# 2018 German (continuers) Subject Assessment Advice

## Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the previous year’s 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

The overall standard of folios was consistent with that of previous years. Generally, four or five folio tasks were submitted. Most teachers attached highlighted performance standards, which can be useful when reviewing assessment decisions at moderation.

Three different types of assessment (Interaction, Text Production, and Text Analysis) need to be undertaken at least once each for the folio. Each type is discussed separately below.

## Interaction

Overall, the standard of the oral interactions was adequate, with some commendable submissions.

The more successful interactions

* flowed naturallyandencompassed a wide range of topics
* showed clearly that students were engaged: responses were spontaneous, passionate and often humorous
* featured open-ended questions that allowed students to respond with a range of information and detail
* featured questions that allowed students to ‘go deeper’ and elaborate, reflect, argue a point and substantiate their opinions
* featured student responses that achieved high levels of authenticity through the use of idiomatic language, modal particles, interjections.

The less successful interactions

* were limited to discussions solely on aspects pertaining to ‘The Individual’ theme, i.e. the student’s personal world
* were lacking in 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 and relied on the interlocutor to take the lead
* demonstrated only a limited range of vocabulary
* were marred by pauses and difficulty elaborating or even responding with some detail to simple questions
* were marred by basic syntactical and grammatical errors, particularly with tenses and subject verb agreement.

### General information for the interaction

The Interaction must be an authentic conversation between teacher and student. Thorough preparation and practice is vital, but overly rehearsed oral interactions potentially limit student achievement. It is useful to provide students with a range of set questions for preparation, but these should not be practised exclusively and never verbatim. Students should be prompted to elaborate as much as possible from the outset. Frequent and regular conversation practices with increasingly complex questioning build students’ confidence and linguistic proficiency over time.

## Text Production

The more successful responses

* were comprehensively planned demonstrating depth and breadth of ideas and detailed content
* evidenced the student’s clear understanding of the context, purpose and audience, text type, and kind of writing required for the particular task
* featured a range of structures, vocabulary and connective devices, e.g. relative clauses, passive voice, subjunctives, and, where appropriate, idiomatic expressions, metaphors, and similes
* reflected engagement and enjoyment: the task was based around a topic of student interest or a current issue, or the task provided scope for creative interpretation.

The less successful responses

* treated the topic superficially
* were often too brief to achieve sufficient depth and breadth
* featured simplistic, repetitive structures/ 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 only loosely or not at all or thematically connected and limited the scope for achieving an adequate level of breadth and depth

### General information for the Text Production

Tasks such as writing personal letters or diary entries have the potential to limit student achievement in terms of breadth and depth. It is therefore essential that the task design explicitly stipulates that a range of ideas, arguments and/or opinions be explored and expressed. Tasks must be appropriately challenging to allow students to maximize their attainment against the standards in relation to ideas and expression. Setting adequate word limits is essential. Stipulated time frames also should allow for optimal planning and execution of the task.

## Text Analysis

The more successful responses

* demonstrated the students’ thorough understanding of text types and metalanguage allowing them to interpret meaning and draw conclusions about the purpose, style, and language of texts effectively
* were comprehensive, but succinct in their analysis of content and textual features
* substantiated conclusions with detailed, pertinent examples
* were in response to a range of texts with questions addressing all of the IR1, IR2, and IR3 standards.

The less successful responses

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

### General information for the text analysis

To address all standards, it is essential that tasks include comprehension questions and questions that allow for reflection on and interpretation of content and textual features at some depth. It is useful for students and teachers to correlate questions and performance standards explicitly.

Questions that ask students to comment or reflect on personal experiences associated with the topic of the stimulus text are not text analysis questions and must be avoided. The translation of a text also does not constitute text analysis. Questions and answers in this section are to be in English.

Student achievement is to be assessed against the performance standards rather than aggregating a numerical grade.

### General information for Assessment Type 1: Folio

Detailed and explicit assessment task sheets facilitate and optimise student achievement. With Text Productions in particular, students performed more successfully when they were able to reference their work against a context sheet that explicitly stated the purpose, context, audience, text type, and kind of writing that was required. Assessment task sheets should be submitted with the moderation samples. They should clearly state the required word limits and assessment conditions, which need to match those identified in the learning assessment plan (LAP) or the addendum.

Assessment conditions should allow students to maximise their achievement. Time allowances and word limits must be conducive to maximising student achievement. If students complete more than one Text Production, these should differ in context, purpose, and audience. An entire film as stimulus text adds unnecessary complexity to Text Analysis tasks.

Tasks and context sheets should be regularly reviewed and updated.

## 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

* consisted of topics that students felt passionate about and therefore achieved substantial breadth and depth in all three tasks
* featured topics that were of contemporary relevance and/or had a degree of controversy, which allowed students to dig deep in order to inform, analyse, persuade and reflect, convey ideas and explain different perspectives
* demonstrated a clear differentiation regarding purpose, context, audience and content between the oral presentation and the written response
* featured a highly engaging oral presentation, delivered in a lively, fluent manner, conveying enthusiasm and interest in the topic
* achieved depth and breadth in the written response
* 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 the IR3 standard
* made some reference, drew comparisons, forged links to relevant contemporary issues
* completed all tasks in a succinct and effective manner, making the best possible use of the available word and time limits.

The less successful responses

* were predominantly informational rather than clearly differentiated in terms of purpose and kind of writing
* one or both German tasks did not reflect breadth of research or were lacking in depth
* featured presentations that appeared underprepared: poorly paced or read off cue cards
* both German tasks contained too many unnecessary errors (grammar/ syntax/ pronunciation) and/or   
  featured overly simplistic and/ or repetitive vocabulary and structures and/or did not use the linguistic features of different text types effectively
* topics did not allow for genuine reflection on the various aspects of IR3
* demonstrated very limited, if any, reflection on cultures, values, beliefs, practices, and ideas
* focused primarily on the research process, did not reflect on the impact of the research on self and others.

### General information

While student interest and motivation are key aspects in selecting in‑depth study topics, teacher advice is critical in guiding students towards choices that allow them to optimise their achievement against the performance standards within the time available. Teachers should consult the support materials on the SACE Board website and, as much as possible, engage in professional dialogue with colleagues to ensure both, topics and the tasks in language, are optimised.

Topics of contemporary socio-political and cultural relevance were once again popular and often successfully addressed from a range of perspectives. Examples included Germany’s refugee policy and its realities, unity and divisiveness in the reunified Germany 30 years on. An interest in history and espionage led to a particularly interesting and successful study that investigated Berlin as a global centre of espionage during the Cold War and explored the issues of human rights and privacy with a focus on Stasi activities: topics, which are increasingly pertinent in the current global context. Environmental and historical topics especially those associated with World War II again featured strongly. Artists, innovators, eminent mathematicians and scientists also continued to be popular choices with scope for interesting responses. Successful studies included the controversy between Leibniz and Newton. A study of Max Planck and his work on electromagnetic radiation explored not only the merits of his research, but also the impact of scientific advances on society, culture, the environment, the economy and referenced the interface of science and politics.

Topics such as ‘festivals and traditions’ or ‘ the German education system’ inevitably limit the scope for students to analyse and reflect critically on values, beliefs, ideas, their own learning, and how insights gained through their research may have changed their perspective and may inform future attitudes and actions. Topics like ‘the clarinet’ and ‘food wastage’ lack the explicit connection to a German-speaking community required for the In-depth study. Teachers should also discourage students from choosing topics that might prove too challenging linguistically.

Teachers need to assist students to gain a clear understanding, as early as possible, of the differences in purpose, context, and audience of each task in order to avoid overlap of information and/or text types. To maximise achievement in the Reflection, students must address a range of the aspects detailed in the subject outline.

# External Assessment

Assessment Type 4: Examination

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

The majority of the 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.

Section 1: Conversation

The more successful responses commonly:

* provided depth of treatment of information and ideas and supported their responses with detailed explanations
* demonstrated the ability to speak well and engage with interest about topics such as family, self, hobbies, school life and exchange experiences
* demonstrated an ability to discuss a wide range of topics with a clear expressions of their own opinions
* handled unpredictable and spontaneous topic shifts well and exercised their sense of humour

The less successful responses commonly:

* used a very limited range of vocabulary and relied on basic linguistic structures, at times even slipping back into English and English sentence structures
* lacked in detail and depth when responding to the examiners, often needing to be prompted or encouraged to add more detail in support of their response. Students need strategies and phrases to win time and to maintain conversation
* frequently paused for long periods of time to search for linguistic resources and/ or to comprehend the question being asked or repeatedly asked for translations.

Section 2: Discussion

There were some interesting topics chosen and many students presented detailed and insightful accounts of their research. Examiners noted that students who had a strong personal connection to their topic in general performed better and could express opinion and reflection well. However, the use of the in-depth study outline is of critical importance for the presentation of the topic. Teachers are encouraged to assist students in establishing the main points covered in their topic. Students are expected to be able to discuss their research in relative detail and cover at least 3 sub-topics in depth.

The more successful responses

* had a clear focus on the German-speaking world and often provided historical context
* presented an overview of their topic and explained in detail what they researched
* discussed their topic in detail, gave opinions, and where appropriate, compared their findings within an Australian context
* compared their own values, beliefs, opinions and perspectives with those presented on the topic of their in-depth study
* used topic-specific vocabulary and a range of complex linguistic structures, e.g. conjugation of haben and sein
* had a strong personal connection to their topic, and so could express opinion and reflection well.

The less successful responses

* lacked depth and breadth of treatment, showing superficial treatment of ideas
* focused on topics that did not genuinely lend themselves to critical reflection of their own and others’ values, beliefs, opinions and perspectives
* did not demonstrate the capacity to support or explain opinions
* showed little interpretation or reflection on the topic
* were not able to explain the focus of their oral presentation or their written German text
* relied on a limited range of vocabulary and language structures to convey meaning.

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. Teachers are encouraged to expose students to more challenging questions about their topics, in particular regarding interpretation and reflection (IR 3.1 and 3.2). Students should be able to discuss aspects of their English reflection task in German.

Depth of treatment of ideas, information, and opinion is still a key area for improvement. Discussion needs to be practised frequently. 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 use of tenses, in particular perfect tense
* use of correct word order and application of correct case rules
* use of correct personal pronouns
* correct use of infinitive clauses, placement of *zu*
* correct subject-verb agreement.

Written examination

Section 1: Listening and Responding

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

Question 1

(a)

The more successful responses

* demonstrated understanding of the text by listing four of the activities offered at the event.

The less successful responses

* listed two or three of the activities offered at the event. All students were able to recognise at least some of the events offered.

(b)

The more successful responses

* identified that the text is an advertisement to promote the event
* provided several examples of how the text engages the audience, for example - giving information about dates, activities and tickets to create interest in the audience, using rhetorical questions, imperatives/encouragements, adjectives- trendig, superlatives - neuste, weltweit gröβte.

The less successful responses

* focused on content and did not explain how the text engages the audience
* did not provide examples from the text.

Question 2

The more successful responses

* identified the text as a speech with the purpose of celebrating the achievements of the ‘Wissenschaftler der Zukunft’ teams in Bavaria.
* provided evidence from the text to support their answer – e.g. the opening address clearly spells out the purpose and wishing them even more good ideas and inventions at the end.

The less successful responses

* did not correctly identify the text type
* misunderstood or only partially understood the purpose of the text
* did not provide evidence from the text to support the answer

(b)

The more successful responses

* demonstrated their understanding of the text by correctly identifying and explaining one short–term benefit and one long-term benefit of participating in the ‘Wissenschaftler der Zukunft’ competition.
* successful responses included:

Short term

* students can work in the fields of math, science, and technology for this national competition, can use
* their creativity
* they win prizes and get to present their work interstate/ at a national level, travel.

Long term:

* successful participants have the opportunity to make important connections for a future career in
* research and industry.

The less successful responses

* identified one or more benefits but were unable to explain why they were beneficial
* did not correctly identify the benefits of participating in the competition.

Question 3

(a)

The more successful responses

* demonstrated their understanding of the text by correctly identifying four reasons why Katrina wants to travel through South America.
* successful responses included:

- she wants to experience a different culture

- something new and exciting

- adventurous

- she looks forward to meeting new, interesting people from all over the world

- she wants to see more of the world.

The less successful responses

* identified two or three of reasons why Kartina wants to travel to South America. All students were able to recognise at least some of the reasons.

(b)

The more successful responses

* correctly identified two strategies that Katrin uses to persuade Jan to come with her and supported the answers with evidence from the text.
* successful responses included:
* She challenges Jan by suggesting he is boring because he doesn’t want to travel far, is not willing to be adventurous.
* She pleads with him that he should come to talk to Tobias who has just returned from a backpacking tour. She begs him to come and talk to Tobias.
* She argues that they can still go by bike to Denmark later, when they are 60.
* She makes backpacking sound exiting and easy at the same time, Tobias had no problems at all and he was all by himself. She applies a bit of emotional pressure to say that she doesn’t want to go without him.

The less successful responses

* identified one or no strategies that Karin uses to persuade Jan to come with her
* simply translated parts of what they had heard in the text
* misunderstood or only partially understood parts of the text
* did not provide evidence from the text to support the answer

(c)

The more successful responses

* demonstrated a perceptive understanding of the character of Jan by providing a detailed explanation of their impression of him
* supported their answer with evidence from the text
* successful responses included:
* Jan is quite careful/cautious because he would prefer to travel closer to home — Northern Europe/
* he prefers to travel with an organised group/he worries about travelling to a country they don’t know/he doesn’t think backpacking is very safe
* strong because he stands up to Katrin
* comfort-driven — he doesn’t want to track around with a heavy backpack in the hot climate of South America
* he is prepared to talk to Tobias even though he doesn’t really like Katrin’s idea. He is prepared to listen to Tobias’s experience as he respects him.

The less successful responses

* identified identified one or no strategies that Karin uses to persuade Jan to come with her
* simply translated parts of what they had heard in the text
* misunderstood or only partially understood parts of the text
* were unable to apply their understanding of the text create an impression of Jan
* did not provide evidence from the text to support the answer

Question 4

(a)

The more successful responses

* demonstrated understanding of the text by identifying all of the issues mentioned regarding traffic in Germany - massive amount of traffic in cities with traffic jams and air pollution, cars dominate everywhere, little room for bike riders or pedestrians, it is dangerous for bikes and pedestrians.

The less successful responses

* identified some or none of the issues mentioned regarding traffic in Germany.
* Incorrectly identified some of the issues mentioned in the text

(b)

The more successful responses

* demonstrated understanding of the text by identifying two positive aspects and two negative aspects of Radschnellwege
* successful responses included:

Positives:

* cycle tracks with few traffic lights or crossings allow for fairly fast speeds
* emission-free, environmentally friendly, [has positive health benefits?]
* potentially cycle superhighways can solve traffic problems in big cities.

Negatives:

* costs for premium cycle tracks are quite high, e.g. Göttingen 59 kilometres for 25 million — high cost for improvement of infrastructure
* small percentage of people use their bike daily for transport, roads not yet safe — implied by the statement that roads need to become safer
* change of attitude away from cars is called for.

The less successful responses

* identified some or none of the positive and/or negative aspects of Radschnellwege
* incorrectly identified some of the positive and/or negative aspects

(c)

The more successful responses

* demonstrated understanding of the term ‘Verkehrswende’ and explained it in the context of the text – ‘Wende’ means ‘change’. A drastic change for traffic, away from cars, trucks to emission-free bikes. The focus needs to shift from the cars to bikes. Bikes offer solutions for mobility in large cities. They are environmentally friendly, no emissions. Safety on roads improved by more Tempo 30, compulsory early roads safety training already in kindergartens.

The less successful responses

* demonstrated understanding of the term ‘Verkehrswende’ but could not explain or only partly explained it in the context of the text
* misunderstood the meaning of the term ‘Verkehrswende’.

Section 2: Reading and responding Part A

For both texts, questions and answers were in English.

Question 5

(a)

The more successful responses

* identified and comprehensively explained two of the main issues that are raised in the article
* successful responses included:
* Fashion is still mostly throw-away — 80 billion items of clothing are produced and the majority quickly gets dumped or are burned. People buy cheap fashion mostly but there are others who are showing more concern for the environment and social condition under which the fashion is produced.
* In sweatshops there are no fair and safe working conditions, chemicals and synthetic fibres pollute the environment, conventional cotton production uses enormous amounts of pesticides and water.
* The fashion produced sustainably is not for mass consumption yet and is too expensive for many people.

The less successful responses

* identified one or none of the main issues raised in the article
* were less comprehensive in their answers and misunderstood some of the points raised

(b)

The more successful responses

* were able to provide three strategies that the author uses to convey their opinion and support them with specific examples from the text.
* successful responses include:
* The author describes the current status of the industry — Uses data and factual information
* He starts off with saying that people in general are getting more aware of environmental and social conditions under which fashion is produced. There is a trend in society that consumers increasingly value environmental protection and human rights. However (contrast) Germans are buying more and more cheap fashion which is produced under unfair working conditions with great negative impact on the environment. Fashion is an expression of our throwaway society.
* There is some hope many designers want to change this! (in particular in Berlin). Authentic — use of designer’s opinion.
* If more people were to rebel against our consumerism and throwaway society then sustainability might be the outcome.
* On a personal level it might work but not at a societal level. He mocks the ‘trendy people’ as fair-trade coffee drinking, organic carrot chewing Berlin hipsters. Satire.
* By using this language she expresses doubt regarding the overall impact of this trend towards fair-trade and sustainably produced clothing. Possibly she is mocking these Berlin hipsters and designers.

The less successful responses

* identified some or none of the strategies used by the author to convey their opinion
* did not support their answer with specific examples from the text
* misunderstood some of the points raised in the text

(c)

The more successful responses

* demonstrated understanding of the meaning of ‘Fashion mit Gewissen’ and provided a comprehensive explanation in the context of the text - The question makes the reader think [ethically]. Does the fashion industry have a conscience? The answers are only partially to be found in the text. Yes, there are some designers (possibly a growing number in Berlin) who are producing sustainably and under fair working conditions. However, the bulk of the fashion production is throw-away/ cheap.

The less successful responses

* demonstrated understanding of the meaning of ‘Fashion mit Gewissen’ but could not explain or only partly explained it in the context of the text
* misunderstood the meaning of ‘Fashion mit Gewissen’

Question 6

(a)

The more successful responses

* demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of whether or not the author found his Berlin experience worthwhile and supported the argument with evidence from the text
* successful responses included:
* He describes his experience in very positive language (bewundern, was mir auch gefallen hat) He describes new, interesting experiences: museum and meeting artists
* He says it is a must for all Berlin visitors
* He writes a blog, so it must be important to him to talk about his experience.

The less successful responses

* were less comprehensive in their answers and misunderstood some of the points raised
* did not support their answer with evidence from the text

(b)

The more successful responses

* demonstrated understanding of the text by providing a comprehensive explanation of the two perspectives on graffiti that are conveyed. – The German perspective/positive — The author is amazed that you can do a 3-hour tour just for graffiti, there is even a museum. It is everywhere and makes the viewer think. Berliners are increasingly valuing graffiti as art, they even pay lots of money to get their houses painted by graffiti artists. It is art and a tourist attraction, can possiblly beautify the cityscape - The Australian perspective/negative: graffiti is vandalism, very negative language used — beschmiert, bekritzelt, in tunnels, on bridges, trains. Police get called when people see graffiti sprayers, it is suggested they are criminals.

The less successful responses

* were less comprehensive in their answers and misunderstood some of the points raised

(c)

The more successful responses

* demonstrated understanding an overall understand of the text by providing a comprehensive explanation of how the information in the text supports the author’s statement ‘die größte Kunstgalerie der Welt’. - art is everywhere, on walls , on street signs, in museums and in galleries as well in private ateliers, people are increasingly valuing graffiti as art. Reference to the title: Colourful Berlin

The less successful responses

* demonstrated an understanding of the author’s statement- ‘die größte Kunstgalerie der Welt’ did not provide an explanation of how the text supports this statement
* .were less comprehensive in their answers and misunderstood some of the points raised
* Misunderstood the meaning of the author’s statement

Section 2: Reading and responding Part B

This question requires a response in German

Question 7

You have read this blog entry. Write a response, addressing the questions raised.

Do we really have more friends than ever before?

The more successful responses

* were well planned and showed logical progression of ideas in response to ideas raised in the text.
* were well structured texts that evaluated the ideas presented referred to own ideas about our modern interpretation of friendship over social networks.

The less successful responses

* relied far too heavily on the ideas presented in the source text and at times even copied from the text but added grammatical errors
* demonstrated difficulties in clearly and accurately expressing ideas, information and opinions
* did not plan their texts well (including paragraphing)
* used pronouns indiscriminately, frequently switching from formal to informal
* frequently misused or did not use their dictionary at all
* subject verb agreement
* multiple verb forms in one sentence
* correct use of tenses
* correct gender of nouns, e.g. ein großes problem
* use of prepositions, e.g. gegen Klimawandel not für.

Section 4: Writing

Students could relate to all tasks and there was an even distribution in terms of the chosen question.

Question 8

*A rich relative has left you a fortune.*

*Write a diary entry, outlining what you will do with the fortune and how it could change your life.*

Question 9

*You want to study in Germany and have already applied at various universities, but your parents do not know about your plans yet.*

*Write a letter to your parents, explaining your plans and trying to persuade them to support you.*

Question 10

*The world of work has changed due to developments in the areas of technology and communication. Now it is possible to work at home, on holidays, on the train, and outside of office hours.*

*Write an article for the student newspaper, in which you discuss the positive and negative aspects of working any time, anywhere.*

Writing in German

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 sophisticated writing using a range of syntax, connective devices and metalanguage
* addressed all aspects of the questions

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. *dass, weil*
* featured frequent basic grammatical errors, i.e. tenses, adjective endings, subject verb agreement, pronouns and spelling.