2020 German (continuers) Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the 2020 assessment cycle, gives an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

Teachers should refer to the subject outline for specifications on content and learning requirements, and to the subject operational information for operational matters and key dates.

School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Folio

Interaction

The more successful responses commonly:

* flowed naturally
* encompassed a range of topics
* demonstrated student responses that were quick, fluent and dealt with topic shifts and unpredicted elements confidently
* showed clearly that students were engaged: responses were spontaneous, passionate, humorous
* featured open-ended questions that allowed students to respond with a range of information
* featured questions that allowed students to ‘go deeper’ and elaborate, reflect, argue a point and substantiate their opinions
* demonstrated high levels of authenticity through the use of idiomatic language, modal particles, and interjections.

The less successful responses commonly:

* limited discussions solely on aspects pertaining to ‘The Individual’ theme, i.e. the student’s personal world
* lacked challenging, probing questions, which limited the scope for students to demonstrate their ability to reflect, substantiate and argue a point
* featured formulaic, often single-sentence, answers
* exhibited frequent pauses and difficulty elaborating on or even responding appropriately to simple questions
* relied on the interlocutor to take the lead
* demonstrated a limited range of vocabulary
* displayed basic grammatical errors particularly with tenses and verb endings
* displayed frequent syntactical inaccuracies
* relied on pre-prepared (often overly rehearsed) responses rather than spontaneous discussion.

Text Production

The more successful responses commonly:

* were comprehensively planned, as evidenced in the depth and breadth of ideas and detailed content
* demonstrated a clear understanding of the context, purpose and audience, text type, and kind of writing required for the particular text-production task
* used a range of structures, vocabulary, and connective devices in their writing, such as relative clauses, passive voice, subjunctives, and, where appropriate, idiomatic expressions, metaphors, and similes
* reflected student engagement with and enjoyment of the task, which was based around a topic of student interest or a current issue, or a task which provided scope for imaginative, creative interpretation
* were presented with tasks that stipulated a range of ideas, arguments, and/or opinions that required exploration and in-depth knowledge.

The less successful responses commonly:

* treated the topic superficially
* were often too brief to achieve sufficient depth and breadth
* featured simplistic, repetitive structures or expression, and basic errors
* consisted of several brief diary entries (often in response to a longer text, such as a film, story, or novel) that were either not at all or only loosely thematically connected and limited the scope for achieving a level of breadth and depth.

Text Analysis

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated a thorough understanding of text types and metalanguage, which allowed students to interpret meaning and draw conclusions about the purpose, style, and language of a text or texts effectively
* featured comprehensive and succinct analysis of content and textual features
* substantiated conclusions with detailed, pertinent examples
* responded to a range of texts (three or four) on topics of contemporary relevance that provided scope for questions addressing all relevant components of specific features IR1, IR2, and IR3
* reflected and interpreted a range of content and textual features.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were general rather than specific
* consisted of either brief, superficial answers or verbose, repetitive, superficial answers with only limited information or limited relevance to the question
* needed to provide examples to substantiate an opinion or conclusion
* demonstrated limited understanding of text types, features of language, and subtext.

Assessment Type 2: In-depth Study

The In-depth Study comprises three assessment tasks: an oral presentation in German, a written response in German, and a reflective response in English.

The more successful responses commonly:

* consisted of topics that students clearly felt passionate about, for example, Germany’s response to the refugee crisis and the subsequent impact on German politics and society, the issue of social engineering in a contemporary German scenario and in WWII Germany
* had contemporary relevance and/or a degree of controversy, which allowed students inform, analyse, persuade and reflect, convey concepts, and explain different perspectives
* featured a clear differentiation in terms of purpose, context, and audience between the oral presentation and the written response
* featured an oral presentation that was delivered in a lively, fluent manner and conveyed enthusiasm and interest in the topic
* featured an oral presentation that was highly effective in engaging the audience by varying the content, expression and tone
* featured a written response that was effectively prepared and carefully edited to ensure that the final product achieved depth and breadth
* ensured that both the oral presentation and the written response demonstrated a high level of formal accuracy and incorporated an extensive range of linguistic structures and expressions
* ensured that the reflection addressed all aspects of IR3
* made some reference, or drew comparisons to pertinent contemporary matters or issues
* made effective use of the word-limits and time-limits.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were often largely identical in terms of purpose (and often context and audience), and merely informational, for example, when a German artist was chosen as a topic, gave a speech focusing on biographical details and chronicled his/her work in the written task
* needed to reflect that adequate research was undertaken in one or both tasks
* featured presentations that appeared underprepared: containing too many unnecessary errors (grammar/ syntax/ pronunciation) and/or were poorly paced
* featured overly simplistic and/or repetitive vocabulary and structures
* needed to use textual features associated with different text types effectively
* were based on topics that limited genuine reflection on any aspect of IR3
* contained limited, if any, reflection on cultures, values, beliefs, practices, and ideas
* focused primarily on the research process, not the impact of the research on self and others.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 4: Examination

The examination consists of two assessments: an oral examination and a written examination.

The majority of the 82 students who completed the examination were generally well prepared for the oral and written examinations.

Oral Examination

The oral examination consists of two distinct parts: general conversation and discussion of the student’s in‑depth study topic. In the conversation the students converse with the examiners about their personal world. This year orals were shifted to the online format, which worked well; it should be noted that well over a quarter of the cohort of students received full marks for the conversation and the discussion.

Section 1: Conversation

Most students were able to converse on familiar topics but many found moving away from pre-prepared material challenging. Teachers are encouraged to help students practise flexible responses re-stating or emphasising information in different ways, using a range of word order, adding additional information and elaborating, expressing and qualifying opinions and agreement/disagreement.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated the ability to interact well and engage with interest about topics such as family, self, hobbies, school life and exchange experiences. Some students had obviously thought about the well‑known topics (such as family, hobbies, school life, future plans and exchange experiences) from the angle of what is particular or special to them, rather than stating superficial or standard information
* provided depth of treatment of information and ideas and supported their responses with detailed explanations
* engaged with follow-up questions, gave opinions and justified them
* were able to discuss a range of topics in creative, natural and engaging ways. They were able to vary structures and use cohesive devices confidently to create flow.

The less successful responses commonly:

* used a very limited range of vocabulary and basic linguistic structures, at times using English and English sentence structures
* gave brief responses such as simple statements rather than offering opinions on topics of conversation
* lacked in detail and depth when responding to the examiners, often needing to be prompted to give more detail in support of their response. Students need strategies and phrases to win time and to maintain conversation
* showed difficulty understanding questions, even when these were reformulated and simplified.

Overall, errors which are incidental rather than systemic and do not impede meaning do not preclude high achievement, however repeated basic errors such as in subject verb agreement, common verb forms for basic tenses (e.g. present and perfect) and confusion of pronouns inevitably impact outcomes.

Section 2: Discussion

This year’s pre-submission of the in-depth study outline worked well. Topics included a range of contemporary environmental and political issues (inevitably also the COVID pandemic) and historical, sporting and cultural topics. There were some interesting topics chosen and many students presented detailed and insightful accounts of their research. Examiners noted, however, that some topics did not offer a clear connection to German culture. Teachers are encouraged to assist students to develop topics that enable them to demonstrate interpretation and reflection both in their research and the discussion.

Students are expected to be able to discuss their research in relative detail and cover at least three sub-topics in depth. Examiners noted that students who had a strong personal connection to their topic in general performed better and could express opinion and reflection well. Teachers are encouraged to assist students in choosing and unpacking a topic that is commensurate with their linguistic abilities. Problems with expression (subject-specific vocabulary and command of basic grammatical structures) are often more pronounced in the discussion. Students require ample opportunity to develop conversational techniques and confidence to flexibly discuss their research topics, as they are less familiar than those of the conversation.

In order to consolidate language skills in their research area, students need to have thought about their main points, including their topic’s significance to German-speaking culture(s), and have developed simple and effective ways of explaining their topic to the examiners. The ability to demonstrate reflection on culture, values and beliefs continues to be an area for improvement. Teachers are encouraged to expose students to more challenging questions about their topics. Students should be able to discuss aspects of their English reflection task in German.

The more successful responses

* had a clear focus on the German-speaking world and often provided historical context
* knew their topic well and were able to give an overview and explain in detail what they researched
* used topic-specific vocabulary
* were able to refer to their research processes (formal and informal): readings including online, conversations/interviews/correspondence
* explained their topic choice, why their topic interested them or was significant
* gave opinions, and where appropriate, compared their findings within an Australian context.

The less successful responses

* lacked depth and breadth of treatment, showing superficial treatment of ideas. Some could add little to their title and outline dot points
* were not able to explain the focus of their oral presentation or their written German text
* did not demonstrate the capacity to support or explain opinions
* relied on a limited range of vocabulary and language structures to convey meaning
* chose topics that were overly complex or narrow, for their level of fluency
* focused on topics that did not lend themselves to critical reflection of their own and others’ values, beliefs, opinions and perspectives
* showed little interpretation or reflection on the topic.

General information for the oral examination

Students are best prepared when they have had frequent opportunities to practise giving reasons, making comparisons, and offering opinions, as well as elaborating and expanding on initial statements.

Depth of treatment of ideas, information, and opinion is still a key area for improvement. It is recommended that teachers ask ‘why’ more often to facilitate opportunities for students to explain, reflect and draw conclusions about topics and issues. Students need to know not only topic specific vocabulary but also the language used to express opinion and make comparisons.

Attention to detail and grammatical correctness is encouraged. It is expected that students are familiar with the following:

* correct subject-verb agreement
* use of correct word order
* correct use of infinitive clauses, placement of *zu*
* correct use of tenses, in particular perfect tense
* use of correct personal pronouns and the impersonal pronoun man (particularly useful with modal structures).

Written examination

Section 1: Listening and Responding

There were five texts in German. For all texts, the questions and answers were in English.

Question 1

This short radio advertisement encouraged attendance of a smart home expo.

The more successful responses identified at least one language strategy and supported their answer with examples from the text. Strategies included use of imperatives to urge the audience to come along, or to imagine the benefits, and positive language and tone to describe the surprising capabilities of the smart home, and the expo itself, which is described using a superlative (Europe’s largest) but also has having free entry.

The less successful responses recounted content such as the expo being free but did not identify techniques the speaker used to motivate listeners to attend the event.

Question 2

This text was relatable and well-handled by most students.

The more successful responses used comprehensive detail from the text to support their impressions of the two speakers’ characters; they gave a balanced comparison of the leisure activity preferences of the speakers and their ideas on relaxing after a busy school week. Hannes likes to go out with friends, dancing or to the latest movies and was seen as more sociable, adventurous and extroverted. Nina was seen as more introverted/less sociable but confident in her choices, and more conscientious; she likes to get on top of her homework and then make herself comfortable with her favourite TV shows and hobbies at home.

The less successful responses did not give detailed text evidence for the two perspectives, or recounted parts of the text without giving conclusions about the personalities of the two speakers.

Question 3

The text deals with a commemorative Beethoven program of events and the special significance of the composer for Vienna.

The more successful responses were based on careful reading of the questions. The less successful responses relied on general knowledge rather than being clearly connected to the text.

(a) Students were required to use the text to identify the primary aim, to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Beethoven’s birth, plus at least one other broader aim of the program; i.e. to make his music accessible to all not just to classical music fans, or to enable people to rediscover his works in new ways and in new settings such as parks, museums or even the cemetery. More successful responses identified the number and linked it to Beethoven’s birth year and gave good detail on the innovative nature of the program.

The less successful responses did not identify the significance of the number 250 or did not refer to text detail on the aims of the program. Most students were able to say that the program was about Beethoven’s music being played around Vienna.

(b) This question focussed on the specific significance of Beethoven for Vienna. The more successful responses identified both that Beethoven made Vienna the capital city of classical music or that it would not be the world capital of classical music that it is today without him, and also gave the biographical detail that he composed his greatest works there (having lived there from 22 years of age until his death).

The less successful responses were either general in nature and not related to text evidence or identified only one aspect.

Question 4

(a) Most students were able to accurately identify the purpose of the radio report. Acceptable responses included that the report covered the outcome of the judging of the world’s most liveable cities, and the announcement of Vienna as the winner, or alternatively that the report aimed to get listeners to think about what makes a city liveable and join in the conversation.

(b) This question required students to gather text evidence on common characteristics of liveable cities. More successful responses identified features of the top 10 cities and gave a selection of relevant detail from the text. These cities are people-friendly; they offer a wide range of leisure activities and plenty of space for pedestrians, coffee shops, and cyclists; their city centres are colourful and full of life; they make people feel at home and relaxed. Their architecture is people-friendly and interesting with new types of greenspaces.

The less successful responses referred only to the general judging criteria for liveable cities.

(c) The more successful responses identified the radio host’s questions at the close of the report and drew conclusions about why listeners would want to join the discussion, i.e. to reflect and comment on the winners, to evaluate the fairness of the ranking system and its criteria and to give their own opinions what makes cities liveable, and comment on their own city. The less successful responses did not refer directly to the text or sometimes just listed some of the host’s questions.

Question 5

This text was a rich and challenging one, however most students understood the concept of a film review and were able to identify some text evidence in support of the reviewer’s positive recommendation. Relevant detail was to be found in several parts of the text, as well as in the closing opinion.

(a) The more successful responses identified at least three key reasons the reviewer gave to see the film. Evidence included that it is suitable for the whole family (not too violent or scary for children); that there is suspense and the film is moving, with a blend of emotions (fear of Nazis catching up with the family, and the pain of the loss of home country, and also funny incidents, exciting new places and people); that the acting is convincing and expressive and the film is very effective (the audience can understand the emotions and pain of Anna and her family); that the film is a timeless and contemporary story of displacement/exile and migration. Some responses also referred to the director as one of the most successful in Germany.

The less successful responses focussed on general comments regarding the importance of the history of the 1930’s or recounted the plot. Some responses repeated terms or phrases from the text in German without sufficient explanation, overall students need to clearly demonstrate their understanding of the evidence selected and should aim to answer succinctly by avoiding unnecessary repetition, of phrases or of the question itself.

(b) This question required students to reflect on the significance of das rosa Kaninchen in the film. The more successful responses identified relevant plot detail (that Anna is only allowed to take one toy when the family flees Berlin. She chooses her plush dog and the pink rabbit gets left behind) but also that the pink rabbit symbolises the pain and loss of home/home country that Anna and her family experience. Some responses also referred to its being a main character and part of the title of the film.

The less successful responses gave little text evidence or demonstrated a lack of understanding of the text and drew unsupported conclusions about the possible role of the rabbit, such as it offering Anna comfort in hard times.

Section 2: Reading and Responding

Part A

For both texts questions and answers were in English.

For both texts, Examiners noted that students need to ensure that they base their answers on information in the text, rather than prior knowledge about a topic.

Given the time and space constraints, it is important that students’ answers are specific but succinct. Students should select key evidence from the text and include it in English in their answers. Quoting extensively in German and then translating takes up valuable answer space. Students should likewise avoid long introductions to their answers.

Question 6

The text examines the practice of burning non-recyclable household waste for energy in Germany and also the use of its ash by-product as a construction material. It poses the question whether combustion of waste is a sustainable solution, and finally presents the author’s negative conclusion.

(a) More successful responses identified both waste management practices — recycling and burning of residual waste for energy.

(b) The more successful responses identified the author’s negative attitude to combustion of waste and analysed how this attitude was conveyed; they commented on the author’s use of language and text strategies.

Evidence included word-choice, use of superlatives/emotionally-laden language e.g. hochgiftig and *krebserregend* and *strengstens* *verboten* to describe the dangerous by-products of burning waste. At text level, the sustainability of burning waste is questioned in the title (*Müllverbrennung – die nachhaltige Lösung?*) and in the body of the text where the author examines what is often said about waste combustion being clean and sustainable and voices disagreement (*Genau genommen ist das nicht der Fall*). Several responses referred to the author’s conclusion (*Müllverbrennung ist in der Tat nicht die nachhaltige Lösung*) and that the sustainable solution is not burning more and more waste but an overall reduction of household waste. Most responses identified that the author was not in favour of *Müllverbrennung* and could give some examples from the text which showed the negative consequences of burning waste.

Less successful responses mostly identified a negative attitude but did not comment on language strategies. In a few cases key vocabulary was confused e.g. *Müllverbrennung* and *Mülltrennung* with some describing Germany’s waste management practices in general. Too few utilised the title, or noticed repeated key vocabulary to assist in identifying and interpreting key messages of the text.

(c) The more successful responses weighed up the positives and negatives in Germany’s waste management practices as described in the text. They identified that ‘to what extent’ meant that they needed to give a balanced evaluation of the evidence, before coming to a conclusion. They gave several pieces of text evidence on each side.

Possible positives/reasons to be proud included: Germans are leaders in recycling, *Spitzenreiter* in separating their waste. Germans have a 70% recycling quota. They have strongly invested in large-scale waste to energy technology. All this looks positive but strictly speaking there are negatives that they shouldn’t be so proud of: Burning of waste still creates waste by-products including emissions and slag. The huge amounts of waste being burned. Combustion can release poisonous dioxins. Slag can contain toxins and contaminate groundwater. Some responses also identified that in comparison to the ‘Swiss’, the Germans have less reason to be proud and could learn from their waste management practices. They do not use the slag in construction, it is banned. They can only shake their heads that Germany does. They keep this type of waste in closed depots.

Less successful responses mentioned only one perspective and/or gave little specific evidence. Some responses commented on Germany’s strong investment in waste burning facilities, and some saw this as only a negative, missing the point that the majority of the waste burned is converted into energy. Some concentrated only on the familiar topic of recycling, which was not the main focus of the text, and were thus unable to demonstrate analysis of Germany’s waste management strategies.

Question 7

This text covers the global state of equal rights and opportunity of the sexes, and with special reference to Germany. A key difficulty for some related to the appropriate use of statistics and understanding of how closing the gap is expressed in German: e.g. *zu 97*, *2 Prozent geschlossen* meaning 97.2% closed. The text deals with a range of areas and is structured with headings which assisted student understanding. The text moves from positive results to areas where the news is less positive (economic issues such as employment, leadership positions, paid and unpaid work).

(a) More successful responses identified at least three positive developments for women in Germany: Germany is again in the top ten (of 153 countries in the study). Germany is doing better than global figures with regard to political representation and especially ministerial positions: 40% i.e. almost 20% more women in ministerial positions compared to global figures and 31% of MPs being women. Equality in the area of education is almost achieved (gap is 97.2 closed) and in health (life expectancy) it is already achieved.

Less successful responses often identified that Germany was doing well compared to other countries but did not support the claim with specific examples. Some highlighted statistics in the text as evidence but failed to incorporate them into their answers. Some students had difficulty with selection of the appropriate dictionary translation, others with direct translation. Some common mis-translations included *nachhaltig* – lasting instead of sustainable (this was also a key term in Text 6); *Wirtschaft* as housekeeping rather than economy. Sometimes false friends also led to misunderstanding: man as man/men rather than the general pronoun ‘one’ or ‘we’; *Freiwilligenarbeit* (voluntary or unpaid work) was translated as free willing work, and *Universitätsbildung* (university/tertiary education) as University building(s).

(b) Most students identified the author’s position that men and women worldwide do not yet have equal rights and opportunity. Few however noted the point at the beginning of the article that this could well take another 100 years according to the World Economic Forum.

More successful responses gave a range of text evidence on the relative situations of women and men in various areas covered by the report. They gathered evidence from across the text to support their explanation of the author’s position.

Although there is some good news in Germany in the areas of education, health and political representation, globally the gap is mostly larger. Developments in one major area — economy — are poor and even worsening in Germany. The tone is rather negative: Even in Germany, fewer women are working overall and less than 55 percent of managerial positions are held by women. Women still earn about 22 percent less than their male colleagues. And women work 1.6 times longer unpaid than men in childcare and household.

The author closes the text with the importance of working to close the gap: we must build fairer and more inclusive economic systems where the sexes are paid equally so that economies can grow for the benefit of all and for achievement of the UN sustainability goals.

Less successful responses provided more general remarks without giving specific evidence. Some responses revealed confusion about the percentages and the specific point/s in the text these related to. A few students interpreted this question as needing to explain how the author conveyed his/her message.

Many students did not recognise the comparative forms of *eine fairere und inklusivere Wirtschaft* translating this as ‘a fair and inclusive economy’ or missed small but important words such as *weniger als and unbezahlt*. The use of man as an alternative to the passive, was often not recognised and led to mis‑translations: ‘Men must be more inclusive’. Some students also had difficulty recognising and translating passive sentences in the conclusion e.g. the modal passive construction: *können … erreicht werden*.

Section 2: Reading and responding Part B

This question requires a response in German

Question 8

Students responded to Lena’s blog expressing her reasons for preferring to shop in stores rather than online, particularly for clothing, shoes and books. Students were required to take the opposite view and to respond to the arguments presented. All students understood the perspective and the main focus of the stimulus text, but for some there was a tendency to voice strong support for online shopping without responding to the arguments in the text. Several creative pieces of writing, while demonstrating passion for the subject and sound expression, nevertheless addressed few of the source text arguments and therefore did not achieve to their potential.

Depth and breadth of content varied; however, a number of students offered insightful and surprising ideas, including the benefits of not being confronted by sales assistants, small changerooms and unsympathetic lighting when trying on clothes!

Accuracy of expression was problematic for many (see comments below). Teachers are encouraged to support students to consolidate basic structures and use them consistently, avoiding direct translation from English. Here recasting complex sentences and using sentence starters and ‘language chunks’ can assist. Most students were familiar with the conventions of the text type.

The more successful responses:

* addressed the arguments and points raised in the stimulus text, demonstrating relevant ideas and arguments, and good depth and breadth of information. Texts referred to downsides of personal interactions, online reviews and recommendations as alternatives to advice from sales staff, alternatives for being able to touch textiles or books (such as being able to examine products closely online), and online information about size and fit
* explained several reasons for their preference for online shopping. Texts referred to aspects including ease and convenience (several saying they could shop without getting out of bed), the benefits of home delivery and returns policies, product range and price and time saving and COVID related risks
* were well planned and showed logical progression of ideas in response to ideas raised in the text
* were convincing and engaging and used persuasive language. They used strategies including exclamations, rhetorical questions and imperatives to express disagreement and for emphasis, and to call on Lena to change her mind and give online shopping a try
* used varied language to express opinions
* used appropriate text type conventions and (informal) address form consistently
* were well structured texts using a range of cohesive devices for flow and interest.

The less successful responses

* gave a general defence of online shopping without addressing the arguments and points in the stimulus text
* did not give specific examples in response to points raised in the text, and repeated one or two simple ideas
* sometimes relied too heavily on the source text, or reiterated the question
* did not use persuasive language
* did not use the planning section to first briefly organise the response
* demonstrated difficulties in clearly and accurately expressing ideas, information and opinions
* used pronouns indiscriminately, frequently switching from formal to informal forms of address
* used incorrect word choice (inadequate dictionary use), used direct translation from English and confused similar forms *Mann*/man and *dass*/das
* experienced difficulty with the following basic grammatical elements:
* subject verb agreement e.g. various incorrect verb forms sometimes in the same text e.g. *ich ist*/*ich sind*; *das ist drei wichtige Gründe*; *Die meisten Leute weiß...*
* appropriate use of pronouns
* correct use of common tenses (present, perfect and future)
* basic word order with different types of conjunctions (coordinating/subordinating) e.g. *Wenn man sind introvertiert…*/*Ich hoffe, dass es ist besser...* Also subject verb inversion when using different elements to start a sentence.

Section 4: Writing

With regard to the distribution of the chosen question, Questions 9 and 11 were most frequently chosen with a fairly even split, while Question 10 attracted a significantly lower number of responses.

Question 9

The more successful responses included these considerations:

* effective use of the text type
* using informal tone and address form as appropriate to two friends discussing their New Year’s resolutions and plans
* creatively thought about and described plans, dreams, goals and strategies for achieving them – popular topics included health and fitness goals and positive body image, travel, learning new languages, sports or instruments, improving study habits and future aspirations, jobs and earning money, but also improving interpersonal relationships and environmental consciousness
* enriching the dialogue by speakers giving reasons for their chosen resolutions/plans; sharing and responding to each other’s ideas, voicing opinions, agreement and disagreement; offering each other advice e.g. joining fitness clubs or other activities together
* reflection on the previous year e.g. whether they had kept their resolutions last year, how they could help each other to realise them this time, such as by writing down resolutions like a time capsule
* many students used a natural conversational tone and some also used humour effectively to create lively and engaging dialogues
* used varied structures and cohesive devices to deepen expression of ideas.

The less successful responses

* did not imagine the scenario in any detail, or adequately plan the dialogue before writing
* took too long setting introductory context before addressing the question
* mainly gave simple statements of plans without strategies for achieving them
* did not present and develop a range of ideas or became focussed on one aspect
* did not incorporate opinions into the dialogue to expand or elaborate on ideas
* experienced difficulties with expression that significantly limited their response (see overall comments below).

Question 10

The more successful responses

* considered the audience (German learners in other countries around the world) and the purpose (to share information and ideas on how German culture is represented in Australia)
* planned their response, using text type features of an article
* reflected on the statement that German culture has more to offer than lederhosen and pretzels
* gave opinions and arguments. Most responses agreed with the statement and identified *lederhosen*/pretzels as *klischees* and cultural stereotypes of German culture. Some acknowledged that many Australians see German culture this way and argued using examples of the many other things there are to know
* connected to their own knowledge of German culture, as learners of German in Australia
* provided other examples of German culture found in Australia such as historical connections and heritage (e.g. Hahndorf, early migration), clubs, food, traditions and festivals, some mentioned the German language, technology/products or sport
* considered the context; what young people in other countries also learning German might find interesting about German-Australian connections
* used language to inform and engage the audience (colourful description, rhetorical questions, exclamations)
* used text conventions appropriate to the text type (article) and structured their response using paragraphs for different topics.

The less successful responses

* had difficulty understanding the question
* focussed only on narrow ideas of culture.and /or discussed mainly one topic
* did not develop the ideas/aspects they mentioned
* went onto different tangents such as experiences of German exchange, without connecting their response to the question i.e. how German culture is seen/represented in Australia – do most people only know the German stereotypes/*klischees*? What other aspects of German culture are we familiar with?
* did not plan and structure their response and apply text type features of an article, including paragraphs for main points
* experienced difficulties with expression that significantly limited their response (see overall comments below).

Question 11

The more successful responses

* reflected on the statement at the beginning of the question as the suggested title of their talk
* considered both the challenges or issues that need improvement and what young people can do to address them
* demonstrated personal interest/engagement for their chosen topics, connected to their personal world e.g. discussed respect for Indigenous cultures, social justice in Australia, poverty in Australia
* considered a range of issues such as social justice and relationships (friendships/bullying, racism/migration), environmental issues (global warming, pollution. consumption), health and technology issues
* justified their choice of topics, unpacked the nature of the problem/s. Overall, responses dealing with two or three issues gave a good balance of breadth and depth
* flexibly used familiar topics important to them including overuse of social media and consequences, environmental issues (plastic pollution, animal protection
* offered ideas and tips for action and involvement. Gave examples of many things young people can do if they work together. Suggestions included volunteering for social or environmental causes, donating, spreading the word on social media, not tolerating inequality or injustice, environmental actions at individual and community level, calling on politicians, petitions. Greta Thunberg was mentioned as a role model in several responses
* used text type effectively including formal features (greetings/closing) and techniques for a persuasive speech
* used persuasive language to appeal to others to join the cause, argued with that getting involved is vital for change
* used appropriate address form and tone consistently (audience: student assembly).

The less successful responses

* used simple statement of problems and/or solutions without supporting detail or elaboration
* recounted pre-learned material on topics such as environment, without clearly connecting it to the topic and without adaptation, or inserted borrowed sentences from other sections of the paper
* neglected the second part of the question i.e. actions that young people can take to address issues
* used repetitive ideas and language
* experienced difficulties with expression that significantly limited their response (see overall comments below).

Writing in German

As for previous years, it is important that students are provided with as many opportunities as possible to practise explicitly how to structure a successful piece of writing. To this end, text types and their textual features need to be taught and students need to understand that thorough planning is imperative for success in any kind of writing, be it narratives, expository or persuasive texts.

Students are encouraged to practise and use structures learnt in class to get meaning across, rather than resorting to word-for-word translations from English when writing German.

The more successful responses:

* presented a thoroughly planned text which provided detail and examples to achieve sufficient depth and breadth of treatment
* produced effective writing using a range of syntax, connective devices and demonstrated sound control of basic grammatical aspects.

The less successful responses

* did not show a clear understanding of the question in all its aspects
* superficially responded to the questions, made global statements without examples or substantiating evidence
* featured basic and repetitive sentence structures with only the most basic connecting devices, i.e. *und*, *aber*, *dass*, *weil*
* featured frequent basic grammatical errors, i.e. tenses, subject verb agreement, pronouns and word order.