



# **Internal Assessment Report 2010: German (009)**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

# National Qualifications (NQ) Awards

## Titles/levels of NQ Awards verified

German Speaking (Intermediate 1)

German Speaking (Intermediate 2)

German Speaking (Higher)

## General comments

All centres showed a clear and accurate understanding of National Standards by adhering to SQA guidelines and specifications, and also to SQA categories and pegged marks in assessing candidates' performances.

Every centre verified carried out the assessments in an appropriate manner. Most showed evidence of familiarity with the Conditions and Arrangements documents and with the *Assessment of Speaking for Modern Languages* guidelines. Only four centres were not accepted, and in these cases the centres conducted the assessments appropriately but were overly lenient or too severe in awarding marks.

Verifiers accepted the marks awarded by 75% of centres, showing that exemplification material had been used.

Most centres showed clear understanding of the Evidence Requirements by preparing candidates thoroughly for both the process and the length of the assessments. The majority conducted assessments of the length specified in the guidelines: length of assessments has been an issue in previous years. If assessments are too short, candidates do not demonstrate their ability to conduct a sustained conversation; if too long, candidates tend to tire and to make errors.

Each centre submitted tapes/CDs as required. All centres verified administered speaking assessments in an appropriate manner.

In the small number of centres where candidates were assessed by different interlocutors, it appeared that internal verification (IV) had been carried out effectively. It is clear that discussion of the marks to be awarded for candidates' assessments within centres leads to an increased awareness of National Standards and to the consistent application of these Standards.

## Areas of good practice

The best performances came from schools where the interlocutor encouraged candidates to give extended answers and asked for opinions if these were not immediately forthcoming. Apart from the most able candidates, who could comfortably sustain a wide-ranging conversation, candidates tended to do better if two or three themes were dealt with in some depth, rather than by covering several superficially.

It is pleasing to note that in more centres than in previous years, there is an interactive discussion rather than mechanical question–answer, leading to an increase in good and very good performances.

It was evident that all centres spent some considerable time helping candidates to prepare for the speaking assessment, as the vast majority of candidates gave performances which were at least satisfactory, with a significant number of good and very good performances. There is a recognition in centres that ‘very good’ allows for some errors. When assessing candidates, assessors should give credit for what is good in a performance, as well as noting errors.

## **Areas for improvement**

Centres should ensure that tapes and CDs are correctly labelled and that documentation is completed in accordance with instructions sent out to centres being verified. They should also ensure that assessments are of the length specified in the guidelines, in order that their candidates fulfil their potential.

In a very few centres, several or perhaps all candidates gave a presentation on the same topic, and were each asked the same questions with little account being taken of the answers given. Candidates do better when taking part in a discussion in which the interlocutor elicits the candidates’ views in an encouraging manner.

Centres must take care when completing Form VSOO; centres should enter raw marks, not percentages in Column A.

Centres should also be aware that in the event of a candidate being withdrawn, a candidate from a different level should be substituted if there is no other candidate at the level first requested.