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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Portuguese (1PG0)

Paper 4H: 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 2024 Portuguese Higher Writing Paper

Question 1

Candidates were required to respond to a set of four bullet points that encompassed the past, present, and future.

1 (a) asked candidates to write an email to a teacher about having lessons on Saturdays, while part. It 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' opinions about having lessons on Saturdays and there were very good reasons given to persuade the teachers not to add lessons on Saturdays.

1 (b) instructed them to write a letter to their friend, Joana, telling their opinion about the social network. It was less favoured by candidates, but a substantial number of students still wrote about their opinions on the social network and addressed all the bullet points.

The top marks for Communication & Content were awarded to candidates who elaborated on all four points and provided personal responses with justifications. For Linguistic Knowledge & Accuracy, candidates showed variable success in transitioning between different tenses. The highest category of the mark scheme called for the occasional use of

complex language, and some candidates demonstrated this by employing the subjunctive and the personal infinitive in rare cases. However, general inaccuracies posed significant issues. Many candidates exhibited interference from English and missing accents were commonly observed. Additionally, Spanish words were frequently used, which was not appropriate for the Portuguese examination.

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

Candidates were instructed to write a response to a set of four bullet points that referred to both the present and the future.

2 (a) candidates had to write an article exposing their ideas and encouraging the youngsters to protect the planet.

2 (b), they were asked to write a letter to the leisure centre's manager convincing him/her to include activities for the young people. This response was overwhelmingly more popular than 2a.

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.

Candidates who scored more than 12 marks for Communication & Content 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: *cuando*.

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.

This candidate apart from showing a very organised writing: a paragraph per bullet point, also excels in both Content and Communication as well as Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy.

Content and Communication:

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 skilfully 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. The register and style remain consistent and appropriate throughout the response.

Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy:

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 use of adjectives, the present subjunctive and personal infinitive. The response flows fluently with extended, well-linked sentences using conjunctions. 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.

This candidate scores 7 for Content and Communication and 5 for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy.

Content and Communication:

In terms of Content and Communication, the candidate communicates information relevant to the task with the development of some key points and ideas. However, these ideas are mainly straightforward. Additionally, their use of vocabulary consists of common and familiar language.

Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy:

Regarding Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy, the candidate's use of grammar involves straightforward structures with occasional repetition. The candidate links ideas together but uses straightforward conjunctions. Nonetheless, the candidate shows some accurate language and structures, including some successful references to past and future events. On some occasions, the errors create ambiguity and hinder the clarity of communication. Therefore, this candidate could not score more than 5 for the category.

Examiner tip:

To improve their performance, the candidates should focus on expanding their vocabulary by learning and using more varied and sophisticated words, avoiding repetition. They should also work on developing their ideas in more detail, providing examples, explanations, and additional relevant information. Using a range of sentence structures, including complex sentences and varied sentence types, will make their writing more dynamic. Practising

fluency through activities like language exchange conversations or timed writing exercises can help with overall fluency and confidence. For linguistic knowledge and accuracy, the candidate should review grammar rules, especially those that are commonly problematic, and use a variety of grammatical structures, including different tenses and moods. They should work on using a wider range of conjunctions and connectives to link ideas more effectively. Regular practice in identifying and correcting errors will help become more aware of common mistakes and improve accuracy. Consistent practice is crucial, so dedicating time each day to writing or speaking exercises and seeking feedback will help solidify correct language use and reduce errors.

Question 3

This question requires candidates to translate a short paragraph into Portuguese. The difficulty level increases with each sentence and specific vocabulary are 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.

Examiner tip

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

Paper Summary

Advice for future candidates:

This report outlines key areas for improvement and strategies to enhance student performance in the component assessment.

- 1. Understanding Questions:** Students need to carefully read and comprehend each question before responding. Specific attention must be given to the required tenses, with Question 2 always necessitating the future tense, and Question 3 requiring both past and future tenses.
- 2. Consistent Language Use:** It is imperative for students to write exclusively in Portuguese, avoiding the use of words from other languages such as English or Spanish. When encountering unfamiliar terms, students should describe them in Portuguese or find synonyms, using creativity to express their ideas.
- 3. Familiarity with Exam Format:** Students should review past exam papers to become familiar with the types of questions and the format of the writing tasks. This practice will help them feel more comfortable and better prepared for the actual exam.
- 4. Tense Practice:** 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.
- 5. Feedback and Review:** Obtaining feedback from teachers or native speakers is crucial. This process will help students identify areas needing improvement and enhance their writing skills through constructive criticism.
- 6. Practise developing ideas:** Students should work on expanding their vocabulary by learning new words and expressions relevant to various topics. A broader vocabulary will enable them to express their ideas more effectively and demonstrate higher language proficiency. 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.

7. Organised Writing: Students should structure their responses clearly and coherently, using paragraphs to separate different ideas. Logical flow and clear organisation are key to presenting well-structured arguments and descriptions.

8. Time Management: Practicing writing within the time limits of the exam will help students manage their time more effectively during the actual test, ensuring they can complete all tasks within the allocated timeframe.

9. Ensure Accurate Translations: 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.

By implementing these strategies, students can improve their performance and achieve better results in their assessments. It is essential to integrate these practices into their regular study routines to build competence and confidence in their language skills.