

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 Writing Skills)

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.

3.4.1 CANDIDATES' GENERAL PERFORMANCE

The table below shows the performance of candidates in German in the years 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Table Candidates Overall Performance in German for the last three years

YEAR	PAPER	CANDIDATURE	MAX SCORE	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION
2017	1		35	17.52	5.58
	2		40	23.28	7.01
	3		25	16.77	3.78
	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
2019	1	830	35	20.00	4.81
	2	830	40	21.00	6.98
	3	830	25	17.00	3.67
	Overall	830	100	59.27	13.83

The following observations can be made from the table above:

- The general performance of the candidates in the year 2019 has declined from year 2018. The subject mean is lower by **1.03%**.
- The candidature has gone up by 55 candidates from the previous year 2018. This is a positive trend. The number of female candidates who sat for the German paper went down from 477 to 471 while the male candidature went up by 61 candidates. This is from 298 to 359 candidates.

3.4.2 German Paper 1 (502/1) – LISTENING COMPREHENSION AND COMPOSITION

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. This paper carries **35 marks** whereby Section 1 has **15 marks** while Section 11 on Composition has **20 marks**. The paper takes 2 hours.

In section I, the candidates are expected to listen to four passages and then answer accompanying questions. It is expected that the candidate will effortlessly understand the spoken German Language. The candidate can use a variety of listening strategies to achieve text comprehension, including paying attention to key points and checking comprehension using contextual clues. At Form 4 level it is expected that the candidate is proficient at using contextual, grammatical and lexical clues to derive attitudes, moods and the intentions and anticipate the sequel (recorded work)

In section II, the candidates are expected to write a composition of about 220-250 words on any one of the given topics given. In 2019 the following topics were provided:

1. A friendly letter to pen pal in Germany called Brigitte/ Thomas talking about the pet culture in Kenya. The candidate is expected to talk about, which pets are popular, how pets are treated/handled in Kenya, whether the candidate has one and the difficulties encountered when having pets and how to handle them.
2. The candidate in the second composition was expected to write a formal letter. They were to assume the role of a chairperson of a youth group then write to a bank and therefore seek for finances. The candidate is expected to talk about the following: how the group was formed and how many members it has, the business idea the group had, how much money the group needs and what the money will be spent on.
3. The third composition was again a friendly letter to a pen pal from Germany who heard about Maasai Mara Park and would like to learn more. The candidate was expected to write about: how important the park is for the country, if they have ever visited the park, how one gets to the park (direction and transport to use), what one can see in the park and how possible it is for the pen pal to visit.
4. The last composition was a creative essay titled: *Life is unfair*.

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 Composition writing, 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

- i) Grammar should be taught through integration and not just on its own to help the students better grasp the concept and rules of the language.
- ii) Students should be exposed to fairy tales as early as possible for them to be familiar with the language used and how to handle questions.
- iii) Teachers should strive to guide their students on how to answer reading comprehension questions without lifting answers directly from text but rather their own interpretation of the texts.

- iv) To develop an ear that hears and recognises German sounds, exposure to more authentic conversations and real life dialogues is the key to improve performance in this paper.
- v) Teachers are encouraged to be stricter with grammar correctness when marking students work in listening comprehension and composition to reduce careless mistakes.
- vi) 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) GRAMMAR AND READING COMPREHENSION

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. Each of the sections carries 20 marks. Therefore, the total score for this paper is 40. There was a decline of 2.41 from the previous mean.

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. Just like in 2018 many candidates did better in this section 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) GERMAN ORAL

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 in the presentation of a chosen topic, some students were not detailed in their presentations. Topics were not well covered or vocabulary was lacking. Question A1 was popular with the girls because the topic was on fashion and they easily got attracted to it. Question A4 and B attracted both candidates of low and higher abilities

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. The candidates should also be encouraged to discuss in German familiar topics in class, outside of class with their peers to promote their interaction with each other. The candidates should be prepared as early as form two for discussion topics to ensure their proficiency in the language and to build their confidence in speaking German language.

3.4.5 GENERAL COMMENTS ON TEACHING AND LEARNING OF GERMAN

- i) Candidates need to be encouraged to pursue German as a foreign Language as it offers them greater opportunity as global citizens.
- ii) With the Competency Based Curriculum, the Candidature will definitely rise up and this requires more resources both physical and human resource.
- iii) Learners need to be exposed to more authentic texts.
- iv) Teachers need to discourage rote memorization of texts.
- v) Teachers should create more time for the subject due to the fact that the Language is being learnt in an artificial environment.
- vi) Schools should equip their German rooms with CD players/Radios.
- vii) The candidates should also be encouraged to discuss in German familiar topics in class, outside of class with their peers to promote their interaction with each other.
- viii) The candidates should be prepared as early as form two for discussion topics to ensure their proficiency in the language and to build their confidence in speaking German language.
- ix) Students should be exposed to fairy tales as early as possible for them to be familiar with the language used and how to handle questions.
- x) Teachers should strive to guide their students on how to answer reading comprehension questions without lifting answers directly from text but rather their own interpretation of the texts.
- xi) 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.