

Key Contents of the Final Examinations in English as a Foreign Language at Lower Secondary Level in Realschulen/Gymnasien 2017¹

The examination corresponds to level **B1 (Realschule) / B1+ (Gymnasium)** of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

The written examination consists of three parts and takes **120 minutes (Realschule) / 135 minutes (Gymnasium)**.

All three parts are to be completed by all candidates.

The texts and assignments usually correlate with matters regularly encountered by the candidates.

¹ The relevant regulations and instructions pertaining to the Final Examinations in English as a Foreign Language at Lower Secondary Level are to be found under the following Internet address:
<http://www.kmk.org/bildung-schule/auslandsschulwesen/sek-i-abschlusspruefung.html>

Part 1: Mediation – Levels I/II

Types of text		Types of exercise
non-fictional	fictional	<p>Candidates have to give a summarized rendering of relevant information:</p> <p>Gymnasium: the mediated text should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - be in complete sentences - be written according to the required text type, e.g. blog entry, article... - take into account both the situation and the addressee <p>Realschule: the text will be mediated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - as notes <p>The following assignments are also possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ note taking ▪ short answers ▪ fill in the grid ▪ fill in the form ▪ labelling, locating places and marking routes on maps
<p><u>continuous texts</u></p> <p>e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ newspaper article ▪ film review ▪ blurb ▪ short biography ▪ speech ▪ interview 	<p><u>non-continuous texts</u></p> <p>e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ brochure ▪ announcement ▪ diagramme/graph ▪ flyer ▪ advert ▪ poster ▪ instructions for use ▪ timetable 	
Competences ²		
<p>Candidates can mediate continuous as well as discontinuous texts from the German into the English language. The task focuses on successful communication, i.e. candidates are NOT required to render exact translations, but are expected to identify and mediate information that is relevant to the task.</p>		
Length and number of texts		
Candidates will have to mediate information that is given to them in up to two texts of varying length.		

² The competences necessary for solving all examination assignments relate to the educational standards for English as a Foreign Language at Lower Secondary Level: **Bildungsstandards für die erste Fremdsprache für den Mittleren Schulabschluss** (http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2003/2003_12_04-BS-erste-Fremdsprache.pdf, passed by the The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany on 4. December 2003) and also to the core curriculum at Upper Secondary Level of German schools abroad: **Kerncurriculum für die gymnasiale Oberstufe der Deutschen Schulen im Ausland** (cf. pp. 33-37 and pp. 38-41).

Part 2: Reading Comprehension – Levels I/II

Types of text		Types of exercise
non-fictional	fictional	e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ right / wrong / not in the text ▪ sentence completion ▪ matching ▪ multiple choice ▪ short answers ▪ filling in the grid ▪ sequencing ▪ labelling
<u>continuous texts</u> e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ newspaper article ▪ film review ▪ blurb ▪ short biography ▪ speech ▪ interview 	<u>non-continuous texts</u> e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ brochure ▪ announcement ▪ diagramme/graph ▪ picture/cartoon ▪ flyer ▪ advert ▪ poster ▪ instructions for use ▪ timetable 	
Competences³		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ to comprehend and process the general contents and details of various types of text according to the given assignment ➤ to independently understand the main ideas of complex, authentic texts, adapted where applicable, of varying style containing some unknown vocabulary ➤ to recognize the structure and effect of text including simple formal elements and the author's intention 		
Length and number of texts		
Candidates will work on a number of texts which will not normally exceed 600 words.		
Aids: a monolingual and a bilingual dictionary (English-German/English-language of country of origin) may be used.		

³ The competences necessary for solving all examination assignments relate to the educational standards for English as a Foreign Language at Lower Secondary Level: **Bildungsstandards für die erste Fremdsprache für den Mittleren Schulabschluss** (http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2003/2003_12_04-BS-erste-Fremdsprache.pdf, passed by the The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany on 4. December 2003) and also to the core curriculum at Upper Secondary Level of German schools abroad: **Kerncurriculum für die gymnasiale Oberstufe der Deutschen Schulen im Ausland** (cf. pp. 33-37 and pp. 38-41).

Part 3: Text Production – Levels II/III

In principle the assignments will correlate to familiar matters regularly encountered by the candidates.

Types of assignment (analytical and creative)

e.g.

- article
- blog entry
- comment
- comparison
- description
- diary entry
- email
- letter writing
(*formal / informal*)
- report
- review
- speech
- travel journal

Competences

- to report, describe, narrate or evaluate matters of personal interest in clear, well-structured text
- to produce short informative text on a familiar topic, in which experiences and events, ideas and ambitions are described and commented upon
- to explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options
- to employ complex syntactical structures using suitable sentence connectors
- to express oneself coherently and correctly using suitable language for target group/reader given
- to make statements using adequate choice of vocabulary, idiom, grammar and orthography

Expected length of text:

The students' texts should be **200 - 250 words** in length.

Aids: a monolingual and a bilingual dictionary (English-German/English-language of country of origin) may be used.

Task operators

In the following table the task operators used in the assignments of the central written examinations are listed, explained and illustrated. Their appropriate usage both during lessons and in class examinations is an important part of the preparation of the candidates for central class examinations and the central final examinations.

Reading comprehension		
Level I		
Task operator	Definition	Example(s)
choose	Choose one option from a number of different possibilities.	Tom is spending his holidays in a) Spain b) Britain c) France d) Greece.
collect	Find arguments for / against a statement.	“School uniforms should be compulsory.” Collect arguments for this statement in a grid.
complete/finish	Complete / Finish the sentence adding the necessary information.	"Fred is afraid of _____."
fill in	Write words or numbers in a grid or a gap to prove that you have understood certain information.	Fill in the grid with information from the text.
give short answers	Give short answers in a limited number of words/numbers.	How many athletes took part in the Paralympics?
label	Find suitable words to complete the pictures / graphs.	Label the pictures / graphs.
match	Link two or more words / sentences to show that you understand their meaning.	Match the sentence halves. Match the headlines to the correct parts of the text.
put in order	Find the right sequence of different parts of the text.	Put the following sentences about Mahatma Gandhi's life in the right order.
tick	Put a tick (✓) to show if a statement is correct.	Tick the correct statement/option. Tick the statements that are true/false/not in the text.

Reading comprehension

Levels II/III

Task operator	Definition	Example(s)
comment on/ give your opinion	Express and justify a personal view on a certain topic.	Comment on / Give your opinion on the statement that "women care best for children."
compare	Consider similarities and / or differences between two or more things.	Compare the two graphs.
describe	Say what something / someone is like by giving details about it / them.	Describe your ideal job.
discuss	Examine an issue from various sides giving reasons for and against.	Discuss whether teenagers can do anything against global warming.
explain	Point out the causes and / or effects of something. Make your ideas clear and easy to understand.	Explain why you would make a suitable exchange student.
outline	Describe something in a general way, giving the main points but not the details.	Outline your plans for life after school.
write	Write a formal / an informal letter /email / text, using suitable structuring phrases (e. g. addressing someone)	Write a letter to your sports club and complain about the state of the changing rooms and showers.