



Examiner's Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCE

In Portuguese (9PG0)

Paper 1: Translation into English, reading comprehension and writing (research question) in Portuguese

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Examiners' Report on Paper 9PG01 – Summer 2025

General comments

This report relates to paper **9PG01**, which tests candidates' ability to translate from Portuguese into English, to read and respond to written Portuguese and to demonstrate their ability to undertake independent research in Portuguese and reflect on it.

The evidence from marking in this session indicates that the paper was once more effective in differentiating between candidates of different abilities and that all the questions worked as anticipated.

The published mark scheme provides extensive guidance with regards to the overarching approach to marking, as well as the range of correct, acceptable and rejected responses as they relate to Section A and Section B, as well as indicative content for Section C. Teachers should note, however, that the mark scheme is not designed in such a way that every possible answer is included. Examiners look at each answer on merit to allocate marks. The approach to marking is positive, so examiners always seek to reward what candidates produce.

It is helpful for teachers to distinguish clearly between the assessment objectives stated in the specification. These are: A01- Listening and Responding in Portuguese; A02- Reading and Responding in Portuguese; A03- Grammar and Vocabulary of Portuguese; A04- Knowledge and Understanding of the countries and communities where Portuguese is spoken. In this paper A02 is assessed in Sections A, B and C; A03 and A04 are assessed only in Section C.

There was varied evidence of how well candidates were prepared for this assessment, but there was little evidence of rubric infringement; this is where candidates either failed to follow the instructions, for example answering in the wrong language, or ticked more than the required number of boxes in the objective tasks.

Comments on each question

Section A

This section tests candidates' ability to translate into English. Teachers should note that in the mark scheme there may, on occasion, appear to be misalignment between the Portuguese column and the English column: this is a reflection of the idiomatic nature of translation and the way word order and clause structure varies between Portuguese and English. Reading the correct answer column vertically from the top will provide a complete translation in good English of the passage.

This year, Question 1 related to the theme of *Cultura Política e Artística nos países de Língua Portuguesa*, the subtheme: *Música* and the content was focused on the aspect of *festivals de música*.

One mark is awarded for each correctly translated segment up to a maximum of 20 marks and, as previously mentioned, not every acceptable or rejected answer is included in the mark scheme. Examiners will award a mark to a segment where the message is conveyed clearly, correctly and unambiguously in such a way that a native speaker of Portuguese with no knowledge of English would understand exactly the same message as would a native English speaker with no knowledge of Portuguese.

As part of the design of the passage for the assessment of translation into English, each segment is targeted at a particular grade and so it normal and expected that candidates with different levels of Portuguese should find some parts more challenging than others. In this way the passage is differentiated to assess across the full range of grades.

Most candidates were successful in translating:

- O festival de verão de Vilar de Mouros é o mais antigo acontecimento de música rock em Portugal.

One of the passages that challenged all but the highest scoring candidates were:

- ...transformou definitivamente o panorama da música portuguesa, graças à visão pioneira dos seus produtores.

There was evidence that some candidates needed to pay closer attention to the English phrasing that they used, to avoid ambiguity of the message translated. Connectives, for example, must convey the same idea than the ones used in Portuguese, otherwise the message conveyed will not be the same. Time frames still proved themselves to be often problematic. The disregard for the tense in the original text would change the message conveyed when translated. A fine example is in segment 10 where a Simple Past in the original text was often translated by a Simple Present which is clearly not the same. A close reading of the reject column in the mark scheme will provide teachers with some useful areas to work on in terms of linguistic structures. The revision of the text translated will allow the students a better overview of the text translated.

One can tell the revision was, sometimes, overlooked by candidates.

Section B

Question 2

This question related to the theme of **Como a História moldou a Política**, the subtheme: **A ditadura de Salazar** and the content was focused on the aspect of *Ditadura em Declínio – Portugal nos finais dos anos 60 e princípios dos anos 70*.

This is a multiple-choice task with four parts and four options for each part. Teachers can usefully note that incorrect options may include an element of distraction in the form of a word or idea from the text. Candidates, therefore, need to be careful to read fully and carefully, rather than rely on spotting isolated words. This question targets grades C to E and is intended as a gentle lead in for this paper.

Most successfully answered was: 2 (i)

Least successfully answered was: 2 (iv)

Question 3

This question related to the theme of *Movimentos Migratórios*, the subtheme: **A Emigração de Portugal no século XXI** and the content was focused on the aspect of **o impacto na sociedade**.

This is a multiple-completion task where candidates choose four correct answers out of nine statements. Teachers can usefully note that incorrect options may include an element of distraction in the form of a word or idea from the text. Candidates, therefore, need to be careful to read fully and carefully, rather than rely on spotting isolated words. This question targets grades A to E, and so differentiates at a higher level than Question 2.

Most successfully answered were: C and I

Least successfully answered were: A and G

Question 4

This question related to the theme of *Mudanças na Sociedade Contemporânea*, the subtheme: *o Mundo do Trabalho* and the content was focused on the aspect of *o Desemprego*. There was some evidence that some candidates did not always read the questions carefully or produced answers which, although correctly locating the information in the text, were not precise answers to the question that was asked or relied on indiscriminate or untargeted lifting from the text. Frequently, candidates did not reflect on the questions enough and did not reply to them adequately. After locating the information in the text, **it has to be transformed** in order to fully answer the question. A fine example is question c) where most candidates failed to explain properly the expectations of the author. The tourism season on its own does not correspond to an expectation but the fact that more tourists will logically create more jobs ('renascer'), that is an expectation.

Teachers are reminded that, in free-response questions, examiners consider only as many elements as there are marks, for example for a 1-mark answer, the candidate's first response is taken for assessment, even if this response is incorrect but the correct information follows as a further element. Where 2 marks are available, award the individual marks discretely but apply the order of elements rule. This question targets grades A to E.

Most successfully answer was: a)

Least successfully answers were: c) and e)

Question 5

This question related to the theme of *Cultura Política e Artística nos Países de Língua Portuguesa*, the subtheme: *Os Media* and the content was focused on the aspect of *A Liberdade de Expressão*.

This is a free response task, where candidates are required to answer in Portuguese. Teachers are reminded to train candidates to give one detail per mark, as they answer free response questions. Some questions do carry two marks and, in some cases, there may be more than two possible things a candidate could write. This is a normal part of the way the questions work, and so there is no need for candidates to offer more information than required by the rubric.

Frequently, candidates did not reflect on the questions enough and did not reply to it adequately. It is useful to note that questions are also designed so that the answers could reasonably be expected to fit on the writing line provided. Candidates should aim for concision in their responses. After locating the information in the text, it has to be adjusted to the question. **Lifting directly from the text is to be avoided.** A fine example is question f). Many candidates located the information in the text (lines 15/16, last sentence of the last paragraph). The

successful candidate would have come to the conclusion that the author does not mind listening to the nonsense of others because they are precisely using their freedom of speech (metaphorically the true of an espresso). Candidates were expected to associate the espresso unsweetened to the freedom of speech untamed and mention the latter. Keeping the metaphor would **not** get the mark as the text is about freedom of speech and not about the flavour of an espresso.

This question targets grades A to E.

Most successfully answered were: b) and d)

Least successfully answered was: f)

In e), rushed answers produced very non-eloquent answers. Despite the fact the language was not correct, the mark was awarded every time the idea was clearly conveyed. Revision by the candidate in the end is **vital** to avoid these situations and make sure the answer provided is clear and correct.

Section C

This section tests candidates' ability to conduct independent research in Portuguese, and to respond critically to a text that relates to the research topic they have chosen. Candidates need to be mindful that they need to relate the text that they have read to the research that they have done about the topic they have chosen. The A02 information from the text needs to be contextualized and added to from the research, A04. It is not enough simply to give a critical view about the content of the text or to use the research statement simply as a kind of essay title and overlook the text. The ideal answer will take into consideration the triangle Research / text / statement.

The highest scoring candidates had effectively combined the information from the text provided with **what (and where) they had researched to respond critically to the research statement**. The inclusion of perceptive ideas was an indicator of high levels of performance in this task. A perceptive idea is defined in the specification and mark scheme, but broadly can be considered any knowledge or understanding that goes beyond what the average speaker of Portuguese would know about the topic in question. **The research done had to be evident and traceable**. References in the essays to 'a minha pesquisa' did not necessarily make the candidate's research into perceptive ideas. It could only be considered ideas or even straightforward ones. **The research had to be evident and could include facts, data, trends, social or historical context or the connection of ideas** in such a way as to demonstrate real understanding of the theme and support the argument. These candidates had also used appropriate and wide-ranging vocabulary specific to the task and had shown their ability to write the language in a natural, authentic and sophisticated way including a range of structures and features and successful examples of complex language from the list presented in the Mark Scheme. These candidates often also showed evidence that they had **proofread** their own work, as was indicated by corrections made to what they had initially written.

The lower scoring candidates often missed a crucial element of the task; they either focused exclusively on the passage, without adding from their own research or they used the research statement as a stimulus for a generalized set of comments that were straightforward in nature and did not go beyond what any speaker of Portuguese might be expected to know. Often the

language used was less academic in register, less wide-ranging, less ambitious in complexity and contained errors, including in **basic Portuguese**, that impeded clarity or generated ambiguity. Here, there was evidence of a lack of proof-reading.

Teachers are reminded that the mark scheme contains indicative content, but this is not intended to be definitive answer to the statement. Examiners use a level-based mark scheme and reward all relevant response produced by the candidate, accepting that each candidate may approach the task in a different way.

Research from Theme 1

The passage dealt with the ‘Ensino Técnico’ as a potential tool of considerable social importance if it has the resources needed to make the difference. It also referred volunteering and how essential it can be to the definition of a future career. This is why it is very useful for a future professional to experience before carrying on to university. On the other hand, mentioned how fast the job market is evolving and changing and how quick some jobs cease to exist. Finally, volunteering may be the right step to allow the students to apply to jobs with some previous experience. Teachers should look carefully at the indicative content in the mark scheme for information about the level of response expected.

In response to this research topic, a sixth of the candidates that chose this topic produced a range of thoughtful and well-structured responses and there was evidence that mainly the above mentioned had prepared well and introduced proper research references in their essays. Some mentioned a reality likely to be set in the UK or anywhere else in the world, which is not precise enough to the reality in Portugal. It applies to students anywhere, in any country, conflicted with what to do and confronted with the lack of preparation, in this case, lack of research done. It does not come from Knowledge about the Portuguese situation. It is not by accident that Portugal is hardly mentioned throughout those essays.

Research from Theme 2

In response to this research topic, candidates produced a range of thoughtful and well-structured responses, even though there was evidence that not all had prepared well. For example, several candidates chose to tell a sequence of historical facts or features about the CPLP and the CPLP countries, while the text was much more about the strengthening of ties between the CPLP countries by the use and celebration of the common language. This celebration is mostly done through the cultural events organised in the CPLP countries as the World Day of the Portuguese Language, celebrated every year on the 5th May. The text referred to Brazil’s celebrations in a specific year where the institutions involved decided to prolong the celebration and make it a 3-days sequence of activities. 25% of the candidates filled the brief, avoid generalities and demonstrated proper research interweaved with comments and personal point of views. Unfortunately, for some, these celebrations became a three-day event, instead of the data mentioned above.

Research from Theme 3

Many wrote about the differences of life opportunities in the country and in the city, how life in the country was improving, creating work opportunities, allowing people to consider returning to the countryside and create a life there, away from the disadvantages of the city,

namely the environmental problems and the cost of living. Finally, reference to how much the countryside evolved compared to the recent past, making life much more attractive in the countryside and how much a number of governmental programmes have been helping to develop the interior thus creating better living conditions to all those involved. Less than 15% of the candidates that chose this theme showed proper research and did considerable reflection on the theme, avoiding being too general about it.

Research from Theme 4

In response to this research topic, candidates produced a range of thoughtful and well-structured responses and there was evidence that many had prepared well. Although some had trouble running away from telling a story of what happened in Lisbon in the 16th century, at least one third of the essays to this theme were well organised and centred in comments and points of view about the historical facts. A third of the students got 75% or more of the available marks (30 out of 40), which means that, at least this third, understood the task, did their research and mentioned it properly in their essays.

For example, several candidates wrote about the way Lisbon became more and more important and central in the European trade. By controlling the trade in the East, the capital grew in importance and prestige. This is attested by the famous reference of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and Archduke of Austria, how, in control of Lisbon, he would be in control of the world. The candidates carried on reflecting on how all this wealth and prestige came from the trade in Lisbon that developed the Portuguese kingdom in most levels. The successful candidates conciliated the main ideas from the text with its own research and avoiding telling the story of Vasco da Gama expedition.

Here is an example of a candidate that did do his research neither his preparation for the exam and assumes that in his writing. This is a fine example of the awareness, even if late, of what needs to be done in preparation to the exam.

E agora, ~~vou~~ não sei o que vou escrever. Não fiz a revisão ~~se~~ provavelmente,
e agora eu estou a ~~sofrer~~ sofrer, mas é minha culpa. Para o meu
próximo exame, vou fazer muito revisão, porque, eu preciso de um
grade bem. Não posso sair dessa escola sem ganhar o grade de
A* ou B. Outro vez mais, eu minha culpa, porque não fiz aquele que
~~precisei~~ precisei de fazer, mas não faz mal, o mundo não vai
acabar porque disso. Tudo vai correr bem."

Guidance for teachers for future sessions

1. Ensure that all candidates are familiar with the format of the paper and what they need to do in each section and question.
2. In section A, make students aware that a correct translation will not necessarily be a literal word-by-word translation. There will be difference in word order, clause

structure or other linguistic features between the two languages. The resulting English passage should be natural, correct and in an unambiguous English.

3. In section A, work with students using the mark scheme, to exemplify different approaches to translation. It can be useful in teaching students to translate into English to ask them to produce a 'mark scheme', rather than a translated passage; this can help to develop the ability to think laterally. It may also be helpful in steering them away from online translators, if they are encouraged to think carefully about alternatives and how to avoid errors.
4. In section B it can be a useful exercise to focus candidates not only on finding the correct answers but also looking at why the incorrect options are wrong. This encourages a careful reading of the questions and develops metacognition in terms of how the questions work.
5. In section B teach students about the 'order of elements' rule and apply it during teaching, so that students learn to produce clear and concise answers.
6. In section B teach students to be guided by the number of marks and the space allowed for writing. This can help them give enough detail and avoid indiscriminate lifts.
7. In section B, encourage students to go back to the text to underline the information located and compare it to the questions and the answer written.
8. In section B, encourage students to avoid the direct lifting from the text. Very often, the information needs to be adapted to the question.
9. In section C, ensure that candidates understand the task and give them practice in linking a passage with **research**. This can make a useful speaking/written task and provide teachers with insightful assessment for learning information about the student's understanding. Input from their own research on the chosen theme is key to answer section C. The candidate's text should be 'relevant' and include own '**perceptive ideas about culture and society**, supported by **relevant information from (traceable) research**', as mentioned above.
10. In section C, ensure students are equipped with a good range of topic specific, academic vocabulary to be able to ensure that the written response is correct in terms of register and not overly colloquial in tone.
11. In section C, give students practice in proof-reading their own work and that of others, including response models, looking to correct common errors to develop the habit of writing accurately.
12. Finally, in exam centres with a small number of candidates and likely with less support, it is important that a MFL teacher explain the students what he needs to prepare and do. The topics and work related with the Portuguese exam are similar to what is required for the Spanish and French exams, for example. The research used in the Speaking exam in those subjects is here included as an essay question. Nonetheless, the research phase is, essentially, the same. If there is no one else available to guide the student, the student needs to be directed to the Specification and the Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs), in the Pearson website, to make sure the candidate will have the chance to do well.

