

PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE

Paper 8684/01
Speaking

Key messages

Although more Centres followed the instructions in the Mark Scheme, there are some others which still conducted **Sections 1, 2 and 3** differently to the regulations in the Mark Scheme and, as a result, some candidates lost marks through no fault of their own..

In order to perform well in **Section 1** and avoid losing marks unnecessarily, candidates must demonstrate knowledge of the contemporary society or cultural heritage of a country where Portuguese is spoken. Centres should give candidates some guidance about which topics best lend themselves to this. Candidates who achieved a high mark presented a topic about the Portuguese-speaking world in **Section 1**. Candidates should not spend more than 3 and a half minutes talking about their topic.

In **Section 2**, the strongest candidates were able to seek information and the opinions of the Examiner with a high level of accuracy and by using a range of question forms. In some cases where the candidates did not do this, the best prepared Examiners prompted the candidates to ask him/her question by using a range of pertinent questions and different question forms.

In **Section 3**, candidates performed the best when the Examiners had prepared questions about the candidate's background and interests, but were also able to discuss more abstract areas and/or current issues within the general topic areas. In some instances, candidates lost marks because they did not ask questions in **Sections 2 and 3**.

General comments

Most Examiners were sympathetic and made the candidates feel at ease. Examiners should familiarise themselves thoroughly with the requirements of the exam to ensure that candidates can access the full range of marks, and that their marks accurately reflect, not only their level of ability and linguistic proficiency, but also their performance in the test as it has been set. Examiners are reminded not to ask long and complex questions or give long answers in order to maximise the candidate's opportunity to express themselves.

In addition, candidates should not present themselves in **Section 1** and they should not be interrupted in this Section either. However, in **Sections 2 and 3**, Examiners should invite candidates to ask questions so that candidates do not lose marks.

Marks can only be awarded for the completion of tasks set by CIE so it is vital that Teachers/Examiners adhere to the tasks specified in the syllabus- this is done to ensure a level playing field for all candidates.

Administration

Some centres did not complete or send the MS1 form to CIE. This form needs to be properly completed as there is a carbon copy and if Examiners are not careful, the marks are difficult to read.

Please remember to fill in the mark grid with the correct mark and also write the total mark in the slot for 'Mark'.

There were also instances where centres did not correctly transfer marks from the Working Mark Sheet to the MS1 form. Also, there were some arithmetical errors. It is important to ask a colleague to double check that the marks were transferred and added correctly.

Quality of recording

Centres and Examiners are reminded that the recorded examinations they send to CIE should be double checked to see if the candidates were recorded and if the sound is clear for the marks to be moderated.

It is important to clearly label the CDs and their cover with Centre number, component and syllabus number as well as the Candidate numbers. CDs should only contain AS or A Level recordings rather other qualifications as well.

CDs should be protected and wrapped properly so that the CDs are not broken or damaged in transit.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

The strongest performances were of candidates whose presentation included references to the culture of Portuguese-speaking countries. In these cases, candidates were able to deliver their presentations with reference to their cue cards, some illustrative material, such as maps, diagrams, statistics, pictures or short articles. These presentations flowed naturally, were delivered within the time prescribed and provided plenty of opportunities for a fruitful exchange of ideas between the Examiner and the candidates in **Section 2**. Candidates are reminded that they should not speak for more than 3 and a half minutes and should not introduce or talk about themselves. They should start the examination by saying what their topic is and start presenting it immediately.

Section 2

In this Section, the strongest performances were of candidates whose presentations provided material for at least 6 questions. Well-prepared examiners were able to get the best out of the candidates by asking mostly open-ended questions. The best candidates were able to access the full range of marks because they asked the Examiner questions. It is important to remember that this should be a two-way conversation that lasts 7-8 minutes, and is not a continuation of the topic presentation.

Please mark sure that the transition between **Sections 2** and **3** is announced.

Section 3

Good performances in **Section 3** started off with an interaction about the candidates' background and interested, but quickly moved on to a conversation about issues within the general topic areas listed in the syllabus. Examiners were well prepared and asked a variety of open-ended pertinent questions to elicit rich responses from candidates, thereby giving them access to the full range of marks.

Examiners chose a good range of topics. Some examples were candidates' free time activities, future plans, studies, living abroad, Facebook, employment and unemployment for young people, living in the city and in the countryside and so on.

Examiners are reminded to vary the topics discussed in this Section if they have more than one candidate. In addition, the topics in **Section 3** should be different to the topic presented by the candidate in **Section 1** and discussed in **Section 2**.

Examiners are also reminded that the start of this Section should be announced clearly and that it should last between 8 and 9 minutes.

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Paper 8684/02
Reading and Writing

Key messages

Candidates should carry on making an effort to write as clearly as possible and ensure their handwriting is legible. Texts should be read carefully and bullet point answers should be avoided. Candidates should use their own words as much as possible and not copy full sentences from the text. Answers should be planned and re-read at the end to avoid repetition and mistakes.

To score full marks in this paper, candidates had to demonstrate that they had read and understood the texts and could express themselves clearly. Quality of Language is also important in order to achieve a high mark, therefore candidates should display a good command of the language by spelling words correctly, varying the way they start their sentences and showing a good grasp of grammatical structures.

General comments

The stronger candidates revealed a good level of familiarity with the format of the paper and the required tasks. There were, however, some whose level of linguistic competence was over-stretched by what was being asked of them.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question required candidates to find a word or a phrase in Text 1 which had the same meaning as the definitions given in (a) to (e). The words given were of a similar level and frequency to those encountered in papers of previous years and most candidates were able to find the correct words/phrases. Candidates should take care that the word or words they choose from the text correspond grammatically with those they provide, that all elements are included in their answers, and that extra unnecessary words are not written. On 1(a) *formação* or *experiência profissional* were both accepted and on 1(b) *estudos (de mercado)* was also accepted but on 1(d) *desconfiar* or *desconfiança* on its own didn't make sense, candidates needed to write the whole expression *vê com desconfiança* to have the full mark. Some candidates also wrote two different words for examiners to choose the correct one, but even when one of the two is the correct word we cannot accept it as an answer.

Question 2

This question required candidates to re-express sentences from the text beginning with phrases provided in the question and demonstrate their knowledge of grammar. This proved to be challenging for many candidates. Answers should not contain spelling mistakes, including incorrect accents where applicable, and unnecessary additions. Details should not be omitted in this exercise. The only changes to be made to these sentences are those grammatical and syntactical ones that the new introductory words elicit. Accuracy is crucial in this task and candidates have to make it very clear which spelling and accentuation is used in their answers.

Question 3

This Question assessed candidates' ability to paraphrase in Portuguese. Occasionally, candidates wrote lengthy answers instead of being selective in their wording, or relied too heavily on 'lifting' complete phrases from the text.

- (a) The vast majority of candidates got 3 points for their answer.
- (b) Most candidates wrote that the parents wanted them to work for big companies because they would have more chances of being successful (1 mark) but they did not mention how good it was to work for these companies.
- (c), (d) Both of these questions were answered correctly by most candidates.
- (e) Candidates were able to identify at least two of the reasons why Tiago wanted to become an entrepreneur.
- (f) Some candidates lifted too much information from the text and sometimes not the correct one.

Section 2

Question 4

- (b), (c) Many candidates repeated themselves in these questions.
- (d) Not all candidates mentioned the trust that families and the public in general had in the company *NannyCare*.
- (f) Many candidates managed to get 3 marks for this question.

Question 5

It appears that candidates are unnecessarily concerned of being penalised for not introducing the topic but it is easy to waste 25% of the available words on this for no reward. The word limit is already quite tight so candidates need to make the point as succinctly as possible. Candidates also need to refer to both texts for the information they need in order to get the 10 marks available for content.

It is recommended that candidates count carefully the number of words that they have used and record them at the end of their answer. The most successful candidates often showed clear evidence of planning, drafting and editing their material with the word limit in mind.

- (b) Most candidates gave reasonable answers.

PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE

Paper 8684/03
Essay

General Comments

Many excellent responses which were generally accurate. With regard to content, they were detailed and clearly relevant. The strongest candidates were able to use accurate sentence patterns, avoid persistent errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling and accentuation.

Candidates need to think about their ideas before writing an essay and organise them with an introduction, development and conclusion.

The words and phrases shown below seemed to be particularly challenging for some candidates:

Punctuation

Candidates need to be aware that a lack of punctuation can prevent the precise transfer and flow of ideas. Here are some examples:

| Some candidates' punctuation | Correct punctuation |
|--|---|
| A igualdade de oportunidades, é uma coisa que deveria... | A igualdade de oportunidades é uma coisa que deveria... (The subject cannot be separated from the verb and the word 'coisa' (thing) should be avoided.) |
| Muitos acham também, que mulher tem que ... | Muitos acham também que mulher tem que ... (The object cannot be separated from the verb.) |
| Obesidade também causa problemas emocionais como a depressão, nesses casos a família e amigos teriam ... | A obesidade também causa problemas emocionais como a depressão. Nesses casos, a família e amigos teriam... (A full stop is necessary because there is a full sentence after that.) |
| Muitos podem ser contra mas eu acho que ... | Muitos podem ser contra, mas eu acho que ... (A comma is needed before some conjunctions.) |

Some good examples are:

| |
|---|
| Infelizmente, nos dias de hoje, não há desporto sem dinheiro, pois estes encontram-se ... |
| Em primeiro lugar, as crianças são vítimas dos hábitos alimentares dos pais, visto que são estes que, maioritariamente, os alimentam. |
| Apesar do ritmo alucinante em que as famílias vivem atualmente, os pais devem estabelecer horários ... |
| ... os produtos que compramos, por exemplo, no Pinto contêm ... |

Spelling

Candidates need to be aware that for an essay to achieve a good mark, spelling is also important. Here are some examples:

| Some candidates' spelling | Correct spelling |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| estaram | estarão |
| opnião | opinião |
| mudão | mudam |
| ofrecer | oferecer |
| feiz | fez |
| durmir | dormir |
| adulshentes | adolescentes |
| tá | está |

Accentuation

The correct use of accentuation is also important for candidates to achieve a high mark. Here are some examples:

| Some candidates' accentuation | Correct accentuation |
|---|--|
| pais | país (If an accent is not used, it means 'parents' and not 'country'.) |
| nos | nós (If an accent is not used, it means 'us' and not 'we'.) |
| As vezes as pessoas tem que comprar ... | Às vezes as pessoas têm que comprar ... (If an accent is not used in 'as vezes', it means 'the times' and not 'at times'. Also, an accent on 'têm' is necessary to differentiate from the singular form, which is 'tem'.) |
| hávera | haverá |
| adêquada | adequada |
| benefiçiar | beneficiar |
| tambem | também |

Singular and Plural

Here are some examples:

| Some candidates' examples | Correct examples |
|--|--|
| Todas essas formas de melhorar o padrão de vida das pessoas, não vai melhorar o estado econômico ... | Todas essas formas de melhorar o padrão de vida das pessoas não vão melhorar o estado econômico ... (Candidates need to be aware that when the subject is long, they need to be careful and make sure that the verb agrees with the subject.) |
| ... manter os preços baixo... | ... manter os preços baixos... (The adjective has to agree with the noun.) |
| ... existe maneiras de obter o mesmo ... | ... existem maneiras de obter o mesmo... (‘Maneiras’ is plural, so the verb has to agree with it.) |
| coisas triste | Coisas tristes (The adjective should agree with the noun.) |
| Todas as pessoas deveria ter... | Todas as pessoas deveriam ter ... (The verb needs to agree with the subject.) |

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question about food and drinks was specifically about measures that should be taken to prevent the consumption of harmful food and drink, rather than causes and consequences. There were many excellent responses and the best responses wrote that there should be campaigns organised by the government to make people aware of healthy food, that schools should ban soft drinks, and there should be legislation to make sure that adverts on TV promote healthy food.

Question 2

Many candidates wrote excellent responses to this question. Some candidates wrote that people need to have the same opportunities and gave examples because the question asked candidates to justify their answers. Some candidates said that women are still struggling to have the same pay as men and that black people either have no jobs or low-paid ones. They also said that equality of opportunities is necessary to maintain a good economy and social structure.

Question 3

In this question, candidates had to express their views about the relationship between sports and money. Some candidates wrote that money is connected to sports and gave very good examples. On the negative side, they wrote that this connection can lead to corruption, illegal betting and money laundering. On the positive side, they wrote that this connection between money and sports helps provide more jobs, improves tourism and clubs can buy state-of-the art equipment. They also mentioned that clubs generate money by selling their products and also that star sportsmen are important to attract more money.

Question 4

This question was about how to improve people's standard of living. Some candidates mentioned that studying is important to have a good standard of life in the future and that socialising and communicating with other people is necessary because the ability to relate to others affects our performance in the market and helps develop our economy. Health and potable water were also necessary.

Question 5

Candidates had to write about the advantages and disadvantages of keeping animals in danger of extinction in zoos. Some candidates organised their writing very well because their first paragraphs consisted of an introduction, the second paragraph was about the advantages with examples, the third paragraph was about the disadvantages with examples and the last one was the conclusion.

Some advantages were that animals at risk of extinction can be looked after and then freed, that they can procreate and that it is good to keep them in zoos for children to learn about them. Some disadvantages were that they can become dependent on human beings, that the area where they are kept is small and that it is not advisable to take animals in danger of extinction out of their natural habitat. The best responses talked specifically about animals in danger of extinction rather than wild animals in general.