what way these experiences had changed them. There were many varied responses with chosen destinations ranging from Europe, and specifically Germany, to more exotic destinations or developing countries. The highest-scoring responses were those that demonstrated a real ability to describe this experience in depth and be able to link this with personal growth or an altered perspective, perhaps even for the future. The topic required students to move beyond a simple holiday on the beach or a travelogue of experiences; rather, they were expected to reflect on the impact that these experiences had on them and what, if any, flow-on effects there may have been as a result.

Question 8

Students were required to write an informative speech to present at a school assembly on a matter they were concerned about, namely energy and water wastage at their school. The topic required students to focus on the school environment only, drawing attention to specific areas of waste and informing the school community about possible solutions. Although this was a less popular topic, there were many high-scoring responses that demonstrated thoughtful analyses of issues at their school and steps that could be taken to alleviate or reduce energy and water wastage.

Question 9

Students needed to create an informative brochure that would encourage future exchange students to choose Victoria as their destination. In order to do this successfully, Victoria needed to be portrayed as a highly desirable destination. The brochures focused on a broad range of areas, including places of interest, everyday life, weather, culture, and quality of schools. Some of the highest-scoring responses were those that comprehensively addressed the questions that would most likely be asked by those considering a student exchange destination.

Question 10

This question required students to write an imaginative story surrounding a mysterious old book found in a dusty chest in the garage and what would happen once that book was opened. Most students wrote original and varied stories. Some stories chose a serious theme such as climate

change and the future of the planet, the student's own future or made links with the past. There were some excellent as well as thoughtful responses.