

## **Department of Germanic Studies**

### **Guide criteria for awarding marks and classes**

#### **Marking Scheme for assessed work and examinations**

The marking scale is subdivided into 6 classes which can be glossed as follows:

I	70% +	distinction – work of exceptional quality
II.1	60%-69%	very good – merit
II.2	50%-59%	average – good
III	40%-49%	passable – adequate
F1	30%-39%	redeemable fail
F2	0%-29%	not a serious attempt

**On the following pages you will find grading criteria for the following types of assessment:**

- 1. Essays and dissertations written in English**
- 2. Assessment Criteria for Essays written in the Foreign Language**
- 3. Translation from the L2 (foreign language) to the L1 (mother tongue)**
- 4. Oral Presentations in the foreign language**
- 5. Oral Examinations**
- 6. Aural and written comprehension**
- 7. Objective tests**

#### **1. Essays and dissertations written in English**

**The following are general guidelines.**

- The grade profiles are general and typical: a candidate may not fit all aspects of a profile to fall into that grade band.
- The criteria set out below are applied in a manner appropriate to the year of the degree programme.
- Allowance is made for essays that are written under examination conditions, i.e. where time is limited and there is no access to dictionaries or other resources.
- Submitted work that is poorly presented or inadequately referenced is likely to be penalised by (at least) a class unless defects are outweighed by exceptional quality.

#### **I (70 +)**

This grade indicates work of exceptional quality. A first-class essay/dissertation will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

- Excellent knowledge of the subject matter and intelligent, comprehensive understanding of the topic's wider implications;
- Incisive analytic ability and excellent critical focus on the question;
- Independent thought of high quality reflected in an original and imaginative handling of the subject matter;
- Clear evidence of thorough original research beyond standard secondary literature;
- Excellent knowledge and critical evaluation of primary and secondary sources;
- Rigorous, entirely relevant and conclusive argument, excellent structure and organisation with a very high degree of coherence and cohesion throughout;

- (Near-)flawlessly formulated and persuasively communicated throughout;
- (For dissertations): Original choice of topic; original angle on topic;
- (For dissertations): Originally conceived thesis, comprehensively treated.

### **II.1 (60 - 69)**

This grade indicates a very competent standard of work. An essay/dissertation in this range will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

- Very good understanding and thorough knowledge of the subject matter;
- Convincing attempt at independent thought reflected in intelligent approach to the subject matter;
- Coherent and clearly focused argument developed within a carefully planned framework, dealing with all aspects of the question;
- Competent handling of relevant primary and secondary sources to support argument;
- Clear evidence of analytic ability and independent critical response to the literature;
- Evidence of some additional research beyond standard secondary literature;
- Generally well organised and structured, but some lack of cohesion in places;
- Generally persuasively communicated throughout, with only minor flaws in formulation and presentation;
- (For dissertations): Convincing choice of topic; intelligent approach to topic;
- (For dissertations): Well-conceived thesis, competently and conclusively treated.

### **II.2 (50 - 59)**

This grade indicates work of acceptable competence. Work will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all of the following:

- Shows good knowledge of the subject matter, but may be narrow in frame of reference or superficial;
- Generally aware of implications of question, discusses some, but not all of the points raised by it; unimaginative approach;
- Relies largely on standard secondary literature (and/or lecture notes/set reading) with limited evidence of additional research;
- Reluctant to engage critically with primary and secondary literature;
- Satisfactory organisation and clear presentation of material, but may omit some material of relevance or contain some which is irrelevant;
- Development of ideas effective but uneven, maintains focus on question, but not always precisely;
- Argument may lack rigour; some contradiction and repetition; some unsupported or inadequately explained points;
- Readable, but occasional significant flaws in formulation and/or presentation;
- Tendency to be narrative or descriptive, rather than analytical;
- (For dissertations): Suitable choice of topic; conventional approach to topic;
- (For dissertations): Sound justification and adequate treatment of thesis, but routinely concluded.

### **III (40 - 49)**

Work in this grade will demonstrate some limited though acceptable knowledge of the subject, but will be too simplistic or brief, or contain other major weaknesses.

- Demonstrates some knowledge of the subject matter, but generally narrow in frame of reference;

- Satisfactory engagement with question, but adopts mechanical approach; fails to discuss many of the points raised by or see all implications of the question;
- Some relevant points made, but not always supported by relevant evidence
- Reliance on uncritical reproduction of lecture notes or set reading; no evidence of additional reading;
- Limited ability to organise material; structure lacks coherence and cohesion;
- Argument lacks rigour and clarity; tendency to unsupported assertions;
- Descriptive with limited ability to develop ideas;
- Adequate presentation and capacity to articulate, but with serious flaws;
- (For dissertations): Poor choice of topic; simplistic approach to topic;
- (For dissertations): Unclear justification and confused or inconclusive treatment of thesis.

### **F1 (30 - 39)**

This grade indicates insufficient evidence of serious academic study. The potential of the candidate to proceed to the next year is an important consideration in this grade.

- Demonstrates minimal knowledge of the subject matter with little reference beyond it;
- Content largely irrelevant and disorganized;
- Generally naive approach or serious misunderstanding of the question, misses important implications;
- Little or no evidence of use of lecture notes or any additional reading;
- Structure almost wholly lacking in coherence and cohesion;
- Very limited ability to develop ideas; either dogmatic assertion or over-descriptive summary or both;
- Clumsy style; poor articulation and presentation; poorly documented sources;
- (For dissertations): Poor choice of topic; ill-conceived approach to topic;
- (For dissertations): Justification and focus on thesis entirely lacking; conclusion lacks substance.

### **F2 (0 - 29)**

Written work in the F2 range will reveal some or all of the weaknesses noted under F1, but to a greater, perhaps extreme, extent.

- Virtually no knowledge of the subject matter;
- Fails to understand and to address the question;
- Content irrelevant and disorganized;
- No evidence of secondary reading;
- Lack of examples & supporting material, sources not documented;
- Structure is without cohesion and coherence;
- No evidence of logical organization or ability to develop ideas;
- Extremely poor articulation and presentation; formulation frequently incomprehensible;
- (For dissertations): Very poor choice of topic; entirely uninformed approach to topic;
- (For dissertations): Justification and focus on thesis inadequate or entirely lacking; no conclusion.

## 2. Assessment Criteria for Essays written in the Foreign Language

- The grade profiles are general and typical: a candidate may not fit all aspects of a profile to fall into that grade band.
- The criteria set out below are applied in a manner appropriate to the year of the degree programme.
- Allowance is made for essays that are written under examination conditions, i.e. where time is limited and there is no access to dictionaries or other resources.
- Submitted work that is poorly presented or inadequately referenced is likely to be penalised by (at least) a class unless defects are outweighed by exceptional quality.

### I (70 +)

This grade indicates work of exceptional quality. A first-class essay will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

#### Language

- Rich, complex and idiomatic language, employing a wide range of appropriate lexis correctly;
- Tone, register and style wholly suited to the chosen task;
- Virtually free from grammatical error;
- Showing a very high degree of command of the structures of the language.

#### Content

- Excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject matter;
- Independent thought of high quality reflected in an original and imaginative handling of the subject matter;
- Comprehensive treatment of the question;
- Clear evidence of additional research which goes beyond the content of lectures and set reading;
- Critical use of primary and secondary sources;
- Incisive critical and analytic ability;
- Excellent structure and organisation with a very high degree of coherence and cohesion throughout;
- Rigorous, entirely relevant and conclusive argument supported by evidence from (where appropriate) primary and secondary sources;
- Guided writing (if applicable): very skilful handling of the stimulus material.

### II.1 (60 - 69)

This grade indicates a very competent standard of work. An essay in this range will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

#### Language

- Convincing attempt to use complex and idiomatic language and to employ a wide range of appropriate lexis with minor errors only;
- Tone and register consistently suited to the task;
- Some grammatical errors, mostly of a minor nature;
- Showing a good degree of command of the structures of the language with the occasional lapse.

#### Content

- Very good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter;
- Convincing attempt at independent thought reflected in an intelligent approach to the handling of the subject matter;

- Deals with all points raised by the question;
- Evidence of some additional research which goes beyond the content of lectures and set reading;
- Competent handling of primary and secondary sources;
- Evidence of independent critical response and analysis of the literature;
- Generally well organised and structured but lacking coherence and cohesion in places;
- Generally rigorous, relevant and conclusive argument;
- Guided writing (if applicable): Skilful use of stimulus material.

## **II.2 (50 - 59)**

This grade indicates work of acceptable competence. The essay will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all of the following:

### **Language**

- Language at an acceptable level of complexity with an adequate but predictable range of lexis, and with a number of significant lexical errors;
- Makes a number of major grammatical errors, but without impairing comprehension and communication significantly;
- Tone and register not always suited to the task;
- Showing some confidence in the command of the language, but with quite frequent lapses;
- Some anglicisms.

### **Content**

- Shows good knowledge of the subject matter, but may be narrow, or somewhat superficial in frame of reference;
- Candidate discusses some, but not all of the points raised by the question;
- Generally capable, but unimaginative approach to the question;
- Relies largely on lecture notes and set reading with limited evidence of additional research;
- Reluctant to engage critically with primary and secondary literature;
- Satisfactory organisation of material;
- Development of ideas uneven and may not always be focused precisely on the question;
- Argument may lack rigour, relevance and be inconclusive: there may be some contradiction or inadequately explained points;
- Tendency to be narrative or descriptive, rather than analytical;
- Guided writing (if applicable): satisfactory use of stimulus material.

## **III (40 - 49)**

Work in this grade will demonstrate some limited though acceptable knowledge of the subject, but will be too simplistic or brief, or contain other major weaknesses.

### **Language**

- Language lacks complexity; some basic knowledge of lexis but lacks variety and contains frequent and significant errors;
- Tone and register frequently not suited to the task;
- Frequent and serious grammatical errors, which impede comprehension and communication;
- Limited ability to manipulate language resulting in simple 'translated' language which contains many anglicisms.

### **Content**

- Demonstrates some knowledge of the subject matter, but generally narrow, or superficial in frame of reference;

- Fails to discuss many of the points raised by the question;
- Some relevant points made, but not always supported by relevant evidence; tendency to unsupported assertions;
- Reliance on uncritical reproduction of lecture notes; no evidence of additional reading;
- Limited ability to organise material;
- Structure lacks coherence and cohesion;
- Argument lacks rigour and clarity and is inconclusive;
- Descriptive with limited ability to develop ideas;
- Guided writing: poor use of the stimulus material.

### **F1 (30 - 39)**

This grade indicates insufficient evidence of serious academic study. The potential of the candidate to proceed to the next year is an important consideration in this grade.

#### **Language**

- Language is simplistic with very limited knowledge of lexis and very high level of error frequency in choice and use of very basic words;
- Tone and register not suited to the task;
- Very frequent and serious grammatical errors, which seriously impede comprehension and communication;
- Very little command of language resulting in simple 'translated' language which consists largely of anglicisms.

#### **Content**

- Demonstrates very limited knowledge of the subject matter with little reference beyond it;
- Content largely irrelevant and disorganised;
- Misses important implications of the question;
- Little or no evidence of use of lecture notes or any additional reading;
- Structure almost wholly lacking in coherence and cohesion;
- Very limited ability to develop ideas;
- Entirely descriptive;
- Poorly documented sources;
- Guided writing (if applicable): inadequate use of stimulus material.

### **F2 (0 - 29)**

Written work in the F2 range will reveal some or all of the weaknesses noted under F1, but to a greater, perhaps extreme, extent.

#### **Language**

- Knowledge and range of lexis almost non-existent; the level of error frequency in choice and use of even the most basic words is unacceptably high;
- Tone and register not suited to the task;
- Frequency and seriousness of grammatical errors mean that comprehension and communication are impossible;
- No command of the structures of the language.

#### **Content**

- Virtually no knowledge of the subject matter;
- Fails to understand and to address the question;
- Content irrelevant and disorganised;
- No evidence of secondary reading;
- Structure is without cohesion and coherence;

- No evidence of ability to develop ideas;
- Lack of supporting material, sources not documented;
- Guided writing (if applicable): no use of source material.

### **3. Translation from the L2 (foreign language) to the L1 (mother tongue)**

- The grade profiles are general and typical: a candidate may not fit all aspects of a profile to fall into that grade band.
- The criteria set out below are applied in a manner appropriate to the year of the degree programme.
- Allowance is made for translations that are written under examination conditions, i.e. where time is limited and there is no access to dictionaries or other resources.

#### **I (70 +)**

This grade indicates work of exceptional quality. A first-class translation will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

- Original text rendered with very high level of accuracy both in content and style; only minor, if any, problems of comprehension of the passage;
- Stylistically appropriate, fluent and accurate English, which deals successfully with nuances of style, register, metaphor and cultural reference;
- Natural and idiomatic expression throughout;
- Student correctly identifies all points of difficulty in the translation and deals with them at a high level of competency;
- Imaginative, apt translation solutions.

#### **II.1 (60 - 69)**

This grade indicates a very competent standard of work. A translation in this range will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

- Original text rendered with high level of accuracy both in content and style; very good comprehension of the original;
- For the most part stylistically appropriate, fluent and accurate English, which deals successfully with nuances of style, register, metaphor and cultural reference;
- Largely natural and idiomatic expression;
- Some mistakes in rendering the grammar, syntax and vocabulary of the original, but few serious errors;
- Competent handling of most points of difficulty in the translation.

#### **II.2 (50 - 59)**

This grade indicates work of acceptable competence. The translation will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

- Original text rendered with a satisfactory to good level of accuracy both in content and style; some errors in comprehension and failure to reflect the original consistently;
- Does not always deal successfully with nuances of style, metaphor and cultural reference;
- Some awkwardness in expression, which, in parts, gives impression of being translated;
- Some evidence of use of unsuitable register;
- Not always competent handling of points of difficulty in the translation;
- Some inaccuracy regarding fluency and accuracy in English.



### **III (40 - 49)**

Work in this grade will demonstrate some limited translation ability, but contain major weaknesses.

- Original text rendered with poor level of accuracy both in content and style; many errors in comprehension and failure to reflect the original consistently;
- Does not deal successfully with nuances of style, metaphor and cultural reference;
- Translation shows awkwardness in expression and tendency to literal translation;
- Evidence of use of unsuitable register;
- Evidence of inability to handle points of difficulty in the translation;
- May contain nonsensical English.

### **F1 (30 - 39)**

This grade indicates insufficient evidence of serious academic study. The potential of the candidate to proceed to the next year is an important consideration in this grade.

- Original text rendered with very high level of inaccuracy both in content and style: translation fails to produce a coherent passage of English based on the original text; widespread errors in comprehension, translation fails in large measure to reflect the original;
- Fails to deal with nuances of style, metaphor and cultural reference;
- Unsuitable register throughout;
- Awkward expression throughout, reflecting strong reliance on literal translation;
- Inability to handle points of difficulty in the translation;
- Likely to feature nonsensical English.

### **F2 (0 - 29)**

Translations in the F2 range will reveal some or all of the weaknesses noted under F1, but to a greater, perhaps extreme, extent.

- Minimal to complete failure to understand the original;
- Complete failure to convey the meaning or even the gist of the original;
- Incoherent and disjointed English;
- Unsuitable register throughout.

#### **4. Oral Presentations in the Foreign Language**

- These descriptions assume a non-native learner of the language. Native speakers may achieve a mark of 70+ for oral proficiency, but as with non-native learners the mark will depend on the level of ability to express and expound complex ideas, the range of structures used, the presentation skills, and the handling of the material.
- The grade profiles are general and typical: a candidate may not fit all aspects of a profile to fall into that grade band and there may be elements that do not apply to every oral presentation.
- The criteria set out below are applied in a manner appropriate to the year of the degree programme.

##### **I (70 +)**

This grade indicates work of exceptional quality. A first-class presentation will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

- Presenter shows excellent level of knowledge and understanding of the material;
- Presenter engages critically with the material and includes independent argument;
- Very coherent and cohesive structure with seamless transitions;
- Clear evidence of independent research using relevant literature;
- Presenter establishes and maintains rapport with the listeners;
- Excellent timing and pace;
- Speaks freely throughout the presentation;
- Near-native pronunciation;
- Mastery of appropriate non-verbal signalling;
- Excellent level of fluency and confidence in delivery throughout the presentation;
- Excellent use of visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint, handouts, acetates);
- Rich, complex and idiomatic language, employing a wide range of appropriate lexis correctly;
- Tone, register and style wholly suited to the task and channel of delivery;
- Virtually free from grammatical error;
- Where appropriate, can respond very fluently and confidently to questions on the content of the presentation.

##### **II.1 (60 - 69)**

This grade indicates a very competent standard of work. A presentation in this range will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

- Presenter shows very good level of knowledge and understanding of the material;
- Consistent attempt at critical engagement with the material and at independent argument;
- Generally coherent and cohesive structure with good transitions;
- Some evidence of independent research using relevant literature;
- Presenter establishes and maintains rapport with the listeners;
- Very good timing and pace;
- Speaks freely with only occasional reference to notes;
- Very good pronunciation;
- Very competent use of appropriate non-verbal signalling;

- A generally high degree of fluency and confidence in delivery;
- Very good use of visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint, handouts, acetates);
- Consistent attempt to use a range of idiom and lexis suitable to the subject with minor errors only;
- Tone and register consistently suited to the task and channel of delivery;
- Some grammatical errors, mostly of a minor nature;
- Where appropriate, can respond with a high level of fluency and confidence to questions on the content of the presentation.

## **II.2 (50 - 59)**

This grade indicates work of acceptable competence. The presentation will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

- Presenter shows good level of knowledge and understanding of the material;
- Generally capable, but unimaginative approach to the handling of the material;
- Reluctant to engage critically with the material;
- Satisfactory organisation of material, but with some evidence of lack of cohesion and coherence and uneven transitions;
- Uneven establishment and maintenance of rapport with the listeners;
- Generally satisfactory timing and pace, but with some unevenness;
- Speaks freely, but with more frequent reference to notes;
- Generally satisfactory pronunciation;
- Generally competent use of appropriate non-verbal signalling;
- A generally good degree of fluency and confidence in delivery;
- Good use of visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint, handouts, acetates);
- Uses an adequate but predictable range of lexis, but with a number of significant lexical errors;
- Tone and register not always suited to the task and channel of delivery;
- Makes a number of major grammatical errors, but without impairing comprehension and communication significantly;
- Where appropriate, can respond with a satisfactory level of fluency and confidence to questions on the content of the presentation.

## **III (40 - 49)**

Work in this grade will demonstrate some limited ability to present in the L2, but contain major weaknesses.

- Presenter shows limited level of knowledge and understanding of the material
- Unimaginative approach to the handling of the material;
- No critical engagement with the material;
- Limited ability to organise material;
- Structure lacks cohesion and coherence and transitions are poor;
- Little attempt to establish and maintain rapport with the listeners;
- Generally uneven timing and pace;
- Little attempt to speak freely;
- Uneven pronunciation;
- Poor use of appropriate non-verbal signalling;
- Uneven fluency and confidence in delivery;
- Poor use of visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint, handouts, acetates);
- Uses very basic lexis, but with significant lexical errors;
- Tone and register frequently not suited to the task and channel of delivery;
- Frequent and serious grammatical errors, which impair comprehension and communication;

- Where appropriate, responds with poor level of fluency and confidence to questions on the content of the presentation.

### **F1 (30 - 39)**

This grade indicates insufficient evidence of serious academic study. The potential of the candidate to proceed to the next year is an important consideration in this grade.

- Presenter shows very limited level of knowledge and understanding of the material;
- Wholly unimaginative approach to the handling of the material;
- No engagement with the material;
- Material is inadequately organised;
- Very poor cohesion, coherence and transitions;
- No attempt to establish and maintain rapport with the listeners;
- Very poor timing and pace;
- No attempt to speak freely;
- Very uneven pronunciation;
- Poor use of appropriate non-verbal signalling;
- Very uneven fluency and confidence in delivery;
- Very poor use of visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint, handouts, acetates);
- Very limited knowledge of lexis;
- High level of error frequency in choice and use of very basic words;
- Very frequent and serious grammatical errors, which seriously impede comprehension and communication;
- Tone and register not suited to the task and channel of delivery;
- Where appropriate, responds with very poor level of fluency and confidence to questions on the content of the presentation.

### **F2 (0 - 29)**

Presentations in the F2 range will reveal some or all of the weaknesses noted under F1, but to a greater, perhaps extreme, extent.

- Presenter shows complete lack of knowledge and understanding of the material;
- Wholly unimaginative approach to the handling of the material;
- No engagement with the material;
- No organisation;
- No cohesion, coherence and transitions;
- No attempt to establish and maintain rapport with the listeners;
- No sense of timing and pace;
- No attempt to speak freely;
- Flaws in pronunciation render comprehension very difficult or impossible;
- Inappropriate non-verbal signalling;
- Lack of fluency and confidence in delivery;
- Completely inadequate use of visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint, handouts, acetates);
- Knowledge and range of lexis almost non-existent;
- Very high level of error frequency in choice and use of very basic words;
- Frequency and seriousness of grammatical errors mean that comprehension and communication are impossible;
- Tone and register not suited to the task and channel of delivery;

- Where appropriate, responds with complete lack of fluency and confidence to questions on the content of the presentation.

## 5. Oral Examinations

- These descriptions assume a non-native learner of the language. Native speakers may achieve a mark of 70+ for oral proficiency, but as with non-native learners the mark will depend on the range of structures used, the presentation skills, and the handling of the material.
- The grade profiles are general and typical: a candidate may not fit all aspects of a profile to fall into that grade band and there may be elements that do not apply to every oral presentation.
- The criteria set out below are applied in a manner appropriate to the year of the degree programme.

### I (70 +)

This grade indicates work of exceptional quality. A first-class oral performance will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

- Excellent level of fluency and accuracy: the language is spoken with virtually no mistakes in lexis, syntax, morphology and pronunciation;
- Rich, complex and idiomatic language, employing a wide range of appropriate lexis correctly;
- Tone, register and style wholly suited to the setting and task;
- Confidence and ability to discuss a range of topics at a high level of abstraction;
- Very high level of strategic competence;
- No comprehension difficulties in an interactive situation;
- Where appropriate, can respond very fluently to questions on the subject matter and engage effortlessly in dialogue with the examiners.

### II.1 (60 - 69)

This grade indicates a very competent standard of work. Oral performance in this range will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

- Very good level of fluency and accuracy: the language is spoken with some minor mistakes in lexis, syntax, morphology and pronunciation;
- Attempts complex and idiomatic language, employing a range of appropriate lexis with minor errors only;
- Tone, register and style consistently suited to the setting and task;
- Confidence and ability to discuss a range of topics at a generally high level of abstraction;
- High level of strategic competence;
- Only minor comprehension difficulties in an interactive situation;
- Where appropriate, can respond with a high level of fluency to questions on the subject matter and engage confidently in dialogue with the examiners.

### II.2 (50 - 59)

This grade indicates work of acceptable competence. The candidate's oral performance will demonstrate some, though not necessarily all, of the following:

- Good level of fluency and accuracy, although the language is spoken with more frequent mistakes in lexis, syntax, morphology and pronunciation;
- Less ambitious in attempting complex and idiomatic language and when choosing lexis. Greater likelihood of error when using more complex syntax and of anglicisms;
- Tone, register and style not always suited to the setting and task;

- Confidence and ability to discuss a range of topics at a lower level of abstraction and with simplification;
- Some evidence of strategic competence;
- Some comprehension difficulties in an interactive situation;
- Where appropriate, can respond at a satisfactory level of fluency to questions on the subject matter and engage satisfactorily in dialogue with the examiners.

### **III (40 - 49)**

Work in this grade will demonstrate some limited ability to express oneself orally in the L2, but contain major weaknesses.

- Low level of fluency and accuracy, with frequent mistakes in lexis, syntax, morphology and pronunciation;
- Can only use limited and basic vocabulary and syntax. Extensive evidence of anglicisms;
- Tone, register and style frequently not suited to the setting and task;
- Confidence and ability to discuss a range of topics only at a very low level of abstraction and with significant simplification;
- Little evidence of strategic competence in the L2 and, hence, tendency to revert to English;
- Frequent comprehension difficulties in an interactive situation;
- Where appropriate, can respond at only a basic level of fluency to questions on the subject matter and can only engage in a very limited way in dialogue with the examiners.

### **F1 (30 - 39)**

This grade indicates insufficient evidence of serious academic study. The potential of the candidate to proceed to the next year is an important consideration in this grade.

- Very low level of fluency and accuracy, with very frequent mistakes in lexis, syntax, morphology and pronunciation, which can result in unintelligibility;
- Cannot use even limited and basic vocabulary and syntax with any degree of accuracy. Extensive evidence of anglicisms;
- Tone, register and style not suited to the setting and task;
- Lack of confidence and ability to discuss a range of topics at even the lowest level of abstraction and with significant simplification;
- No evidence of strategic competence in the L2 and, hence, frequent recourse to English;
- Significant comprehension difficulties;
- Where appropriate, responds inadequately to questions on the subject matter and cannot engage satisfactorily in dialogue with the examiners.

### **F2 (0 - 29)**

Oral communication skills in the F2 range will reveal some or all of the weaknesses noted under F1, but to a greater, perhaps extreme, extent.

- Fluency and accuracy lacking completely; mistakes in lexis, syntax, morphology and pronunciation render the speaker unintelligible;
- Cannot use even limited and basic vocabulary and syntax with any degree of accuracy. Extensive evidence of anglicisms;
- Tone, register and style not suited to the setting and task;
- Inability to discuss a range of topics at even the lowest level of abstraction and with significant simplification;
- No evidence of strategic competence;

- Very significant comprehension difficulties;
- Where appropriate, responds wholly inadequately to questions on the subject matter and is incapable of engaging in dialogue with the examiners.



## 6. Aural and written comprehension

In Sophister years, aural comprehension and written comprehension papers are assessed, in each case, on the basis of both content and productive language competence in equal proportion. Candidates are given credit for grammatical and factual accuracy and for correct idiomatic usage in their own words.

In Freshman years, whereas in written comprehension papers both content and productive language competence are assessed, aural comprehension is judged predominantly on content, according to the requirements of the different questions:

- For multiple choice questions, content only tested;
- for summary of points of content in note form in German, spelling and grammar are not penalized, so long as errors do not impede intelligibility;
- for essay summary of points of content in English, correctness and completeness as well as cohesion are assessed.

The 'language' specifications which follow apply only to questions where German productive competence is required. Where answers in English are required, clear, correct English and coherent essay structure are prerequisites for a II.2 mark or higher.

### I (70 +)

#### Language

- Near-native competence in conveying communicative intention fully;
- Very high degree of fluency in appropriate style and register;
- (Near-)perfect grammatical precision.
- Within scope of exercise, ability to employ complex language and varied structures and a wide range of appropriate lexis and idiom;
- Highly successful balance between independent formulation and accurate content.

#### Content

- Precise understanding and well-focused answer to question;
- Consistently renders factual content with almost flawless accuracy.
- Shows high degree of awareness of sophisticated rhetorical strategies.
- Thorough and subtle comprehension of implied points with a high degree of accuracy.

### II.1 (60 - 69)

#### Language

- High degree of fluency in appropriate style and register;
- High degree of grammatical accuracy, ability to convey communicative intention clearly, with minor errors only;
- Within scope of exercise, ability to command and vary language structures, appropriate lexis and idiom, with minor errors only.
- Some attempt at balance between independent formulation and accurate content.

#### Content

- Good understanding and clear answer to question;
- Consistently renders factual content with high degree of accuracy, avoiding major misunderstanding of the original;
- Shows some awareness of sophisticated rhetorical strategies.
- Accurate comprehension of implied points.

## **II.2 (50 - 59)**

### **Language**

- Fluent, at an acceptable level of complexity in appropriate style and register;
- Satisfactory communicative ability, but with a number of major grammatical and lexical errors, which do not impair communication significantly;
- Within scope of exercise, largely successful attempt to employ appropriate language structures, with predictable range of lexis and idiom;
- Some attempt at own formulation, but over-reliance on text of the original.

### **Content**

- Adequate understanding and solid answer to question;
- Renders factual content accurately with a fair degree of consistency, but with some major lapses of understanding;
- Shows some basic awareness of rhetorical strategies or implied points.

## **III (40 - 49)**

### **Language**

- Intelligible, though not always accurate or at an appropriate level of complexity in style and register;
- Basic communicative ability, but with many major grammatical and lexical errors, which impair communication in places;
- Within scope of exercise, unsuccessful or no attempt to employ appropriate language structures, with very basic range of lexis and idiom;
- No attempt at reformulation, imbalance between own simple phrasing and almost verbatim quotation from the original.

### **Content**

- Basic, sometimes inadequate understanding and unfocused answer to question;
- Factual accuracy either defective or only in the simplest form, significant confusion and problems of understanding;
- Shows no awareness of rhetorical strategies or implied points.

## **F1 (30 - 39)**

### **Language**

- Predominantly inaccurate usage, at an inappropriate level of style and register;
- Lacks basic communicative ability, high incidence of basic grammatical and lexical errors, which frequently impair communication;
- Within scope of exercise, inability to employ appropriate language structures; serious errors even within very limited range of lexis and idiom;
- No attempt at reformulation of quotation from the original; inaccurate quotation.

### **Content**

- Inadequate understanding and failure to answer question;
- Completely inaccurate or confused reproduction of facts, little grasp of content;
- Poor grasp of lexis and structures leads to major failure in comprehension;
- Shows no awareness of rhetorical strategies or implied points.

## **F2 (0 - 29)**

Work in the F2 range will reveal some or all of the weaknesses noted under F1, but to a greater, perhaps extreme, extent. Almost complete failure to comprehend original; grammatical and lexical deficiencies entirely impede intelligibility.

## 7. Objective tests

Objective tests are correct answer tests/ items which have unequivocal answers. These may be useful in the assessment of discrete linguistic skills and/or knowledge. Objective items can be designed to focus on specific knowledge and skills, and can be set at any required level of difficulty.

### Objective test types

- ❖ Gap/Cloze tests of various kinds
- ❖ Comprehension exercises (True/False; Multiple choice; questions requiring students to locate specific information in the source text; ...)
- ❖ Matching questions + answers/beginnings + ends of sentences; Sentence completion

The main strength of objective tests is the fact that they can be marked with complete reliability, thus eliminating the possibility of marker subjectivity or bias. The assessment of objective tests may also present a problem because of possible confusion arising from (a) marks as symbolic representations of attainment and (b) marks as raw scores, without reference to standard/scale.

In the Department of Germanic Studies the top mark for objective tests is normally 80. This is an indication of a very high I class mark. Exceptional performances may, however, be awarded a mark in excess of 80.

Objective tests are normally used in conjunction with other types of question in order to ensure that students may obtain an overall mark within the full range 0-100.

The pass mark in objective tests is determined by the difficulty of the test, the range of skills and knowledge that are being tested and the level of the students.