



Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board



Cambridge Assessment
International Education

**Singapore–Cambridge General Certificate of Education
Ordinary Level (2025)**

**German
(Syllabus 3918)**

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INTRODUCTION

This document provides details of the Ordinary Level German syllabus for candidates in **Singapore**. This syllabus is available in October/November only.

Note: Centres and candidates should note that the use of dictionaries is not permitted in this assessment.

AIMS

The aims of the syllabus are the same for all students. The aims are set out below and describe the educational purposes of following a course in a language at Ordinary Level.

- To develop the ability to use the language effectively for purposes of practical communication in countries where the language is spoken.
- To form a sound base of skills, language and attitudes required for further study, work and leisure.
- To offer insights into the culture and civilisation of the countries where the language is spoken.
- To develop a fuller awareness of the nature of language and language learning.
- To encourage positive attitudes towards foreign language learning and towards speakers of foreign languages and a sympathetic approach to other cultures and civilisations.
- To provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation.
- To complement other areas of study by encouraging skills of a more general application (e.g. analysis, memorising, drawing of inferences).

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The examination will assess candidates' linguistic competence and their knowledge of contemporary society by requiring them to:

- understand and respond to the spoken language drawn from a variety of sources and ranging from short to longer extracts
- understand and respond to texts written in the foreign language, drawn from a variety of sources and ranging from short to longer texts
- communicate in the spoken language
- communicate in writing to narrate events, give factual information and express and justify ideas and points of view.

ASSESSMENT

All candidates take Papers 1, 2, 3 and 4.

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Paper 1		Paper 2		Paper 3		Paper 4	
Duration	Weighting	Duration	Weighting	Duration	Weighting	Duration	Weighting
1 hour 30 minutes	33%	1 hour 15 minutes	33%	approx. 35 minutes	17%	approx. 10 minutes	17%

AVAILABILITY

This syllabus is available in October/November only.

DESCRIPTION OF COMPONENTS

PAPER 1: Writing (1 hour 30 minutes) (60 marks)

All candidates must attempt both questions.

- Question 1 (30 marks): candidates are required to write a composition in German of between 140 and 150 words. The composition must describe the story depicted in a series of 6 pictures given on the question paper.
- Question 2 (30 marks): a directed writing task. Candidates are offered a choice of two tasks (a letter/email and a narrative) and must complete one of these. Between 140 and 150 words are required.

PAPER 2: Reading (1 hour 15 minutes) (45 marks weighted to 60 marks)

The test will be in three sections.

Section 1 (15 marks)

- Short notices, signs, instructions, messages, advertisements, etc. – multiple-choice questions.
- Short statements and complete a matching exercise which tests the main words in these statements.
- A short text in the form of an email, message, postcard, letter, etc. Questions are objective and test the main points and some detail.

Section 2 (20 marks)

- A longer text in the form of a letter, email, etc. Questions test general understanding of the main points, which includes recognising simple attitudes and opinions.
- A longer, more complex text. Questions test general and specific comprehension. They will also require candidates to identify attitudes, emotions and ideas. Questions require short answers in the target language.

Section 3 (10 marks)

- A cloze text with 10 gaps, testing knowledge of grammar, e.g. prepositions / particles, verb agreement, tense, conjunctions, vocabulary.

PAPER 3: Listening (approx. 35 minutes) (30 marks)

All questions requiring written answers are to be answered in German. The aim of this paper is to test candidates' listening comprehension skills and therefore they are not penalised for incorrect or inaccurate language unless it makes their answers ambiguous.

Section 1 (15 marks)

Candidates hear short recordings, sometimes involving two speakers, which are tested mainly by visual material. The recordings contain largely factual information about travel, weather, opening times, facilities available, food, etc. and candidates identify main points and some details. Most of the questions are objective, one or two require a very brief written answer.

Section 2 (15 marks)

Candidates hear recordings of two longer and more complex conversations/interviews. They listen for main points and detail. Some of the questions are objective, some require short answers in the target language.

PAPER 4: Oral (approx. 10 minutes) (60 marks weighted to 30 marks)

- **Test 1: Topic Presentation/Conversation (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)**
- **Test 2: General Conversation (approximately 5 minutes, 30 marks)**

MARK SCHEMES

Paper 1: Writing

Generic parts of the mark scheme to be used in questions 1 and 2

1.1 – award a mark out of 10 for Communication

Generic mark scheme for Communication (Questions 1 and 2)

- (i) There are 5 relevant communication points per question, each worth a maximum of 2 marks
- (ii) For each relevant communication point, use the appropriate numbered tick and place up to 2 of these ticks as close as possible to each relevant communication point

2 ticks	Message clearly communicated. Minor errors (adjective endings, use of prepositions, etc.) are tolerated.
1 tick	Communication of some meaning is achieved but the message may be ambiguous or incomplete.
0 ticks	Nothing of worth communicated.

- (iii) Add up the ticks to give a mark out of 10 for Communication

Total marks for Communication: 10

- Guidance on awarding ticks for Communication**

Example 1: *Beschreiben Sie, was Sie mit Ihrer Familie gemacht haben.*

Candidate's response	Ticks for Communication	Reason for mark
<i>Ja ich mit meiner Familie gemacht.</i>	0	Nothing of worth communicated.
<i>Wir bin einen Ausflug in die Berge gemacht.</i>	1	Some meaning conveyed – use of 'bin' makes message ambiguous.
<i>Ich habe mit meiner Familie einen Ausflug in die Berge gemacht.</i>	2	Message clearly communicated.

Example 2: *Beschreiben Sie einen Tag, an dem Sie viel Sport getrieben haben. Was war besonders schwierig und warum?*

Candidate's response	Ticks for Communication	Reason for mark
<i>Ich viel Sport getrieben haben.</i>	0	Nothing of worth communicated.
<i>Das Schwimmen war für mich besonders schwierig.</i>	1	Some meaning is conveyed but the message is incomplete.
<i>Das Schwimmen war für mich besonders schwierig, weil das Wasser so kalt war.</i>	2	Message clearly communicated.

1.2 – award a mark out of 8 for Accurate use of verbs

Generic mark scheme for Accurate use of verbs (Questions 1 and 2):

- (i) Place a tick above the **first** occurrence of each correct verb up to a maximum of 18 ticks (details of how to award ticks are provided below)
- (ii) Convert the total number of ticks to a mark out of 8 using the Conversion table below

Conversion table for Accurate use of verbs (Questions 1 and 2)

Number of ticks	Mark
18+	8
16, 17	7
14, 15	6
12, 13	5
10, 11	4
8, 9	3
6, 7	2
4, 5	1
0, 1, 2, 3	0

Total marks for Accurate use of verbs: 8

- **How to award ticks for Accurate use of verbs (Questions 1 and 2)**

(a) Subject (noun or pronoun) + any finite verb

- both subject and verb must be correct for the verb to score a tick (minor errors in the subject, e.g. missing capital letters on nouns, umlauts, etc. will be tolerated)
- verb must be in the appropriate tense to score a tick
- ignore inaccuracies in the use of umlauts except where lack/addition of umlaut creates another word, e.g. Accept: *wir müssen* (could not mean anything else), but do not accept *ich mochte* where *ich möchte* is required (word means something different).

Tick	No tick	Note
Ich bin (✓)		
Ich spiele (✓)	Ich spielt (<i>no tick</i>)	verb form must be correctly spelt
Der Mann kommt (✓)	Den Mann kommt (<i>no tick</i>)	subject must be correct
Ich bin gegangen (✓)	Ich habe gegangen (<i>no tick</i>)	insist on correct auxiliary

With reflexive verbs

Tick	No tick	Note
Ich wasche mich (✓)	Ich wasche sich (<i>no tick</i>)	insist on correct reflexive pronoun
Ich habe mich gesonnt (✓)	Ich habe gesonnt mich (<i>no tick</i>)	insist on correct word order (see note on use of compound tenses)
	Ich wasche mich das Auto (<i>no tick</i>)	'waschen' should not be used reflexively in this statement

With separable verbs

Tick	No tick	Note
Ich lege ein Foto bei (✓)	Ich beilege ein Foto (<i>no tick</i>)	separable prefix needs to be in the correct position for the verb to score
Ich habe mitgemacht (✓)	Ich habe gemitmacht (<i>no tick</i>)	separable prefix needs to be in the correct position for the verb to score

Compound tenses

Tick	No tick	Note
Ich habe gekauft (✓)	Ich hat gekauft. (<i>no tick</i>)	auxiliary must be correct
Wir sind gefahren. (✓)	Wir haben gefahren. (<i>no tick</i>)	auxiliary must be correct
Ich bin gestern geflogen. (✓)	Ich bin geflogen gestern. (<i>no tick</i>)	past participle must be in the correct position for the verb to score
Ich werde singen. (✓)		future credited as compound tense, so no extra tick for infinitive
Er würde ein neues Auto kaufen. (✓)		conditional credited, so no extra tick for infinitive
Wir werden mit dem Bus fahren. (✓)	Wir werden fahren mit dem Bus. (<i>no tick</i>)	infinitive not in the correct position, so future tense not credited

Single auxiliary with multiple past participles

Tick	No tick	Note
Wir haben gesungen und getanzt (✓) (✓)		Wir haben gesungen = tick 1; Wir haben getanzt = tick 2

Impersonal verbs

Tick	No tick	Note
Es ist lustig (✓)		
Es gibt (✓)		
Gibt es...? (✓)		
Es geht mir gut (✓)		

Verbs with negative

Tick	No tick	Note
Sie spielen nicht (✓)		tick is awarded for the correct verb and subject; the negative is considered for reward in 'Other linguistic features', hence credit for the verb is unaffected by any error in position of the negative
Sie nicht spielen (✓)		

Correct verb within meaningless statement

Tick	No tick	Note
Der Tag war lang (✓)	Der Tag war klug (<i>no tick</i>)	do not reward a correct verb in a meaningless statement

Imperative

Tick	No tick	Note
Komm! (✓)		
Kommen Sie bitte nicht! (✓)		

Interrogative

Tick	No tick	Note
Du kommst? (✓) / Du kommst. (✓)		question mark not required for mark to be awarded
Kommst du (?) (✓)		
Wer bist du (?) (✓)		inversion required with question word
	Wer du bist (?) (<i>no tick</i>)	no inversion with question word, so no credit

Infinitive/Modal constructions

Tick	No tick	Note
Ich kann (✓) gut spielen (✓)		
Ich kannst (<i>no tick</i>) gut spielen (✓)		incorrect verb form but correct infinitive
Ich kann (✓) spielen gut (<i>no tick</i>)		infinitive in incorrect position
Ich will (✓) spiele (<i>no tick</i>)		incorrect spelling of infinitive
Er hat versucht (/) fit zu bleiben (✓)		
Er hat versucht (✓) fit bleiben (<i>no tick</i>)		zu is omitted, hence infinitive cannot be credited
Ich möchte (✓) zu studieren (<i>no tick</i>)		zu is incorrectly added, hence infinitive cannot be credited

Reward only the first occurrence of a verb, e.g.

- Ich mag (✓) Schwimmen. Ich mag (*no tick*) auch Tennis.
- Ich mag (✓) Schwimmen. Ich mag (*no tick*) Tennis nicht.
- Hier gibt es (✓) Berge und Flüsse. Es gibt auch (*no tick*)

However,

- Ich mag (✓) Schwimmen und mein Bruder mag (✓) Tennis – 2 different persons of the verb
- Mein Bruder mag Schwimmen (✓) und meine Schwester mag (*no tick*) Tennis – both third person usage
- Sie ist (✓) unglücklich, es ist (*no tick*) nicht gut – both third person usage

1.3 – award a mark out of 12 for Other linguistic features

Generic mark scheme for Other linguistic features (Questions 1 and 2):

- (i) Award a mark out of 12 for Other linguistic features according to the Grade descriptions in the table below (please see *Note on using mark schemes with Grade descriptors* (last page of mark scheme)):

Grade descriptors for Other linguistic features (Questions 1 and 2)

11–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a wide range of structures effectively; produces longer, fluent sentences with ease. • Highly accurate at this level, though not necessarily faultless. • Makes effective use of a wide range of vocabulary fully appropriate to the task.
9–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts a range of structures with a good degree of success. • More complex language usually error-free. • Uses a variety of relevant vocabulary at this level.
7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In control of simple structures. Varied success with more complex structures. • Accuracy is fairly consistent throughout. Errors may occur when more ambitious language is attempted. • Has sufficient vocabulary to add some interest to the writing.
5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts more than basic structures. • On balance, the work is more accurate than inaccurate. • Straightforward vocabulary relevant to the task.
3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliant on basic structures. • Some examples of correct language. Meaning usually conveyed. • Basic vocabulary.
1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few phrases or short sentences are accurate enough to be comprehensible. Very simple sentence structure.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or two disjointed words or short phrases may be recognisable.

- (ii) Consider the extent to which the following are used correctly and appropriately when assessing the candidate's control of structures:

- Adjectives, including possessives and demonstratives. Also comparatives and superlatives
- Word order, including inversion, positioning of verb in relative/subordinate clauses, word order with direct/indirect objects, and time/manner/place
- Use of capital/lower-case letters in nouns and pronouns
- Negatives (*nicht, nie, weder...noch*, use of *kein*)
- Linking words and conjunctions other than *und/aber*
- Adverbs and adverbial phrases
- A variety of prepositions, followed by case agreement
- Subordinate clauses, including use of *wenn, weil, dass*, etc.
- Time clauses with *als, seit*, etc.
- Object pronouns, direct and indirect
- Relative clauses, including use of relative pronouns
- Appropriate use of letter etiquette.

Total marks for Other linguistic features: 12

Total for Questions 1 and 2: 30 marks

Mark Schemes

Paper 4: Oral

Table A – Mark Scheme for Communication

This assesses the candidate's response in terms of comprehension of the Examiner, immediacy of reaction/response, and successful transmission of messages (including presentation of material in the topic).

Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A spontaneous interchange between candidate and Examiner. • Candidate responds fully and confidently to all question types. • Most points justified and explained. • Very consistent performance. Not necessarily of native speaker standard. 	14–15
Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally understands questions first time, but may require occasional rephrasing. Can respond satisfactorily to both straightforward and unexpected questions. • Often develops own ideas and opinions and provides justifications. 	12–13
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds well to straightforward questions; sometimes responds well to unexpected questions. • Communicates essential elements and can expand occasionally. • Expresses opinions with some simple justifications. 	10–11
Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually responds well to straightforward questions; has difficulty with unexpected questions and needs some rephrasing. • Communicates most of the essential elements. • Can convey simple, straightforward opinions. 	7–9
Weak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has difficulty with many straightforward questions, but still attempts an answer. • Communicates simple pieces of information. 	4–6
Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently has difficulty understanding the questions and has great difficulty in replying. • Communicates a few facts. 	1–3
	Communicates no relevant information.	0

Table B – Mark Scheme for Language

This assesses the linguistic content of the candidate's answers in terms of complexity, accuracy and range of structures, vocabulary and idiom.

Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very accurate use of a wide range of structures, vocabulary and idiom with occasional errors in more complex language. • Not necessarily of native speaker standard. 	14–15
Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide range of mostly accurate structures and vocabulary. 	12–13
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good range of generally accurate structures, varied vocabulary. 	10–11
Satisfactory*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate range of structures and vocabulary. Can use past and future tenses accurately. Some ambiguity. 	7–9
Weak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some manipulation of structures and awareness of verbs, though often faulty and/or incomplete. Shows elementary, limited vocabulary. 	4–6
Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows very limited range of structures and vocabulary. 	1–3
	Nothing coherent or accurate enough to be comprehensible.	0

* Candidates who do not show that they are able to use past and future tenses accurately cannot be awarded a mark in the Satisfactory band or above for Language.