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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

PORTUGUESE

GCE Advanced Level and GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

<p>Papers 8684/01 and 9718/01 Speaking</p>
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General comments

The maximum mark for the Speaking is 100, divided into three sections: presentation 20 marks, topic conversation 40 marks, and general conversation 40 marks.

Presentation

Most candidates did well in this section with clearly thought out presentations covering a wide range of subjects. Many candidates chose the same topic, related to Euro 2004. Unfortunately some of them did not seem to have undertaken much research on the subject.

Topic conversation

The Examiners interacted well with the candidates encouraging their participation without interfering with the flow of answers to questions (a problem evident in the previous year). The candidates were at ease and were better able to articulate their ideas. Some candidates, however, failed to develop their ideas. For example some opted to talk about food and diet but failed to mention eating disorders or common preoccupations with the appearance of the body.

General conversation

Some candidates found it difficult to sustain the level of content and discussion which meant that the Examiner had to work hard to maintain the conversation. On a number of occasions candidates went too far in engaging the Examiner in questions, seeking their feelings and opinions, rather than articulating their own.

Overall

Candidates showed a good level of skill in the use of language and vocabulary, although a few grammatical mistakes were evident.

Some Centres seemed keen to prolong the examination, but in most cases this was not necessary. For both the Examiner and Moderator preparation and quality of content are more important than the length of the presentation.

Not all Centres ensured that the cassettes were clearly marked indicating the candidate's number, name and the number of the Centre.

Moderators would like to thank the Examiners for their preparation and for ensuring that the candidates were well prepared.

Papers 8684/02 and 9718/02
Reading and Writing

General comments

Most candidates coped well with this paper.

Problems occurred when candidates were not able to express themselves clearly. Many candidates demonstrated a poor knowledge of grammar and spelling, including of words they borrowed from the texts.

Many candidates did not ensure their handwriting was immediately legible and the presentation of some candidates' work made it difficult to read their scripts.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

Most candidates answered most or all sub-questions correctly. There was no sub-question that candidates consistently answered inaccurately.

Question 2

Most candidates answered most or all sub-questions correctly. Inaccurate answers included the following:

- (a) *se no futuro estarem*
- (b) *para que ser mais fácil; para que será mais fácil*
- (c) *... temos ter tratados...; ... estamos tratados...*
- (d) *Os patrões deve tratar...; Os patrões tratarem...*
- (e) *Que tinham fugir...; ... tinham passado a vida a fugir...; ... tinham vivendo fugindo...*

Question 3

Most candidates answered all parts correctly.

Section 2

Question 4

Most candidates answered all parts correctly.

Question 5

Although many candidates coped well with this question, many did not follow instructions and wrote well in excess of the required 140 words for both parts **(a)** and **(b)**.

<p>Papers 8684/03 and 9718/03</p>
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<p>Essay</p>

General comments

In general questions were answered well with clear paragraphs, and answers were well illustrated and relevant. On the whole candidates developed arguments and drew conclusions well. However, there was a significant proportion of weak scripts this year.

There were a few candidates who did not answer the question or misunderstood it. Centres should guide the candidates to answer the question and not merely write about the topic, for example: *O conflito de gerações* or *Guerra e Paz*. Some scripts clearly showed that the candidate brainstormed the topic before writing the essay, whereas others did not. Candidates should be aware that essays need an introduction, development and conclusion. A few scripts did not have a conclusion. Centres should help the candidates brainstorm ideas and organise their ideas in paragraphs to avoid repetition of words and ideas.

Some candidates were not aware of the correct verb form or tense to use and mixed these, making it difficult to understand the context. Some scripts were very weak and showed no grasp of the language. There were persistent errors and limited vocabulary which impeded understanding.

Centres should guide candidates about how to choose questions. Candidates should attempt the question they feel most confident about, for which they have sound arguments to put forward and good examples to write about. Choosing the right question is very important.

Punctuation

Many errors occurred in punctuation. Commas were frequently used instead of full stops. The most common mistake occurred when adding extra information; this was not separated by commas. Some examples: *É lógico que como é mais barato as pessoas vão comprar...*, *Esta boa apresentação que poderá parecer insignificante é o que puxa realmente as pessoas...*, etc.

Some candidates separated the object from the verb by a comma, or the subject from the verb by a comma. Some examples are: *A Guerra tem sido, um problema...*, *A Guerra no Iraque, foi...*, etc.

Sometimes there was just a flow of ideas without punctuation. For example: *...explodem cinco minas por dia os idosos são obrigados a...*

Spelling

Another common problem was the wrong spelling of words such as: *duaz*, *vosse*, *aver* (=haver), *heramos* (*éramos*), etc.

Some candidates wrote the way they speak. For example: *crião* (=criam), *fluentmente*, *podíamos*, *duenças*, *consucuencias*, *tamos* (=estamos), *disvantagem*, etc.

Há was written by a simple *a* when used with time. Examples: *a 500 anos*, *a bastante tempo*, etc.

Candidates should be aware that there is a difference between spoken and written language.

Accents

This was another problematic area. There were lots of words without an accent or with the wrong accent. Some examples were: *varias*, *e claro*, *tambêm*, *portuguêses*, *jôvem*, *possivel*, etc. Frequent words such as *e* (=é) and *nao* did not have an accent.

Cedillas were unnecessarily used. Here are some examples: *açeitam*, *nasçer*, *ambiçiosos*, etc.

Candidates should remember that accents contribute to accuracy, and that they are important.

Verbs

Some mistakes were:

- Subject in the plural and verb in the singular. For example: *O stress e agitação da vida dos pais pode ser....*
- Wrong verb form. For example: *eu nasceu, eu falou*, etc.
- Wrong tense. Examples: *...podem mostram filmes...., as pessoas preferam...* (when the subjunctive is not required), *É verdade que isto não reflecta...., ...as pessoas que compram e comam....*, etc.

Gender

Words ending in *ema* are masculine. Some mistakes were: *uma grande problema, as mesmas problemas*, etc.

Some other mistakes were: *as pessoas portuguesas, um outro maneira, ...são do outro religião*, etc.

In general there were not many mistakes in this area.

Pronouns

Objective and reflexive pronouns were used wrongly. For example: *antes de casarem* (omission of the reflexive pronoun), *Os pais da nova geração não se compreendem o porque...., transmitindo-no*, etc.

Some pronouns were not hyphenated and were written as one word such as: *magualo, preparase, livralos*, etc.

However, in general the use of pronouns was good.

Prepositions

In general they were used correctly, but the contraction of the preposition and feminine article (the *crase*) was not used in some cases. For example: *as duas ou três da manhã regressavam a casa*.

Some other mistakes: *Gostaria comentar* (preposition *de* missing), *canais dependem nas audiências* (*das* would be the correct form), *expressar da minha opinião*, etc.

First language interference

There was first language interference in the use of articles (*Religião é um grande causa...., jovens nunca pensaram....*, etc), and vocabulary. For example: *a coisa muito mais importante, não há nada a fazer com a paz* (there is nothing to do with peace), *em facto* (in fact), *a natura humana, No meu visto*, etc.

Capital letters

A few candidates used capital letters when it was not necessary and small letters instead of capitals. Some examples are: *Para Finalizar, os Pais, inglaterra, o Dilema, neste Século*, etc.

Candidates should not mix small and capital letters, and should remember that a capital letter is used after a full stop.

Good examples

There were some very good examples of the use of link words and the variety was also very good. Some examples are: *...visto que a sua produção...., ...dado que não se dirige...., ...pois possibilita o crescimento...., ...à medida que o filho cresce....*, etc. Conjunctions such as: *contudo, porém, pois, não obstante*, etc, were also used.

Candidate should link sentences appropriately to avoid repetition of words and for clearer understanding of the content.

There were also some good examples of the subjunctive. For example: *... sem que esse fizesse mal algum...., Se houver un diálogo...., Seja qual for o país....*, etc.

Paragraphs in general were indented and clear.

Advice to candidates

- Read the question carefully and answer all parts of it. When writing, refer back to the question constantly to make sure you are answering all parts of it.
- Do not write about the topic. Answer the question.
- Choose the question you have arguments for and feel confident about. Select wisely.
- Brainstorm your ideas before writing to avoid repetition of ideas and vocabulary. Vary your language.
- Organise your ideas in paragraphs.
- Remember to include an introduction, development and conclusion.
- Study the rules of punctuation, mainly how to use commas, full stops, semi-colons and colons.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Most candidates did not answer the question, but wrote about the topic *O mundo de língua portuguesa*. Centres should guide the candidates on this matter. Some others invented their own topic and wrote about Portuguese television or understood that the Portuguese-speaking countries are not known all over the world.

Question 2

There were some very good scripts with good arguments and clear paragraphs without repetition of ideas. Some were well illustrated. Candidates gave examples concerning countries such as England and Germany. Some compared the generation under Salazar and the present generation.

However, a large number of scripts for this particular question were too general and ideas were repeated, indicating a lack of planning. Some introductions were long and did not address the topic. The question asked for examples about the candidate's own country, and these were not given.

Candidates should refer to the question when they are writing so that they do not forget to answer all parts of it.

Question 3

Some candidates wrote about the topic confidently and knew about GM food while others did not know what *transgénico* meant and did not answer the question properly. If the candidate is not sure about a question, they should choose another one to achieve a better result in the exam.

Candidates should write about both the advantages and disadvantages and not only about one of these.

Question 4

The question clearly indicates that the candidate should write about their country. Some scripts were too general without examples of the candidate's own country. The question asked for the candidate's opinions with examples.

Question 5

This question was very well answered with scripts showing a good knowledge about the question. These were very well illustrated, argued, structured and with good conclusions. There were some good examples about Russia, Portugal, communism, the Arab countries, etc.

Question 6

Most scripts were well argued, illustrated, structured and had good conclusions. They showed that candidates brainstormed the topic before writing. However some candidates wrote about the topic *Guerra e Paz*, but did not answer the question. Candidates should always refer back to the question when writing so that they include every part of the question in their answers. Some did not even refer to Aristotle's quotation.

There were some good examples about apartheid in South Africa, the Second World War and Hitler, Iraq, Vietnam, the Portuguese wars, etc.

Papers 8672/04 and 9718/04

Texts

General comments

As in previous years, the majority of candidates were able to answer the questions in this paper in an appropriate way. On the whole, the passage questions were well done and the essays were well organised. Most candidates showed good knowledge of the texts and were able to write a critical analysis of the text and develop a coherent argument. Their answers demonstrated how well prepared they were.

However, a number of candidates, yet again, only retold the story without referring to the question at all, or copied bits of the texts. Also, a few had not read the books and had no idea how to address a question or even how to write an essay. The weaker candidates struggled to make themselves comprehensible and to convey any knowledge they might have.

All questions on the paper were attempted.

It was encouraging to see a high proportion of candidates express themselves in accurate language and produce well-balanced and solid essays.