



Course report 2022

Subject	German
Level	National 5

This report provides information on candidates' performance. Teachers, lecturers and assessors may find it useful when preparing candidates for future assessment. The report is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published assessment documents and marking instructions.

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any appeals.

Grade boundary and statistical information

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2022	1500
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Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

A	Percentage	56.6	Cumulative percentage	56.6	Number of candidates	850	Minimum mark required	80
B	Percentage	22.0	Cumulative percentage	78.6	Number of candidates	325	Minimum mark required	64
C	Percentage	13.4	Cumulative percentage	92.0	Number of candidates	200	Minimum mark required	48
D	Percentage	6.8	Cumulative percentage	98.8	Number of candidates	105	Minimum mark required	32
No award	Percentage	1.2	Cumulative percentage	N/A	Number of candidates	20	Minimum mark required	N/A

You can read the general commentary on grade boundaries in appendix 1 of this report.

In this report:

- ◆ 'most' means greater than 70%
- ◆ 'many' means 50% to 69%
- ◆ 'some' means 25% to 49%
- ◆ 'a few' means less than 25%

You can find more statistical reports on the statistics page of [SQA's website](#).

Section 1: comments on the assessment

Overall, the 2022 National 5 German course assessment performed as expected, and was fair and accessible to all candidates, with a range of differentiation. Most candidates coped well with the level and were able to complete the assessment within the allocated time. However, given the disruption over that last two years, it was clear from candidates' responses that the lack of face-to-face learning and teaching, and the opportunity to regularly practise and listen to German has impacted on their exam technique and listening skills. This was taken into account when setting the grade boundaries.

Due to the removal of the assignment–writing, the mark for the writing question paper was doubled.

Question paper 1: Reading

The reading question paper was comprised of three texts (each worth 10 marks) on the contexts of culture, employability and learning. There were three supported questions (worth 4 marks). Candidates engaged well with the texts and performance was consistent over all three questions, indicating that they had managed their time better than in previous years.

The texts in the question paper were relevant to candidates. The question paper was accessible to all candidates while providing the demand and rigour required at National 5. The assessment performed as expected.

There was a full range of performances and some candidates were able to gain full marks. Some candidates did not provide enough detail from the text to access some of the marks. The marking scheme allowed candidates to offer a range of answers to demonstrate their understanding from a range of contexts. Candidates performed consistently across all three reading texts.

There were some no responses, more than in previous years, but most candidates made an attempt to answer all questions.

Most candidates did well in this element of course assessment; however, there were more candidates achieving less than 15 marks than in previous years.

Question paper 1: Writing

The writing question paper asked candidates to reply to a job advert for a kitchen assistant at a hotel in Berlin. The job application required candidates to respond to six bullet points, four of which were predictable and the final two bullet points were unpredictable.

There was a full range of performances, and a good number of candidates were able to achieve 16 or 20 marks. However, the proportion of candidates achieving the higher marks decreased this session. Many candidates achieved 12 marks and above, but there was an increase in the number of candidates achieving 0 or 4.

Question paper 2: Listening

The context of the listening question paper was society. The texts were about mobile technology, which sampled vocabulary from all contexts. Due to the familiarity of the topic,

candidates performed well with the level of challenge in this paper. The question paper performed as expected.

There was a range of performances. The marking instructions were sufficiently adapted to ensure that candidates could provide a range of answers, but also to help identify answers that were guessed when a candidate had not understood the answer. There was a range of topics included within the context of the paper that sampled a wide range of vocabulary.

Assignment–writing

The requirement to complete the assignment–writing was removed for session 2021–22.

Performance–talking

The performance–talking performed as expected. All centres verified this session used SQA’s guidelines for the internally assessed component of the course assessment: National 5 Modern Languages performance–talking assessment task.

At this level, candidates are required to deliver an oral presentation on a topic of their choice and take part in a conversation directly afterwards. The recommended duration of the presentation is 1–2 minutes, and the conversation should last between 5 and 6 minutes.

All centres provided audio files of the performances, either digitally or in a physical format.

Markers applied the marking instructions in line with national standards.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that the candidates performed well in

Question paper 1: Reading

Overall, candidates performed well in the reading question paper.

Text 1 (culture)

- ◆ question 1(a): most candidates were able to get both marks in this supported question
- ◆ question 1(b)(i): many candidates were able to correct identify Sandra's job as a boss at a travel agent
- ◆ question 1(b)(ii): most candidates got at least 1 mark in this question and the most common answer was 'the Italian food/cuisine'
- ◆ question 1(c): most candidates got at least 1 mark for this question by correctly identifying 'holidays at the beach' or 'holidays on a farm'. 'Holiday in the north' was not accepted as it did not answer the question
- ◆ question 1(d): most candidates were able to get the mark for this question by writing 'go in spring' or 'go early in the year'

Text 2 (employability)

- ◆ question 2(a): many candidates were able to gain the mark in this question
- ◆ question 2(b): most candidates were able to pick out the idea that the politicians were 'looking for teachers abroad'
- ◆ question 2(c)(i): most candidates gained at least 1 mark in this question and many achieving both marks. Most were able to point out that 'she earned more money' or 'teacher had better job opportunities.' A small number also identified that 'she could choose where she wanted to work'
- ◆ question 2(c)(ii): most candidates gained at least 1 mark, with many getting all 3 marks
- ◆ question 2(e): most candidates got this question correct, with many identifying that 'her job in Germany is fun'

Text 3 (learning)

- ◆ question 3(d): most candidates gained at least 1 mark, with many getting all 3 marks, partly supported by the use of cognates in this question
- ◆ question 3(e): most candidates answered this question correctly, which was supported

Question paper 1: Writing

Most candidates attempted the first four predictable bullet points, displaying a good range of vocabulary, grammatical structures and tenses. Most candidates seemed well-prepared for the task.

Question paper 2: Listening

Given the level of disruption noted above, candidates performed as expected in the listening question paper.

Item 1: monologue

- ◆ question 1(a): most candidates were correctly able to identify the number in the multiple-choice question
- ◆ question 1(b): most candidates were able to identify 'stay in contact with friends'
- ◆ question 1(c): most candidates were able to gain at least 1 mark. The most common answers were that 'it was not good for your health' or 'it has a negative influence on family'

Item 2: dialogue

- ◆ question 2(b): most candidates were correctly able to identify 'household chores' and many candidates gained both available marks
- ◆ question 2(c): most candidates gained 2 marks and were able to identify, for example 'listen to music', 'do his homework' or 'concentrate better'
- ◆ question 2(d)(i): most candidates were able to correctly identify 'French' in the multiple-choice question
- ◆ question 2(d)(ii): most candidates wrote that 'he was using an app' or 'testing each other'
- ◆ question 2(e): most candidates gained at least 1 mark. Most candidates identified 'to book a hotel online'

Performance—talking

At National 5 level, candidates performed well when the topics chosen for the presentation were covered in detail with well-structured responses and opinions, including an introduction and conclusion.

All candidates covered a different context in the conversation. Overall, most candidates coped well with the conversation at National 5.

Areas that candidates found demanding

Question paper 1: Reading

Text 1 (culture)

- ◆ question 1(b)(i): many candidates said that Sandra was a chef
- ◆ question 1(b)(ii): some candidates strayed too far from the text and made a comparison, for example 'Italian food is better than German food.' Some candidates missed out key ideas, for example 'relaxing' or had misread that the Italians were relaxed
- ◆ question 1(c): some candidates did not read the question and wrote 'holidays in Berlin or Munich' or 'city holiday'
- ◆ question 1(e): many candidates were unable to gain a mark here as they mixed up the ideas or didn't understand the concepts. The inversion *Bei einer größeren Gruppe ist die...* or the composite noun *Reisekosten* seemed cause difficulty for some candidates

Text 2 (employability)

- ◆ question 2(a): some candidates did not provide enough detail and missed out 'fast' or simply wrote the number '32,000'
- ◆ question 2(b): a few candidates thought the politicians were using university students, or they did not provide enough detail and missed out the idea 'from abroad'
- ◆ question 2(c)(i): a few candidates thought that 'she made double/twice the money', which showed a misunderstanding of *zweitens*
- ◆ question 2(c)(ii): some candidates were missing marks by not providing enough detail, or guessing. There were a number of instances of dictionary misuse, with some candidates unable to identify the plural noun *Straßen*, and wrote about trams
- ◆ question 2(d): this question proved challenging for some candidates. Some responses included a degree of misreading, for example 'she wanted to test them all the time' or 'she didn't understand German/what they were saying'
- ◆ question 2(e): some candidates misunderstood the reflexive verb and wrote 'she now understands her pupils'

Text 3 (learning)

- ◆ question 3(a): many candidates missed the comparative adjective *interessanter* or did not mention the school day
- ◆ question 3(b): most candidates got at least 1 mark here, but this question was particularly challenging to mark due to poor expression in English. Candidates seemed to mix up the ideas, which was a result of the modal verb and *sowie*. A number of candidates mixed up *Noten* with the English 'notes'
- ◆ question 3(c)(i): many candidates did not provide enough detail and missed out *ehemaliger*, and some candidates guessed the 'art teacher'
- ◆ question 3(c)(ii): some candidates misunderstood *freiwillig* and said that 'pupils stayed in school to volunteer'. Some candidates did not gain the mark in this question
- ◆ question 3(d): some candidates did not answer this question and may have run out of time at the end of the paper. Some confused *Frieden* with *Freunden*. A number of candidates were unable to identify the verbs after *zu*

Question paper 1: Writing

Overall, candidates did not perform as well as expected in the writing question paper:

- ◆ in the first four bullet points, many candidates were not well-prepared for these, despite the predictability
- ◆ some candidates did not always understand what they were writing and made errors when writing from memory
- ◆ some candidates are still writing a formal introduction, which is no longer required, and some struggle to do this well
- ◆ some candidates did not provide a range of tenses, and some had particular difficulty in forming the past tense
- ◆ some candidates only coped with the language in the first two bullet points

- ◆ other points of difficulty for some candidates were adjective endings, word-order and verb agreement
- ◆ a few candidates wrote very few sentences or did not attempt the task at all, which could be the result of exam technique, or the candidate had spent too much time on the reading
- ◆ a few candidates had over-prepared the first four bullet points and it was clear that they did not always understand what they were writing
- ◆ the language was so complicated in parts that some candidates made errors that detracted from the overall impression, particularly where chunks of learned material were missed out
- ◆ bullet point three: a few candidates wrote about free-time activities with no mention of skills and qualities. Free-time activities are often mentioned without any relevance to the job, for example going to the cinema and their favourite types of films
- ◆ bullet point four:
 - some candidates chose to write in the present tense, which limited the range of tenses in the piece overall
 - a few candidates had very little detail
- ◆ most candidates attempted bullet points five and six. The accuracy of the bullet points deteriorated significantly in the last two bullet points and a considerable number of candidates were unable to form basic sentences using two verbs. The result was unconjugated verbs and incorrect word order
- ◆ bullet point five, some candidates:
 - made serious errors and at times it was not immediately obvious what they were trying to say
 - instead of writing detailed language, tried to express ideas that were beyond their writing ability in German
 - tried to write extended answers but made significant errors in terms of grammar and vocabulary
- ◆ bullet point six, some candidates:
 - were unable to form basic questions, which resulted in unconjugated verbs or dictionary misuse
 - were unable to deal with question words, auxiliary and modal verbs, which led to confusion with conjugations and word order
- ◆ most candidates attempted all six bullet points, but many encountered difficulties in the final two unpredictable bullet points, particularly number six, indicating that writing spontaneously seemed to be challenging
- ◆ many candidates kept the final two bullet points simple, which worked overall

Question paper 2: Listening

Item 1: monologue

- ◆ question 1(b): some candidates did not put enough detail here to gain some or all of the marks, including 'take photos of food', 'watch videos on the bus'. Only some candidates were able to achieve all the available marks

- ◆ question 1(c): despite providing a range of possibilities, some candidates were unable to pick out some basic vocabulary, including *Fernseher* and *Schlafzimmer*. Some candidates guessed that 'mobile phones disturbed sleep' or 'fraud/scammers'
- ◆ question 1(d): this question was particularly challenging, with many candidates guessing that the technology was not available in the past. Many candidates were either unable to identify 'spending more time outside/in the fresh air' or 'happier'

Item 2: dialogue

- ◆ question 2(a): this question was the most challenging in the listening paper, and most candidates were unable to identify that his 'phone bill was [...] high'. This resulted in lots of guessing, with many candidates saying that 'Kai had broken his phone' or 'his screen time was too high'
- ◆ question 2(b): a number of candidates confused 'washing up' with 'doing the washing'. There were a few contradictory answers, for example 'to do chores for pocket money'
- ◆ question 2(d)(i): some candidates were unable to identify 'French' as the correct answer and chose the other options. This could be exam technique; however, even if the candidate did not understand *Französisch*, the text also included *Vokabeln lernen*
- ◆ question 2(d)(ii): some candidates were unable to identify cognates or near cognates here, including *App*, *Vokabeln* or *testen*
- ◆ question 2(e): some candidates confused 'book a hotel online' with 'reading a book online' and found it challenging to correctly identify 'self-scan in the supermarket'. There were lots of references to 'shopping online' and 'getting things delivered directly to your door'
- ◆ question 2(f)(i): some candidates did not provide enough detail in this answer or mixed the two ideas up. Some were unable to identify *Informatik* or the time phrase. Others missed out key details 'for families' or 'at the library'
- ◆ question 2(f)(ii): a significant number of candidates gave contradictory answers: 'it is free/cheap' which resulted in the candidate not gaining any marks

Performance–talking

A few candidates had prepared a presentation using a range of topics that did not allow for any depth. The content was repetitive, lacked structure, and the level of language was more appropriate to National 4. Some candidates found it difficult to sustain the conversation as the discussion progressed.

Some conversations and discussions were unnecessarily long or too short. Particularly when conversations and discussions were short, candidates were unable to demonstrate detailed language.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Question paper 1: Reading

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ practise their dictionary skills to help them select the most appropriate translations in the context of the text
- ◆ answer the question being asked. It may be worthwhile reminding candidates that the information comes in a chronological order and the questions include hooks to support them throughout the text
- ◆ read each question carefully and highlight or underline key words to help them find the correct answer in the text
- ◆ read the question and their answer at the end of the paper to ensure that the question has been answered and what they have written in English makes sense
- ◆ are guided by the marks available for each question and should provide as much detail as they have understood. Some candidates did not provide sufficient detail to gain the marks
- ◆ are aware that it is rare for a single word answer to be sufficient detail at National 5. They should look at what comes before and what comes after to ensure that all the necessary detail is included
- ◆ are familiar with a range of grammatical structures as outlined in the productive grammar grid at National 5. This should help them in identifying the relationship between the words in the sentence, including the tense if there is more than one verb in the sentence
- ◆ are aware that comparative adjectives and composite nouns are common features at National 5
- ◆ know the tense of the question should give them a good idea of the tense they should be using in their response
- ◆ are discouraged from giving additional information that is not related to the text or the question, as this could negate any correct information and they could therefore miss gaining the marks for correct information

Question paper 1: Writing

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ are aware that a formal introduction or conclusion is not required
- ◆ for bullet point three:
 - know that the information should be relevant to the job
 - the context of the paper is a job application
 - if free-time is mentioned, it should be linked to the skill, otherwise they bullet point may not be covered
 - remember that the bullet point is looking for information on skills and interests that make them right for the job
- ◆ in bullet point four, try to show a range of tenses accurately to achieve a higher mark
- ◆ avoid listing, particularly school subjects in bullet point two
- ◆ for the unpredictable bullet points, have opportunities to practise a range of these. It may help teachers and lecturers to look to other languages for ideas
- ◆ attempt all six bullet points to ensure that they have written enough, as this can have an impact on their overall mark
- ◆ check that all bullet points have been covered and use their dictionary to check the accuracy of what they have written
- ◆ practise a range of productive grammar skills, including how to form questions
- ◆ are made aware of the marking criteria so that they know what is expected of them in this paper, and to help them achieve as high a mark as possible
- ◆ can use detailed language and give opinions and reasons
- ◆ use a range of tenses (where appropriate) and include examples of inversion and subordinate clauses

Question paper 2: Listening

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ read the introduction and are aware of the context
- ◆ read the questions carefully
- ◆ highlight key words to help them structure the text
- ◆ write in bullet points and score out any notes with a single line
- ◆ regularly practise taking extensive notes in class
- ◆ know that notes should be confined to the side of the paper. Some candidates drew a line down the middle of the paper, which made it more difficult for markers to find the correct answers
- ◆ as they hear both the monologue and the dialogue three times, use the third time to check the accuracy of what they have written
- ◆ are guided by the number of marks available for each question to ensure that sufficient detail is provided
- ◆ know that it is rare for a single word answer to be sufficient detail at National 5, for example a country on its own would not be sufficient detail

- ◆ revisit some basic vocabulary, for example countries, numbers, weather expressions and question words to ensure that sufficient detail is provided
- ◆ do not provide a range of alternative answers using oblique lines (/). Some candidates missed marks if it was not clear what their answer was, or if the two answers contradicted each other
- ◆ provide accurate answers. A few candidates negated the correct answer by providing additional information that was incorrect

Performance–talking

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ use detailed language as per the productive grammar grid. At this level, long lists of nouns (for example places in the town and school subjects) or repetitions of straightforward descriptions (for example names, ages, pets and descriptions of hair and eyes) are unlikely to allow candidates to use a suitable range of structures and vocabulary to access the higher pegged marks
- ◆ are guided carefully in their choice of topic and should avoid topics that are better suited to Higher and require greater levels of maturity (for example smoking, drinking alcohol)
- ◆ are guided to choose one topic and use a range of structures, tenses, and vocabulary appropriate to the level
- ◆ avoid overly rehearsing discussions: the discussion at National 5 should contain spontaneous and natural language
- ◆ prepare for their assessment independently to personalise their performance. This means candidates can select their own topics of interest, vocabulary, and grammatical structures
- ◆ do not respond to questions with mini presentations. Longer answers can appear to be overly rehearsed, and conversations should include a range of short and long answers
- ◆ have a range of strategies for asking questions to be repeated, or language structures and phrases to say when they have not understood an aspect of the discussion

Teachers and lecturers could make use of the Understanding Standards materials for National 5 German talking performances (IACCAs) published on SQA’s secure website.

Appendix 1: general commentary on grade boundaries

SQA's main aim when setting grade boundaries is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.

For most National Courses, SQA aims to set examinations and other external assessments and create marking instructions that allow:

- ◆ a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional grade C boundary)
- ◆ a well-prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional grade A boundary)

It is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level. Therefore, SQA holds a grade boundary meeting for each course to bring together all the information available (statistical and qualitative) and to make final decisions on grade boundaries based on this information. Members of SQA's Executive Management Team normally chair these meetings.

Principal assessors utilise their subject expertise to evaluate the performance of the assessment and propose suitable grade boundaries based on the full range of evidence. SQA can adjust the grade boundaries as a result of the discussion at these meetings. This allows the pass rate to be unaffected in circumstances where there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more, or less, difficult than usual.

- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more difficult than usual.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been less difficult than usual.
- ◆ Where levels of difficulty are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

Grade boundaries from question papers in the same subject at the same level tend to be marginally different year on year. This is because the specific questions, and the mix of questions, are different and this has an impact on candidate performance.

This year, a package of support measures including assessment modifications and revision support, was introduced to support candidates as they returned to formal national exams and other forms of external assessment. This was designed to address the ongoing disruption to learning and teaching that young people have experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, SQA adopted a more generous approach to grading for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses than it would do in a normal exam year, to help ensure fairness for candidates while maintaining standards. This is in recognition of the fact that those preparing for and sitting exams have done so in very different circumstances from those who sat exams in 2019.

The key difference this year is that decisions about where the grade boundaries have been set have also been influenced, where necessary and where appropriate, by the unique circumstances in 2022. On a course-by-course basis, SQA has determined grade boundaries in a way that is fair to candidates, taking into account how the assessment (exams and coursework) has functioned and the impact of assessment modifications and revision support.

The grade boundaries used in 2022 relate to the specific experience of this year's cohort and should not be used by centres if these assessments are used in the future for exam preparation.

For full details of the approach please refer to the [National Qualifications 2022 Awarding—Methodology Report](#).