

PORTUGUESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0540/02

Reading and Directed Writing

General comments

Generally, candidates performed well in this paper.

It was clear that many teachers had been able to bring out the best in their candidates. In continuing this process, teachers are advised to give particular attention to the following:

- exposing candidates to a wide variety of written material;
- instilling an attentive approach to reading;
- increasing awareness of structural features of the target language that will enable candidates to improve their abilities in reading and selecting information;
- encouraging the correct use of a wide range of tenses.

Candidates should be reminded to read carefully the rubrics, questions and reading passages, in order to help reduce the number of marks lost through carelessness.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Questions 1–5

This exercise was answered correctly by the majority of candidates. Some candidates struggled with **Question 5** which contained vocabulary regarding the seasons.

Questions 6–10

The majority of the candidates performed very well here.

Questions 11–15

Generally, the questions in this exercise were well answered. Weaker candidates sometimes encountered difficulty with **Questions 13, 14** and **15**. In **Question 15**, a few candidates thought that *antipático* and *amigáveis* were synonyms rather than antonyms.

Question 16

There were some good attempts at this question. However, candidates should be reminded to pay close attention to the rubric, which in stated *Baseando-se nas figuras indique...* Some candidates forgot to relate their answers to the pictures and instead wrote something on a topic of their own choice.

Section 2

Questions 17–25

The majority of candidates performed very well in these questions. Some candidates did not read **Question 19** carefully enough, and therefore gave a wrong answer.

Question 26

This writing exercise was generally correct and there were some interesting answers. It was pleasing to note that the majority of candidates adhered to the word limits specified in the question paper. A small number of candidates wrote about a family holiday rather than a school outing/exchange; a few candidates ignored the topic and wrote about something different.

Section 3

Questions 27–36

Many candidates answered these questions very well indeed. However, it seemed that a few candidates had tried to answer the questions without having read the text. Weaker candidates tended to struggle with **Questions 30** and **31**.

Questions 37–45

Whilst there were some good attempts at these questions, a number of candidates demonstrated a lack of understanding of the reading passage. Others seemed to have not read the passage carefully enough. Weaker candidates tended to struggle with **Questions 40, 41** and **45**, simply copying out long portions from the reading passage, which was not usually appropriate. Generally, the stronger candidates selected the correct material for their answers to these questions.



PORTUGUESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0540/03

Speaking

General comments

Most candidates seemed well prepared for this year's Speaking test. Nevertheless, it is advisable to give them the chance to practise similar situations in advance: Centres should make sure that candidates have access to past papers so they are familiar with the structure of the test.

It is very important that Examiners read all of the Speaking test instructions in advance of the examinations; please refer to the Teachers' Notes booklet for details.

Recording

Centres who record onto CD should ensure that each candidate's Speaking test is recorded onto a separate track.

Centres who record onto cassette should ensure that the cassette is rewound to the beginning of the first candidate's test before submitting it to CIE.

Occasionally the volume of the recordings was too low. The microphone should be positioned so that both the Examiner and the candidate are clearly audible – it is worth trying out the recording equipment in situ before beginning any examinations.

It is worth reminding Examiners that once the examination has begun, the recording should not be stopped or paused between elements of the examination, but should run continuously until the end of that candidate's examination.

Centres are also reminded that the size of the recorded sample required for external moderation will change in 2011 and that they should consult the 2011 0540 Portuguese syllabus booklet (available on the CIE website) for further information.

Mark Sheets

When completing the MS1, please enter the final mark in figures as well as shading the lozenges.

Comments on specific questions

Role Plays

Performance in this part of the test was generally good, although there were some candidates whose responses contained incorrect verb tenses. In some cases this caused the message to be ambiguous or incomplete, and candidates therefore lost marks.

A small number of candidates tackled some of the Role Play tasks in a language other than Portuguese and so no marks could be awarded for those tasks.

Candidates generally struggled to provide a suitable response to the prompt "*manifeste preocupação...*" in **Role Plays B**.

Examiners are reminded of the need for careful preparation of Role Plays in order to ensure that candidates are given the correct cues which allow them to attempt the required tasks. Some Examiners were not sufficiently well prepared, and simply read aloud what was written on the Role Play cards, rather than acting out the Role Plays.

Please note that in the interests of fairness to all candidates, Examiners should **not**

- create additional role play tasks which may confuse candidates;
- miss out any of the role play tasks;
- replace any role play tasks with alternative or different tasks.

Examiners should note that when an answer is fed to a candidate, no marks can be awarded for that element of the task.

Centres should also remind candidates that they must follow the material provided on the Role Play cards: in the first part of the test we do not want candidates to give their personal opinion or to share their experience; they will not gain more marks by straying from the prompts given on the Role Play cards.

Topic Presentation and Conversation

The majority of candidates had prepared their topic and there was a good variety of themes.

In a few cases, the candidate's presentation was too long; Examiners are reminded that the candidate should not speak for more than about 2 minutes before they are asked questions about their chosen topics.

Candidates tended to be more accurate in their use of grammar in this part than in the ***General Conversation***.

Examiners should ensure that they indicate where the topic conversation ends and the general conversation begins.

General Conversation

The majority of candidates performed well in this section, with many candidates making a confident attempt at the topics chosen by the Examiner. On the whole, Examiners had a very good examining technique, although a couple of issues did arise:

- Examiners should try to ensure that they not to feed the answers when asking a question;
- Examiners should try to avoid asking closed questions which candidates can answer by saying "yes" or "no". It is important to ask questions which require more than "yes" or "no" as answers in order to allow candidates to work for marks.



PORTUGUESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0540/04
Continuous Writing

General comments

Generally, most candidates coped well with both questions. However, a few candidates exceeded the word limits specified in the question paper: it is important that Centres remind candidates to adhere to any word limits given.

It was pleasing to note that handwriting had improved this year, although there were still a few scripts that proved difficult to read. Candidates should be reminded of the importance of presenting their answers clearly and legibly.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The most popular question was **Question 1(a)**. Answers were generally good in terms of content and candidates generally tried hard to refer to all of the required bullet points in their answers.

As in previous years, some candidates were unsure of the form of address required; some used *tu*, *você* and *vocês* interchangeably and there was often no agreement in gender or number. A number of candidates struggled with verb tenses and verb endings. It is recommended that these points of grammar should be studied and practised prior to the examination.

Answers to **Question 1(b)** were generally good, with candidates addressing the required bullet points satisfactorily.

In **Question 1**, candidates encountered difficulty in their use of a range of grammatical structures. These included:

- the use of *tudo* and *todo*, and of *mas* and *mais*
- how to write dates and times
- differentiation between *dois* and *duas*
- the conjugation of the Future tense, e.g. *venderam* instead of *venderão*
- the conjugation of the verb 'to donate'
- the formation of plural nouns, e.g. *festivals* instead of *festivais*

In future, it is recommended that particular attention should be paid to practising these areas of grammar in order to improve overall fluency and accuracy.

Question 2

Unfortunately most answers were not very creative: most candidates mentioned that they had met the friend at school, and that the reason for their having lost contact was because he/she had moved to another country. Many candidates said that they were now in contact again through the internet.

Many candidates answered the question as a description, but others chose to write an email or letter to the friend in question, all of which were acceptable methods of addressing the question.

In **Question 2**, candidates encountered difficulty in their use of a range of grammatical structures. These included:

- the use of *b* instead of *v*, and the use of *c* instead of *q*

- prepositions, in particular the use of *por* and *para*
- direct and indirect object pronouns
- verbs with a preposition, particularly *gostar de*
- reflexive verbs
- the verb *haver*, which was often spelt without the *h*
- the use of *ser* and *estar*
- the use of the Imperfect and Preterite
- the distinction between *brincar* and *jogar*

In future, it is recommended that particular attention should be paid to practising these areas of grammar in order to improve overall fluency and accuracy.

