

3.4 GERMAN (502)

German is examined in the following three papers;

Paper 1 (502/1) - This paper tests Listening and Writing Skills (functional and creative)

Paper 2 (502/2) - This paper tests Grammar and Reading Comprehension

Paper 3 (502/3) - This paper tests Reading and Oral skills (communication skills) this includes Intonation and Pronunciation.

CANDIDATES' GENERAL PERFORMANCE

The table below shows the performance of candidates in German in the years 2017 and 2018.

Table 15: Candidates Overall Performance in German for the last two years

YEAR	PAPER	CANDIDATURE	MAX SCORE	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION
2017	1		35		
	2		40		
	3		25		
	Overall	687	100	57.57	14.75
2018	1		35	19.79	3.9
	2		40	23.41	5.04
	3		25	17.1	7.46
	Overall	775	100	60.30	14.28

The following observations can be made from the table above:

- The general performance of the candidates in the year 2018 has improved from year 2017. The subject mean is higher by 2.73%.
- The candidature is minutely going up. This year it increased by 8 candidates.

3.4.2 German Paper 1 (502/1)

This paper tests listening skills, writing skills and vocabulary. Section I tests general, selective and detailed listening and section II tests writing skills and vocabulary. In section I, the candidates are expected to listen to four passages and to answer accompanying questions. In section II, the candidates are expected to write a composition in form of a letter or an essay of **about 250 words**. The paper carries a **maximum of 35 marks**.

Weaknesses

The listening comprehension had four passages where the candidates were required to listen for specific information as told by different people, pick out identities/names and activities. Some candidates displayed inability to pick out names and numbers, assigning activities to the specific actors, identifying synonymous information and following instructions. In the composition, candidates were required to choose between writing a friendly letter and a creative fictional text. There was inability to keep to the word limit and to tell a story creatively. There was a slight improvement in performance in this paper as compared to that of last year.

Advice to teachers

To develop an ear that hears German sounds and recognises them, exposure to more authentic conversations and real life dialogues is the key to improve performance in this paper. Teachers are encouraged to be stricter with grammar correctness when marking students work in listening comprehension and composition to reduce careless mistakes. Teachers ought to confront students with more non guided essays to develop creativity. The teachers should ensure that the Learners follow instructions and compositions are within the prescribed word limit. Learners should also be exposed to more written German literature and creative texts.

3.4.3 German Paper 2 (502/2)

This paper tests the understanding and application of grammatical rules and reading skills. These two form section I and II, Grammar in section I and Reading comprehension in section II. In section I, the candidates are expected to fill in blanks in given sentences, combine or change sentences according to their grammatical structure and/or rewrite sentences in accordance to the instructions. In section II, the ability to extract information from the two texts is tested. Specifically, candidates are expected to read and respond to questions on a fictional and non-fictional text.

Weaknesses

Section I – Most candidates demonstrated paucity in their understanding and application of rules of German grammar in this section. This can be attributed to lack of practice.

Section II – This section was performed better. There was a slight improvement from last year though many candidates had problems with interpretation based questions.

Advice to teachers

In grammar items, practice is the only solution. Teachers should expose students to more exercises and ensure application through speaking and writing to ensure the grammar correctness is fully understood. Students need to internalize the rules that govern the formation of sentences in various situations and allocate time to study German and not relegate it to the less important subjects. Teachers should nurture a reading culture and improve on teaching infrastructure.

3.4.4 German Paper 3 (502/3)

This paper consists of a reading aloud passage, a presentation of a chosen topic and a discussion with the examiners on the already presented topic or a related one. Articulation, pronunciation and intonation are tested. Students seemed to be attracted to questions A3 and B3 because they felt an attachment to the discussion topics. The performance was varied but there was a marked improvement in part II.

Weaknesses

In this year's reading aloud passage, there were quite a number of candidates with wrong intonation and mother tongue interference. It was noted that passage 3A had quite a number of "umlaute". In the presentation of a chosen topic, some students were not detailed in their presentations. The pictograms attracted the weaker candidates but they were not well averse to explaining them.

Advice to teachers

Teachers should avail to the candidates authentic listening materials for practise and encourage students to do online exercises. Schools should equip their German rooms with CD players/Radios. Candidates should be helped to interact more with the language in spoken, written, read and listened form.