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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 Subsidiary Level

Paper 8684/01

Speaking

General comments

The examination is divided into three sections: **Section 1 – Presentation**, **Section 2 – Topic conversation** and **Section 3 – General conversation**. Overall candidates showed a good level of skill in the use of language and vocabulary, although a few grammatical mistakes were evident. CIE would like to thank the Examiners for their own preparation and for ensuring that the candidates were well prepared – it showed in the results.

Comments on specific questions

Presentation

Candidates did well in this section with clearly thought out presentations covering a wide range of contemporary subjects.

Topic conversation

Examiners interacted well with candidates, encouraging their participation without interfering with the flow of answers to questions (a problem that had been evident in previous years). Candidates were obviously at ease and were thus better able to articulate their ideas. In addition, Examiners showed that they had prepared well for the examination and were thus able to respond well to each presentation to ensure an adequate dialogue.

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.

Paper 8684/02

Reading and Writing

General comments

Most candidates coped well with this Paper.

Many candidates did not write legibly and the presentation of their work did not make it easy to read their answers. Some candidates left no space for the Examiner, no space between one answer and the next and they wrote on practically every available space. Some Centres did not provide appropriate or sufficient paper for their candidates to write presentable answers. Some candidates did not present their work in the order that their answers were written. Candidates are expected to make an effort to submit work that is immediately legible and well presented.

Many candidates were unsure of various aspects of grammar, including spelling (even of words borrowed from the texts), tenses, punctuation, etc.

Comments on specific questions**Section 1****Question 1**

Most candidates answered most parts correctly.

- (a) The most common wrong answer was *definia*.

There was no consistently wrong answer for the other parts.

Question 2

Most candidates answered most parts correctly, but very few answered all parts correctly. Sometimes candidates added their own words to the ones given in brackets and/or did not write the complete sentences or did not use the words in brackets.

- (a) Examples of wrong answers: *Antigamente não corrião perigos difusos; Antigamente não corriam perigos.*
- (b) Many candidates were unable to cope with this question, as in: *sem que exista a mesma tonalidade; sem que tereriam a mesma tonalidade; sempre que tinham varias tonalidades; sem que terem várias tonalidades; sem que deixe de haver varias tonalidades; sem que haja cores distintas; sem que as tonalidades; sem que váriem.*
- A few candidates did not attempt to answer.
- (c) Examples of wrong answers: *Todos nos podemos ser bem sucedidos; todos podem suceder; todos nós pomos suceder.*
- (d) A few candidates did not attempt to answer and there were many wrong answers, as in: *no futuro o contacto com as drogas for mais fácil; no futuro facilitou-lhe-ia...; no futuro foi mais fácil...; no futuro facilitara-lhe...*
- (e) There were a few blanks and many wrong answers, as in: *se bem que continua presente; se continue presente; embora já tenha passado, o perigo ainda se mantém; embora se mantenha; se continua-se; se emborem continuar presente.*

Question 3

Most candidates answered most parts well but usually they missed one or more details. Many simply copied word for word from the text, often with spelling mistakes.

Section 2**Question 4**

Most candidates answered most parts well, but many copied word for word from the text, often with spelling mistakes. Where more than one detail was required, candidates did not write full answers.

Question 5

Candidates had to write a total of 140 words for parts (a) and (b) and not 140 words for each part. Many candidates ignored the instruction and wrote well in excess of the required number of words. No credit is given for words written in excess and therefore many candidates did not gain the marks allocated for part (b). Some candidates did not indicate the part of the question they were answering.

Answers had to reflect what had been read in the two texts. Although there were some good answers, many candidates did not ensure they followed all instructions and their answers were poor in many aspects, as in:

Nos dias de hoje um mundo está difícil, as pessoas trabalham mais e a economia nunca está estável, e por isso as pessoas têm de trabalhar mais e dedicação menos tempo aos filhos. Estes que ficam em casa com a empregada...

and

Os jovens ficam muito indecisos com a aproximação do adultério que consiste na responsabilidade do futuro...

Paper 8684/03

Essay

General comments

Paragraphing

There were some very good and excellent examples of essays organised in clear paragraphs with examples linked with appropriate conjunctions. However, some essays were disorganised with lack of clear paragraphs, an introduction, development and conclusion. Some candidates wrote what came to their minds without any previous planning.

The Examiner recommends that Centres should teach their candidates to brainstorm the topic before writing. This way, the candidates will be able to organise their ideas and avoid repetition of ideas and words.

Centres should teach that each paragraph consists of a topic sentence with examples to illustrate it.

Punctuation/linking/phrases

In general, candidates were not confident about the use of commas, semi colons and full stops. There were examples of 7, 10 line sentences without any punctuation. Some candidates mixed capital and small letters and others did not use capital letters after a full stop.

There were commas used between the subject and the verb (verbs) such as: "*Portugal, desenvolveu-se muito bem...*", "*Embora, Portugal tem, tentando...*", etc.

Two sentences were written together without any punctuation or linking words such as: "*Há várias opções só depende do que queremos.*", "*As drogas so distroem as pessoas é muito triste.*" and "*Os jovens hoje em dia não fazem o desporto não é como antigamente.*" In contrast, there were some very good examples of linking words such as: "*visto que*", "*embora*", "*segundo*" and some good phrases such as: "*no que diz respeito a*", "*por ventura*", "*a principio*", etc

Centres should teach punctuation and how to use conjunctions so as to link sentences properly. This way, the essays will read well and clearly.

Accents

Some essays showed a grasp of how to use accents properly, however there were some examples such as: "*alguem*", "*as vezes*", "*sête (sete=7)*", "*trás (traz)*", "*estão*", "*saudavel*", "*país (país)*", etc

Spelling

There were some very good essays without spelling mistakes. However, some candidates wrote the words as they are spoken. For example: "*conviniente*", "*algu*" instead of "*algo*", "*perduar*", "*quando*", "*divido a*", "*disvantagens*", "*tumar uma decisão*", etc.

There were a few problems with the verb “*haver*”. Some candidates wrote “*a*” when they meant “*há*”. For example: “*a certos casos*”, “*a de melhorar*”, “*a outras alternativas*”, etc.

Verbs were either spelt wrongly (“*penço*”, “*tem cido*”, “*desidir*”) or had no ending in the infinitive (“... *os outros países podem ajuda Portugal*”).

Spoken Portuguese

Centres should teach candidates the difference between spoken and written language. Here are some examples of spoken language: “*sera que tá faltando...*”, “*...e tá a demonstrar que ...*”, “*tamos aqui a falar...*”, etc.

Mother tongue influence

Some essays had a clear English influence in the grammar and vocabulary. Some examples are about the lack of articles or a literal translation of some words. For example: “*Pessoas naqueles países*” (People in those countries), “*Ajuda pode ser distribuída*” from the English: “Help can be distributed” and “*fazer decisões*” (“make decisions” instead of “*tomar decisões*”).

Centres should make a comparative study of the key differences between Portuguese and English such as the use of articles, false friends, etc

Singular and plural/masculine and feminine

There were not many mistakes as regards gender, but here are a few examples: “*meus família*”, “*o lei*”, “*alguns drogas*”,

However, there were quite a few examples of verbs used in the plural when the subject is singular and vice versa: “*As Nações Unidas dá comida...*”, “*O homem têm tentado...*”, “*Nada de frituras porque prejudica a saúde...*”, etc. There were also some mistakes regarding adjectives and the past participle: “*continuamos firme*”, “*foram canalizado (colonizados) pelo os portugueses...*”, “*as coisas eram muitos deficit (difícil)*”, etc.

Centres should teach the plural of adjectives in Portuguese and also explain the use of the past participle with verbs “*ser*”, “*estar*” and “*ter*”.

Verbs

There were some very good examples of the personal infinitive such as: “*sem darmos conta*”, “*para terem um futuro melhor*”, etc.

Some verb forms were used wrongly. Here are a few examples: “*eu gostos*”, “*tenhem-se beneficiado*”, “*a precisar-mos deste tipo de terapia*”, etc.

There were some excellent examples of the subjunctive such as: “*no que for possível*”, “*para que haja sempre ...*”, “*para que todos nós ... estejamos em comunhão*”, “*quando formos aos hospitais*”, “*uma pessoa que fume...*”, “*seja como for*”, etc.

Pronouns

Some candidates were not aware of the position of pronouns and others were not sure how to write them. Here are a few examples: “*começar ajudar-los*”, “*com nós*”, “*uma organização que chama-se*” instead of “*que se chama*”, “*não desgastar-se muito com o trabalho*” instead of “*não se desgastar ...*”, etc

Centres should teach the rules of how to use and position these.

Vocabulary

A great deal of essays showed a variety of good vocabulary and phrases. However, others repeated the same word several times such as “*saudável*”.

Very few idioms were used in general.

Conclusion

The Examiner suggests that the points mentioned above should be revised or taught in more detail. Centres should make the candidates aware of these points.

Comments on specific questions**Question 1**

There were some excellent examples that showed a sound knowledge of the topic with very good examples of the advantages and disadvantages. In contrast, some other essays were not objective. The ideas were not relevant and some wrote about the topic but did not answer the question. Some candidates wrote nine and eleven lines without any punctuation at all.

Centres should explain to the candidates that they have to answer the question and not talk about the topic.

Question 2

Again some candidates wrote about the topic "Law and Order" but did not answer the question. Some texts were long with repetition of ideas. There was a sentence with thirteen lines without any punctuation. Punctuation was weak and there were no clear paragraphs. Some examples were too personal. Candidates should try to be objective.

Some candidates talked about drugs, said they were in favour but did not explain why.

However, there were some excellent examples with a clear introduction, paragraphs with topic sentences and examples, and a clear conclusion. Some candidates used phrases such as: "*como conclusão*", etc. One essay compared the situation in Portugal with that in Holland.

Question 3

Again some candidates talked about the media, but forgot to answer the question. Some answers were too general and with few examples. Some talked extensively about the media and only in the last two paragraphs did they answer the question. There should be a balance and candidates should answer the question giving examples.

One essay was very well organised with an introduction; a paragraph about the Internet; a paragraph about the Press with examples; a paragraph about how to substitute the Internet with examples and then the conclusion.

Question 4

There were some good examples and points. Some candidates gave examples of Mozambique and Brazil and these were well illustrated. There were also some good examples of the consequences of cancelling the debt.

There were also some clear paragraphs about the advantages and disadvantages mentioned in the question. In general, the essays showed a sound knowledge of the question.

There was repetition of words such as: "*país*". Candidates should revise their work before handing it in to avoid this and they should also plan their work before writing.

Question 5

Some candidates presented good, well organised essays in clear paragraphs with introduction, development and conclusion. In the development candidates wrote about sports, diet, holidays, family and friends in clear paragraphs with very good examples. These were all linked with the appropriate linking word. They clearly showed that the ideas were brainstormed before writing.

However, other essays repeated the same idea, words ("*saudável*") and clearly showed a lack of planning before writing. One sentence was eighteen lines long without a full stop. Some others gave irrelevant examples or talked about a personal problem. Candidates should try to be objective.

Question 6

There were some well-illustrated essays with a natural sequence and clear paragraphs. Some others were vague and did not give good examples. Some wrote about their own families and forgot about the topic. Some candidates wrote ten and twelve lines without any punctuation.

This question required a very well illustrated answer with details because the capsule would be open in a thousand years' time.