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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCSE In Portuguese (1PG0)

Paper 4 Higher Tier: Writing in Portuguese

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Overview of the Examination

The writing paper constitutes 25% of the overall GCSE grade and is divided into three parts:

1. A choice of two writing tasks with four points to cover, including reference to the past and future, with a suggested word count of 80-90 words. (20 marks)
2. A choice of two writing tasks with four points to cover, including reference to the past and the future, with a suggested word count of 130-150 words. (28 marks)
3. Translation task: Candidates have to translate a paragraph into Portuguese. (12 marks)

In the Portuguese GCSE writing exam, word counts are provided as suggestions, but longer responses are considered fully for marking. However, it's essential to emphasise that writing more does not guarantee full marks.

The first two tasks, Q1 and Q2, are assessed based on two criteria: Communication & Content and Linguistic Knowledge & Accuracy. If a candidate omits key details in their response, they cannot score full marks for Communication & Content. However, they still have the opportunity to earn marks in the Linguistic Knowledge & Accuracy category as long as their response remains relevant.

To achieve high marks in Communication & Content, candidates must address all the required details in the question. Some candidates might miss specific instructions or overlook the need to use certain tenses. Occasionally, a candidate might freely write based on the task's introduction or provide a broad response about a given topic without specifically addressing the bullet points.

The expectations for Linguistic Knowledge & Accuracy become more demanding with each question. Q1 necessitates references to past, present, and future events, as well as the use of extended sentences and some variation in grammatical structures for full marks. On the other hand, Q2 requires consistently accurate language, fluent writing, and a wide variety of grammatical structures to achieve the highest scores.

Notes on the 2023 Portuguese Higher Writing Paper

Question 1 (a)

In Question 1, candidates were required to respond to a set of four bullet points that encompassed the past, present, and future.

Part (a) of Question 1 asked candidates to write an email to a friend about breakfast and healthy eating.

This question was the most popular choice among candidates, and the majority made a good effort in addressing all or most of the bullet points. Examiners enjoyed reading about candidates' descriptions of their breakfast. However, some candidates misunderstood the term "pequeno-almoço" (breakfast) and wrote about "almoço" (lunch) instead, resulting in losing marks for communication and content. This misunderstanding likely occurred because they did not read the English title "Breakfast" at the top of the page.

The majority of candidates responded very well to this question, addressing all the bullet points with some elaboration. The highest scores for Communication & Content were given to candidates who not only covered all four points but also provided personal responses with justifications.

Candidates demonstrated variable success in transitioning between different tenses. However, it was gratifying to see that some candidates used complex language appropriately, including the subjunctive, personal infinitives, and impressive connectives like 'apesar de' (despite).

Overall, the responses to this question were strong, with candidates showcasing their language skills effectively by addressing the criteria set forth in the mark scheme.

Olá, Carlota!

Normalmente, ao pequeno almoço tomo leite com cereal. Algumas vezes, como biscoitos de chocolate, mas não todos os dias, porque não é muito saudável.

Na minha opinião, penso que alguns jovens não tomam pequeno-almoço porque estão com muita pressa. Jovens que acordam tarde não tomam pequeno-almoço, pois podem se atrasar para a escola.

Quando eu era criança, não gostava de comer carne. Hoje em dia, adoro um churrasco ou um bife, mas quando era menor, eu preferia vegetais e grãos, como arroz.

No futuro, farei mais exercício físico. Penso que é muito importante se exercitar, mas não faço muito, porque tenho preguiça.

Content and Communication: 12/12

The candidate's response to the question addresses all the bullet points with full development by providing at least three pieces of information for each point. The candidate's use of language is creative, effectively narrating stories and justifying opinions. The use of uncommon vocabulary such as "saudável" (healthy), "estar com pressa" (to be in a hurry), "churrasco" (barbecue), "exercitar" (to exercise), and "preguiça" (laziness) adds depth to the response.

Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy: 8/8

The candidate skillfully employs a wide range of grammatical structures, frequently extending sentences and connecting them with conjunctions like "porque" (because), "pois" (for), and "mas" (but). While there are some minor flaws in the language, such as misspellings in verb forms like 'atrazar' (should be 'atrasar'), they do not significantly hinder the understanding of the text. The response demonstrates successful references to past, present, and future tenses.

Overall, the candidate's performance in both Content and Communication as well as Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy is outstanding. The response is engaging, well-developed, and showcases a strong command of the language.

Examiner tip:

Writing a separate paragraph for each bullet point helps check that you have given enough detail for each one.

Question 1 (b)

In this question candidates were instructed to write an article for the school's newsletter/newspaper about the end of the school year party. This question was less favoured by candidates, but a substantial number of students still wrote about their past experiences and addressed all the bullet points. Some candidates failed to read the instructions properly and wrote about the "New Year's celebration," which was not relevant to the given topic.

Most candidates gave a very successful response to this question, addressing all bullet points with some development. Examiners particularly enjoyed reading candidates' opinions on the end of year party. The top marks for Communication & Content went to responses that expanded on all four points and gave personal responses with justifications.

Many candidates had variable success when moving between different tenses. It was not possible to award full marks for Linguistic Knowledge & Accuracy if the candidate did not successfully reference the past, present and future. The top category of the mark scheme asks for occasional use of complex language, so it was pleasing to see use of the subjunctive, personal infinitives and impressive connectives such as 'apesar de'.

This task overlaps with the top end of the Foundation paper. If candidates struggle with this task, it is often a sign that they would be better served by entering for the Foundation tier. General inaccuracy caused some problems: there was often English interference (e.g. 'asho' instead of 'acho'), missing accents were common (e.g. translating 'is' and 'and' in the same way) and Spanish appeared quite frequently.

A festa do fim do ano na minha escola é muito importante. Eu participei a ajudar a professora a organizar a festa e por os balões em todo o lado. A festa foi muito divertida, tinha muitas coisas para fazer. Eu gosto da festa porque eu sei que ~~é a~~ ~~um~~ último festa do ano e porquasa ~~disso~~, de isso, vai ser muito grande com muitas jogos para jogar com os amigos e amigas. A festa de esta ano tem mas coisas para fazer e ficar mas tarde de ~~o~~ ano passado porque esta ano tinha mas de dinheiro para gastar em jogos e advertisement. Ninguém vai esquecer de ~~esta~~ esta ano para

varias anos no futuro. ~~A~~ próximo grande ~~event~~ evento vai ser no verão quando a escola vai acabar para as férias. Esta festa é sempre bom porque tem muitas jogos de verão com nadar, saltar na água.

Content and Communication: 7/12

The candidate addresses all four parts of the task, but some points lack sufficient development as they provide only limited information. The use of language and vocabulary often hinder effective communication, with errors such as "escolha" instead of "escola" (school) and "escecer" instead of "esquecer" (to forget).

Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy: 3/8

The candidate struggles with using tenses accurately. There are errors in using the future tense, like "vair ser" (going to be) and "vair acabar" (going to finish), as well as in the past tense with "eu participou" (I participated), which renders the writing somewhat ambiguous and more inaccurate than accurate.

Overall, the candidate's performance in Content and Communication is satisfactory, but there is room for improvement in fully developing points and enhancing language usage. Additionally, the candidate needs to work on using tenses correctly to improve Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy.

Examiner tip:

Candidates should:

Focus on language accuracy and vocabulary usage by paying attention to verb conjugations, especially in different tenses, which can significantly enhance the clarity and accuracy of their writing.

Expand vocabulary by learning new words and expressions related to the topics commonly covered in the exam. Building a strong vocabulary will enable them to convey their ideas more effectively and make their writing more engaging.

Practise regularly with writing exercises that specifically target different tenses can help the candidates become more comfortable and confident in using them accurately. They could also benefit from seeking feedback from teachers or native speakers to identify areas for improvement and receive guidance on how to enhance their language skills.

Additionally, the candidates should carefully proofread their writing to catch any spelling or grammatical errors before submitting their responses. This will help ensure that their communication is clear and precise.

Question 2 (a)

This question required candidates to write a formal letter to the mayor of the region convincing him/her to not close the leisure centre. This question was the most popular between 2a and 2b. A high number of candidates wrote more than 150 words in Portuguese. All words written by the candidates are considered and assessed even though the response is considerably longer than the recommended word count. For this question, some candidates did not understand what “centro de lazer” meant and wrote about “shopping centre” instead.

Candidates who scored more than 12 marks have effectively developed their points and justified their ideas. They have adapted the language they have used to narrate, inform, interest, and convince the reader of their ideas and points of view. There is a wide variety of vocabulary and expressions with frequent examples of uncommon language. The register and style were appropriate although there wasn't always a clear awareness of the need for writing in the formal register.

Candidates who scored between 8 to 11 marks wrote detailed information relevant to all 4 bullet points. They have mostly effectively developed their points and justified their ideas. They have adapted the language they have used to narrate, inform, interest, and convince the reader of their ideas and points of view quite well. There is a variety of vocabulary and expressions with frequent examples of uncommon language. The register and style were appropriate.

Candidates who scored between 4 to 7 marks have at times written detailed information relevant to all 4 bullet points, however in other instances some bullet points have lapses in communication. They have developed a limited number of points with more facts and straightforward opinions, which they fail to justify in length. The register and style are somewhat appropriate.

Candidates who scored between 0 to 3 marks have either not attempted to answer this response or they have partially responded to either one or two bullet points with limited amount of information, thus huge lapses in communication.

For Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy candidates who scored more than 10 marks wrote fluent responses with extended, well-linked sentences using a wide variety of structures. The overall impression of the response is a use of consistently accurate language, including consistently successful references to past, present and future events. Some answers were not completely faultless. However, those mistakes did not hinder the clarity of communication as they were balanced against the rich, wide-ranging vocabulary and structures that the candidates used.

Candidates who scored between 7 to 9 marks predominantly wrote fluent responses with extended, well-linked sentences using a variety of structures. The language is mostly accurate and includes mostly successful references to past, present and future events. Errors occur but they rarely hinder the clarity of the communication, for example spelling that derives from the English: *personalmente* and from Spanish: *fiesta*.

Candidates who scored between 4 to 6 marks exhibited a repetitive use of simple grammatical structures as well as simple language. There are some prolonged sequences of writing with some extended linked sentences, mostly using *porque*. The language ranges from generally accurate to somewhat accurate with either one or two successful references to past, present, and future events. Errors occur that occasionally or completely hinder the clarity of the communication.

Candidates who scored in between 0 to 3 marks, either have not attempted to provide an answer or they have exhibited a repetition of simple sentences, with repetitive vocabulary and simple structures. Errors occurred that hindered the clarity of the communication or there were huge interferences with other languages, such as Spanish and English. In some instances, the candidates attempted to make references to past, present and future events and have only been successful in one of them on one or two occasions.

The best responses to this question dedicated a paragraph to each bullet point, each with new ideas building into a persuasive overall argument and showed that the candidate had thought about how to include complex language. Less successful responses spent a long time introducing themselves rather than getting on with the task or repeated the same argument to address different bullet points. Some candidates struggled to demonstrate that they were addressing the bullet points directly, making it harder for the examiners to award them top marks for Communication & Content. Conversely, many candidates wrote very persuasively but did not use any complex language, thus limiting their mark for Linguistic Knowledge & Accuracy.

Senhor presidente,

Sei que o seu tempo é precioso então vou direto ao ponto. Não só eu como a maioria dos jovens amamos esse centro de lazer, já que ele oferece piscina, academia, pistas de skate e de patins, entre muitas outras coisas, ele também se encontra perto de centros comerciais e é perto da minha casa, o que é ótimo já que ~~ajuda meus pais~~ fica mais fácil para meus pais virem para aproveitar. Outro motivo pelo qual eu amo esse centro é porque ele é anti-racismo, sem preconceito, ~~também é isso~~ ~~o que~~ torna o lugar muito acolhedor e único.

107

A última vez que fui no centro de lazer, foi um dos melhores dias da minha vida! ~~Eu~~ ~~meus~~ amigos ficamos horas andando de patins e skate nas pistas, depois fomos dar um mergulho na piscina, o que foi divertidíssimo porque pude mostrar para meus amigos os truques que eu aprendi em aulas de natação. Mais tarde passamos no shopping ~~o~~ que fica perto do centro, compramos uns lanches e depois voltamos e ficamos na área comunitária, conversando e rindo muito.

137

Eu estou ciente que ~~voce~~ o senhor tem um motivo para ~~f~~ querer fechar o centro, porém, com todo o respeito, se o ~~sen~~ senhor fechar estará cometendo o maior erro de sua vida. Imagine ~~mil~~ centenas de adolescentes que amam e admiram esse centro com todo o coração, sem ter nada para fazer com o tempo livre porque o lugar favorito deles fechou, ou seja, não poderam mais ~~encont~~ socializar com ^{os} amigos, ou até conhecer gente nova, entrando em uma depressão ou ^{até} mesmo começando a ter vários ataques de ansiedade. O senhor não quer isso para a futura geração? 281

Contudo, eu acredito que para manter a sanidade da sua futura geração, e melhorar a vida dos jovens, o senhor prefeito não deve fechar o melhor centro de lazer da cidade.

This candidate excels in both Content and Communication as well as Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy.

Content and Communication: 16/16

In terms of Content and Communication, the candidate provides detailed and relevant information that effectively develops most key points and ideas. The language adaptation is consistently impressive, as they skillfully narrate, inform, interest, and persuade. The candidate creatively expresses a wide range of individual thoughts, ideas, and perspectives. Additionally, their use of vocabulary is varied and includes many examples of uncommon language, such as "eu estou ciente" (I am aware), "os truques" (the tricks), and "dar um mergulho" (take a dive). The register and style remain consistent and appropriate throughout the response.

Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy: 12/12

Regarding Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy, the candidate's performance is flawless, earning a full score of 12/12. They display a wide variety of grammatical structures, including complex language like the imperative ("Imagine"), superlative absolute ("divertidíssimo" - very fun), the present subjunctive ("ou seja" - in other words) and personal infinitive ("para os meus pais virem" - for my parents to

come). The response flows fluently with extended, well-linked sentences using conjunctions like "já que" (once) and "contudo" (however). The candidate demonstrates consistent accuracy in their language and structures, successfully referencing past, present, and future events. While there may be some minor errors, they do not hinder the clarity of communication.

Overall, this candidate's writing is exemplary, showcasing a high level of proficiency in Portuguese and effectively meeting the criteria set forth in the mark scheme.

Examiner tip:

Borrow language from the bullet points to introduce your response to each one. This makes it clearer to the examiner that you are addressing them.

Question 2 (b)

This question required candidates to write an opinion article aimed at motivating young people to consider their future careers and it was less popular than Q2(a). Some candidates misunderstood the term "professional courses" and wrote about any course, including those typically pursued at the university level, such as medicine, instead of focusing on vocational or skill-based courses. Similarly, some candidates also struggled with the term "competências" and failed to address that particular bullet point effectively in their responses.

Q4 required candidates to translate 5 sentences into Portuguese. The difficulty level increased with each task and specific vocabulary was required, so only the best candidates could achieve high marks. Most candidates were able to score a mark on each task for a partial translation. In future, candidates should familiarise themselves with the vocabulary list on the specification, since all of the words used for this question are taken from there.

Question 3

Q3 requires candidates to translate a short paragraph into Portuguese. The difficulty level increases with each sentence and specific vocabulary is required, so only the very best candidates can access the top category of the mark scheme. The majority of candidates were at least partially able to communicate the meaning of the passage, scoring around half marks.

3 Traduza o seguinte parágrafo para português.

My mother organises the music festival in Óbidos and I am going there tomorrow. The concerts will be in the open air or inside ancient churches. The best thing is that, despite the high quality of the musicians, it is free. Last year it was so magnificent that it even became famous abroad.

Minha mãe organiza o festival de música em Óbidos e eu vou lá amanhã. Os concertos serão em um local aberto ou dentro de igrejas antigas. A melhor coisa é que, apesar da boa qualidade (dos) dos músicos, é de graça. Ano passado o festival foi tão magnífico que até se tornou famoso pelo mundo.

12/12

The candidate scores full marks, because the meaning of the passage is fully communicated, and the language is largely accurate.

3 Traduza o seguinte parágrafo para português.

My mother organises the music festival in Óbidos and I am going there tomorrow. The concerts will be in the open air or inside ancient churches. The best thing is that, despite the high quality of the musicians, it is free. Last year it was so magnificent that it even became famous abroad.

~~My mother organises~~
Minha mãe organizou um festival de música em Óbidos e eu ^{vou} ir lá amanhã. O concerto será ao ar livre ou dentro de uma igreja. A melhor coisa é que, terá as melhores qualidades de músicas, e é de graça. Ano passado foi magnífico que até se tornou um festival famoso.

8/12

The candidate scores 8, because in some instances, the meaning of the passage was changed. Additionally, the candidate used the past tense instead of the present tense as stated in the original

passage. Furthermore, there were omissions of a few words, such as "so" and "abroad," which affected the full accuracy of the response.

Examiner tip

Check your translation thoroughly to make sure you haven't accidentally changed the meaning.

Paper Summary

Advice for future candidates:

Read each question carefully: Take your time to understand the requirements of each question. Pay attention to the tenses required, and make sure you address all aspects of the question in your response.

Familiarise yourself with the required tenses: Be aware that both essay questions will always require you to use the past, present, and future tenses. Practise writing in all these tenses to become more comfortable with using them effectively.

Avoid using words from other languages: Stick to using Portuguese and avoid using words from other languages like English or Spanish. If you encounter a term you don't know, try to explain it in Portuguese or use synonyms.

Watch out for repetition: Be mindful of repeating yourself in your writing. Aim to present diverse ideas and expressions to showcase your language skills.

Ensure accurate translations: If a translation task is included, double-check that your translation conveys all the words and meaning from the original English text. Pay attention to spelling and grammar to maintain accuracy.

Look at past papers: Review questions from previous exam papers to become familiar with the format and expectations of the writing tasks. This will help you feel more confident on the day of the exam.

Practice developing ideas: Work on developing ideas in the past, present, and future tenses. Practice writing extended sentences and linking thoughts coherently to demonstrate a strong grasp of language.

