

PORTUGUESE

GCE Advanced Level and GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

Papers 8684/01 and 9718/01
Speaking

General comments

In **Section 1** candidates spoke in ways which reflected knowledge of the contemporary society of the country where the language is spoken. The majority of candidates presented relevant facts, expressed opinions and put forward points for discussion.

Examiners were ready to prompt candidates whenever this was necessary and encouraged them to contribute as much as possible. At times some Examiners tended to dominate the conversation and made the mistake of entering into an overly personal discussion with too much attention to the validity of the candidates' opinions, which are not in question in this examination. In one case an Examiner began to correct the candidate's Portuguese, giving the impression that this was more like a lesson than an oral examination. Please note that corrections of this kind should not be attempted during the oral examination itself. In addition, one Examiner began to drift into giving personal counselling and advice to the candidate which although potentially helpful, should not figure in an examination of this kind.

The examination is divided between three sections: **Section 1** — presentation; **Section 2** — conversation; and **Section 3** — general conversation. It would be very helpful if the Examiner could state which of the three sections is being covered as the exam progresses.

In general, conversations were lively, spontaneous and informative. Teachers' assessments of this component were fair and accurate and the agreed standard was applied to all candidates.

Papers 8664/02, 8684/02 and 9718/02
Reading and Writing

General comments

Most candidates coped well with most of the questions.

However, once again, this year many showed weaknesses in various aspects of grammar and some did not even spell correctly words that they borrowed from the question paper. Many candidates wrote excessively long answers without much regard to grammar.

Some candidates did not ensure their handwriting was immediately legible. Candidates should make a special effort in the exam to ensure their answers can be read with ease.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

Many candidates answered most of this question correctly and a few gained full marks.

There was no pattern to wrong answers, which included the following:

- (a) *decididos; certeza; desistir; confidentes.*
- (b) *puros; putrefacto; paiol de doenças; puras; impuros; contaminado.*
- (c) *mover; literalmente; estável; desapareciam-me; levou.*
- (d) *recomeçar.*
- (e) *durou; fraco; forte.*

Question 2

Most candidates answered most parts correctly but again, only a few gained full marks. Sometimes candidates quoted whole sentences rather than precise parts of them. Wrong answers included:

- (a) *não acontece sempre; determinadas a recomeçar, as vezes; recomeçar a vida a partir de zero; voragem; madrugada; fugindo às fúrias das águas.*
- (b) *avaliavam; acampamento.*
- (c) *roubariam tudo que tenho; furtar, não podia perder de vista a casa; perdeu tudo.*
- (d) *continuar a trabalhar, sobrevivente; vencido; não abriu mão; deu por vencido.*
- (e) *pensaram; nunca mais dali saíram; incrivelmente rija.*

Question 3

Many candidates answered all parts well, but few gained full marks because the required number of details was not given for each answer and/or the quality of language was not good. Some candidates copied word for word from the text.

Section 2

Question 4

Many candidates answered all parts well, but the quality of language of many was not good. Some candidates wrote excessively long answers, usually with irrelevant material about poverty in Brazil that was not written in the text. Sometimes the required number of details was not given and/or the same details were repeated for two or more answers.

Question 5

Candidates had to write a total of 140 words for both parts of the question. Many wrote well in excess of this number and some wrote 140 for each part and they therefore did not gain the 5 marks allocated for part (b), unless they happened to have included the answer to this part in the first 140 words. It is important that candidates read and adhere to instructions.

Candidates were often repetitive, included unnecessarily long introductions and failed to include many points. Some did not seem to know how to summarise in their own words.

The quality of language of many candidates was not good.

General comments

Many scripts showed a high degree of organisation of ideas in paragraphs with introduction, development and conclusion. These were well illustrated with clear examples. Some candidates planned and organised their ideas before writing and showed an ability to develop an argument. There were some excellent essays.

However, there were also some poor ones. Either the ideas were not organised in paragraphs or the lack of punctuation made the message difficult to deliver. Some sentences were very long without punctuation or conjunctions to link them. At times the ideas were not well illustrated and so the candidates failed to develop an argument properly. The areas that caused most concern were accents, spelling, singular and plural and punctuation. Ideas were not always put forward very clearly due to lack of vocabulary. Some candidates repeated the same word several times. On the other hand, there were some very good examples of expressions, the subjunctive, linking words and vocabulary.

Some candidates wrote as they speak. They should be aware of the difference between spoken and written language. A few scripts were longer than the number of words required and some had very difficult handwriting that hindered understanding.

Candidates should read the question very carefully and then answer it; they should not merely write about the topic. Centres should advise the candidates to brainstorm the question, organise the ideas into paragraphs, and then ensure that the sentences progress in a logical way with the appropriate use of linking words.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Only 1 candidate attempted to answer this question. However, the candidate did not answer the question specifically enough, but tended to talk about the topic in vague terms.

There were some mistakes regarding accents such as *Ângola*, *páz*, *esperança*. There were some mistakes with singular and plural such as *a lingua portuguesa e a cultura está vivamente presente...*

The paragraphs were clear and organised.

Question 2

Twelve candidates attempted this question. A few candidates did not answer the question, but wrote about the topic. There was one excellent script with good examples, organised paragraphs, correct punctuation and varied linking words.

There were some good examples of the subjunctive such as *um bom emprego seja ele qual for ...*, but also some mistakes: *as pessoas que procurem*.

Spelling was good on the whole but there were some mistakes such as *resintos*, *iram* instead of *irão*; wrong accents such as: *obedeçer*; bad punctuation: *O tipo de emprego que esta pessoa vai ter que arranjar vai ser um que, não permite...*

Some pronouns were used wrongly, eg: *saber valorizar-los*.

Candidates should be aware of the difference between spoken and written language. Some wrote words as they say them, for example *custuma*, *...tou a referir à percentagem*.

In general the scripts were very good with organised paragraphs. Some candidates brainstormed ideas before writing. Most candidates wrote an introduction, developed ideas in paragraphs and were able to draw conclusions.

Some were very creative and one interesting sentence was *É melhor prevenir do que não ter a sua própria liberdade*.

Question 3

Twelve candidates attempted this question. Some candidates wrote about the topic, Technological Innovations, but did not answer the question (What are the advantages and disadvantages of shopping on the Internet?). Some others wrote about the advantages but not about the disadvantages and some were not able to develop an argument. Some candidates just listed the advantages and disadvantages but did not link them in complete sentences or paragraphs. Some sentences were very long without the correct punctuation.

However, there were some very good examples with good arguments and conclusions. The writing was generally relevant and demonstrated sound knowledge of the topic.

Some of the mistakes were:

- Singular and plural: *Compras pela Internet pode facilitar...*, *coisas estão distante*, etc.
- Spelling: *eficiente*, *persissa*, *usão* instead of *usam* and some candidates wrote as they say the words: *...pessoas que não tenham...*, *concedrado*, etc.
- Accents: *cheguei a conclusão*.

Question 4

Thirteen candidates wrote about this, but some misunderstood the question and wrote about War and Peace, but did not answer the specific question. Some forgot to talk about the causes and consequences, others wrote about the causes but not the consequences and vice-versa. Very few scripts talked about the causes and when they did, these were not very well illustrated.

Lack of punctuation made reading difficult. Spelling mistakes were as follows: *murrerem*, *terrorismo*, *inucentes*, *tivesse* instead of *estivesse*, *teram* instead of *terão*, etc. Candidates should be aware of the difference between spoken and written language.

The future form was used wrongly: *... seus filhos nunca passaram* (instead of *passarão*) *fome...*

The subjunctive was used wrongly: *É provável que continuam a lutar...*

Candidates should be aware of how to use capital and small letters. Some mistakes were: *É através dela que muitos Países não ...* and *... um país que não Produz...*

Some candidates wrote more than the word limit and others wrote sentences and paragraphs without full stops. However, there were some excellent examples with clear paragraphs and very well illustrated arguments.

Question 5

No candidates attempted this question.

Question 6

Eight candidates attempted this question. There were some very good examples with introduction, development of arguments and conclusion. The arguments were very well illustrated and some had very strong feelings about the question and showed this very well with excellent examples.

Owing to poor vocabulary, some arguments were not presented clearly and some used the wrong word such as *perca de tempo*.

Some mistakes were:

- Subjunctive and punctuation: *... não acho que nós como jovens queremos passar por isso.*
- Singular and plural: *...nisso origina-se as discussões...*
- Spelling: *disperdicio*, *disenteresse*, *intereçarem*, etc.

Once again, candidates should be aware of the difference between spoken and written language. They should also avoid writing very long sentences. They should try to use linking words and improve punctuation. Paragraphs should be clear and deal with only one topic with good examples. Planning is also important to avoid repetition of ideas and words.

Papers 8664/04, 8672/04 and 9718/04

Texts

General comments

The majority of candidates were able to answer the passage questions well and to write an organised and coherent essay. The best of them knew the texts and managed to express themselves in accurate language. They knew how to write an essay and how to approach a text and analyse it.

Less able candidates had difficulty not only with the language but also seemed to be unsure of what was expected of them. They either had not read the texts, or if they had, did not know how to use them. Some retold the story without addressing the question at all. A few just copied bits of the book when answering the question. Some candidates failed to answer the correct number of questions and some of them also failed to make clear which question was being attempted.

However, it was encouraging to see that most candidates were well prepared and were capable of very articulate work.