



**National Qualifications 2013
Internal Assessment Report
German**

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: Intermediate 1
German: Intermediate 2
German: Higher

General comments

In general, centres have a good understanding of the requirements of both the content and the conduct of the Speaking test at all three levels.

Candidates were generally well prepared and although there was a range of performances it was pleasing to find fewer candidates in the unsatisfactory and poor categories which suggests that centres are choosing accurately the level at which their candidates should be presented.

In centres where more than one interlocutor is involved in the conduct of the tests at the same level, it is clear that departmental discussion, involving cross-marking and internal verification, has taken place.

Verifiers were pleased to note that marks awarded to candidates were accurate, and the length of the recorded Speaking assessment was appropriate to each level.

Course Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

It was clear from the way in which tests were conducted that the vast majority of schools are very familiar with the Course Arrangements and recommendations as outlined in the document entitled *National Qualifications Assessment of Speaking in Modern Languages*. In addition, all centres were familiar with the categories, criteria and pegged marks as detailed in this document.

Evidence Requirements

Most centres are aware that recordings of candidate performances should be submitted either on CD or on cassette; however, centres must ensure that CDs have been fixed for use on any type of CD player and that DVDs should be avoided.

Centres must also be sure that all paperwork is completed in accordance with SQA instructions. There is, however, no need to submit extra paperwork such as teacher notes on how an assessment is marked. It is useful when centres include a copy of the NAB used for Intermediate 1 assessments, particularly if the centre has created its own assessment instrument.

Most centres this year appeared to have taken steps to ensure that the tests were conducted in appropriate surroundings, and were without background noise or interruption.

Administration of assessments

Almost all of the centres verified administered the tests in accordance with the available guidelines and documentation, using appropriate assessments at all three levels. As previously mentioned, it was usually clear that discussion, cross-marking and internal verification had taken place in centres where there was more than one interlocutor.

At all levels the choice of topic(s) was appropriate; centres gave candidates the opportunity to cover a wide range of topics.

Areas of good practice

The verification team commented on the fact that there was real and positive interaction between candidate and interlocutor in some centres, leading to several excellent performances. Most interlocutors conducted the test in a supportive manner which helped to put candidates at their ease and bring out the best in them. There were few instances this year of Speaking tests which were either too short or too long.

In general it was noted that there was good mastery of German word order in particular with reference to the use of inversion and to the use of subordinate clauses by candidates at Higher level.

At all three levels candidates were well prepared for the assessment and with regard to vocabulary used, verifiers were pleased to hear candidates use a wide variety which included a lot of up to date expressions. At all levels the choice of topic(s) was very appropriate; at Intermediate 2 and Higher levels, candidates were able to express opinions and reasons and give extended answers; at Intermediate 1 level it was pleasing to hear candidates go beyond minimum requirements.

Specific areas for improvement

There are still some instances of candidates being over-prepared and lacking spontaneity and the so-called 'discussion' element of the test really just being a list of prepared questions and answers with minimum intervention or comment from the interlocutor. Candidates should be able to answer unexpected questions on occasions, particularly at Higher level, and interlocutors could still make greater use of open-ended questioning.

One issue this year in a few centres was weaknesses in pronunciation. While basic pronunciation errors might be expected and tolerated at Intermediate 1 and 2 levels, at Higher level it is expected that candidates can cope with basic sounds such as "ch" and can correctly use vowels with umlauts; "weil" was, unfortunately, a frequently mispronounced word.