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Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Portuguese (1PG0)
Paper 4F: Writing

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GCSE Portuguese
Unit 4F: Writing
Examiner report

Overview of the Examination

The writing paper makes up 25% of the overall GCSE grade and consists of four parts:

- 1) A picture-based task with two points to cover, worth a maximum of 12 marks and with a suggested word count of 20-30 words.
- 2) A choice of two writing tasks with four points to cover, including reference to the future, worth a maximum of 16 marks and with a suggested word count of 40-50 words.
- 3) A choice of two writing tasks with four points to cover, including reference to the past and future, worth a maximum of 20 marks and with a suggested word count of 80-90 words.
- 4) A translation task with 5 sentences to translate into Portuguese, worth a maximum of 12 marks.

Words counts are only suggestions, and longer answers are considered in full when awarding a mark. However, it is important to stress that it is not necessary to write more to score full marks.

The first three tasks are marked for 'Communication & Content' and 'Linguistic Knowledge & Accuracy'. Candidates omitting key details could not score full marks for Communication & Content, but they had access to the whole range of Linguistic Knowledge & Accuracy marks as long as their response was relevant.

To gain marks for Communication & Content, candidates needed to address the required details. Some candidates missed a detail from the instructions or did not notice the need to use a particular tense. Very occasionally, a candidate wrote freely based on the introduction to the task, or just wrote everything they could about a given topic, rather than making reference to the bullet points.

The demands of the mark scheme for Linguistic Knowledge & Accuracy increase with each question. Q1 only requires present tense and some connected ideas with words such as 'and' for full marks, while Q3 requires past, present and future, extended sentences and some variation of grammatical structures.

Notes on the 2022 Portuguese Foundation Writing Paper

It was clear that centres had given careful thought to the entry level of their students. The majority who entered at Foundation tier were able to attempt all questions, though some struggled with the longer essay Q3, which overlaps with Higher tier. Candidates at the top end wrote interesting and accurate pieces with variation of grammatical structures, allowing them to access the top boxes in both categories of the mark scheme.

Question 1

Q1 required candidates to describe a picture of some teenagers walking into a school, followed by an opinion on their school day. Most candidates had success with this task, tending to focus on the people and what they were doing, with a few mentioning items of clothing. More ambitious candidates used their imaginations to link the photo to another event that had just taken place. The most common major mistake was to address only one part of the task.

Question 2

Q2 required candidates to write a response to a set of four bullet points referring to the present and the future. For Q2(a) they could discuss shopping habits and for Q2(b) they could discuss winter holidays. Q2(a) was slightly the more popular, with about 55% of candidates choosing this question.

Both options were responded to with some success and candidates enjoyed developing their responses. The best candidates made it clear they were addressing the four points required by the task and gave at least one extra detail for each of them. Most candidates managed to use the future tense or allude to the future, both of which are sufficient for scoring high marks in this task.

Question 3

Q3 required candidates to write a response to a set of four bullet points referring to the past, the present and the future. For Q3(a) they could discuss the fight against plastics and for Q3(b) they could discuss an upcoming visit from a friend. Q3(b) was by far the more popular, with almost 75% of candidates choosing this question.

Most candidates made a good attempt at this question, addressing all or most bullet points. We enjoyed reading candidates' opinions on typical English food in Q3(b)! The top marks for Communication & Content went to candidates who expanded on all four points and gave personal responses with justifications.

The most commonly omitted detail was the 2nd bullet point from Q3(a), where many candidates failed to notice that this required the past tense. We accepted relevant present tense answers as addressing this point, but could not award full marks for Linguistic Knowledge & Accuracy if the candidate did not use the past tense. Many candidates had variable success when moving between different tenses.

The top category of the mark scheme asks for occasional use of complex language, and in rare cases we saw the subjunctive and the personal infinitive. General inaccuracy caused a lot of problems: there was lots of English interference (e.g. 'asho' instead of 'acho'), missing accents

were very common (e.g. translating 'is' and 'and' in the same way) and Spanish appeared quite frequently.

Question 4

Q4 required candidates to translate 5 sentences into Portuguese. The difficulty level increased with each task and specific vocabulary was required, so only the best candidates could achieve high marks. Most candidates were able to score a mark on each task for a partial translation. In future, candidates should familiarise themselves with the vocabulary list on the specification, since all of the words used for this question are taken from there.

Advice for Candidates Preparing for Portuguese GCSE Foundation Writing

Read each question carefully and think about what exactly you are asked to write. Make sure you know which tenses are required. Q2 will always ask you to use the future tense, and Q3 will always ask you to use the past and the future.

Avoid using words from other languages such as English or Spanish. If necessary, come up with an entirely new idea to discuss.

Look at questions from past papers so you are familiar with what you will need to do.

Practise developing ideas in the past, present and future.