

Portuguese A: Language and Literature

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0 - 12 | 13 - 25 | 26 - 42 | 43 - 56 | 57 - 69 | 70 - 84 | 85 - 100 |

Standard level

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|--------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0 - 14 | 15 - 28 | 29 - 43 | 44 - 58 | 59 - 68 | 69 - 83 | 84 - 100 |

Higher and Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

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|--------------------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0 - 4 | 5 - 9 | 10 - 13 | 14 - 17 | 18 - 20 | 21 - 24 | 25 - 30 |

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Generally, the recordings were suitable pieces of work which offered a varied range of opportunities to obtain good responses.

However, it was noticed that some teachers gave passages to candidates that were too long and printed in papers with narrow borders. On these occasions, candidates did not have the chance to demonstrate their skills and knowledge on the passages, because they could not complete a comprehensive analysis of the extracts in the required amount of time. They tended to synthesise as much as possible, instead of offering a literary analysis of the work that had been presented to them.

In this component candidates give their commentaries of an extract from a literary text studied in part 4 of the course and teachers should set two guiding questions for each extract. However, there were occasions where more than two questions (even 4) had been prepared.

There were also some centres where the extracts had two guiding questions but these were very similar, such as: “Comente sobre a relação entre as características físicas e psicológicas do narrador-personagem./ De que forma se desenvolvem as reflexões sobre sua relação com Madalena no enxerto.” or “Qual o tema ou ideia principal do texto, e de que modo se desenvolve? / De que modo o nacionalismo está refletido no texto?” In these cases, the guiding questions did not help the candidates develop a better commentary.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Candidates showed a good contextual understanding and knowledge overall.

Criterion B: Generally a good level of analysis was observed. Candidates tended to summarise, which is not the purpose of this task. To avoid this tendency, literary features and their effects on the reader should be explored in more detail.

Criterion C: Generally candidates were able to respond with a well organised structure. However, there were many candidates that appeared to struggle to elaborate an adequate conclusion.

Criterion D: There was a good use of language overall, despite some candidates presented difficulties with fluency and literary terminology.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers should ensure that candidates have ample opportunities to explore terms and expressions that could help them follow a sequence (on the overall structure) when they are delivering an oral commentary.

Teachers should offer shorter passages so that candidates can analyse them in depth. Candidates should concentrate on the passage rather than in the whole book or the other works of the author.

Teachers should try to take part only to formulate questions and these questions should be less quantity but good quality to allow for longer and more appropriate answers.

Further comments

The Individual Oral Commentaries were very well conducted overall. Some teachers were too strict because they know what to expect from their candidates; others were too generous and gave higher marks than what was appropriate. Teachers should ensure that they are following the criteria, as described in the subject guide, to avoid awarding incorrect marks to their candidates.

Higher level written tasks

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0 - 5 | 6 - 11 | 12 - 18 | 19 - 23 | 24 - 28 | 29 - 33 | 34 - 40 |

Standard level written task

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0 - 2 | 3 - 5 | 6 - 9 | 10 - 12 | 13 - 14 | 15 - 17 | 18 - 20 |

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Teachers should be familiar with the new course and follow the requirements of what constitutes a suitable written task, which is expected from all candidates.

Some of the forms that came with the candidates' works show that their centres are using more reading books than those required for the Language and Literature programme. The list of the works presented also suggested that some centres have opted only for narrative texts (novels and short stories). It is recommended that they include poems and/or drama in their reading lists.

There were a few tasks based on books which were not related to any part of the programme for the subject, as well as some based on a free choice anonymous writer, with no references to time or place for this work. Teachers are reminded to check that the content of each task is related to a different part of the course for each candidate.

The majority of the candidates did not write their names, candidate numbers and page numbers in each sheet of the task.

Most candidates did not include the bibliography with the correct references in their tasks.

It is important that the whole task is written in Portuguese: for rationale, please use "fundamentação", for outline, "plano de trabalho", etc. There were some candidates who lost marks because they wrote "Meu *written task* é sobre..."

Written Task 1

Through the written tasks candidates were able to demonstrate the hard work that had occurred in the class; at Higher Level, they had a better understanding of the Written Task 1

(in comparison with Written Task 2) and candidates seemed to be more comfortable producing WT1 than WT2.

Examiners have noticed that some centres have presented similar work in terms of language, style and some excellent ideas. It would be beneficial for teachers to encourage a more individual approach and style.

Candidates from certain centres did not produce a suitable WT1 because the content of the task was not related to any part of the course.

Written Task 2 (Higher Level)

There were too many candidates from some centres presenting the same type of work (same question, same book or sources, same focus) rather than presenting an individual and imaginative way of exploring an aspect of the material studied in class as expected from this written task.

WT2 was a problem because most centres misunderstood the questions outlined in the subject guide.

The results for were often better than those for WT2. The written task is a type of assessment where candidates have more time to devote to it than to Paper 1 or Paper 2 and this generally led to good results for this component; however, there were some exceptions to this trend and some tasks seemed to have been rushed.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Candidates had difficulties with the writing of the rationale for WT1 and the outline for WT2. Some rationales were a summary of the task, and did not indicate the required information, as it is explained in the subject guide. A rationale should mainly introduce a justification for the work presented. The audience should be taken into account too. It should explain how the task is linked to the aspect of the course being investigated. More attention should be drawn to the term: “investigate”. Regarding WT2, it should be noted that the outline is not the rationale, but the plan of the work.

Criterion B: This is a very important aspect of the assessment. The understanding of the work and the content of the task are judged here. For WT2 it assesses: the “understanding of the expectations of the question”, “how relevant and focused is the response to these expectations” and how well-chosen the references are. The conventions for the text type chosen (a diary should have dates, a blog should clearly reflect an online environment, etc.) should also be taken into consideration.

Criterion C: Many candidates presented an organised and coherent work, but they did not develop their argument in a consistent way. This was the criterion where candidates achieved higher marks.

Criterion D: Most candidates performed well on their use of language, but some did not follow an appropriate register. The most frequent mistakes were related to sentence structure and syntax. Fluency in the language is expected in this new course. Teachers should remind candidates that they should never use slang or bad words.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers should be aware of the guidelines for each of the tasks and help candidates choose a focused and appropriate composition which must be related to a part of the course. Some candidates presented tasks (WT1) which did not relate to any part of the course and, therefore, the content was not appropriate for the Language and Literature course.

There should also be a discussion about the text type pupils decide to write in and make them aware of the conventions of that text type. Furthermore, candidates should be made aware of the need to acknowledge all sources that have been used to support their work.

The content of the tasks should be chosen and decided by the candidate and not prescribed by the teachers, which seem to have been the case in some cases: “I have chosen for homework, the suggestion 2 out of 4”.

Further comments

Some reading lists presented literary works on all parts of the course, and not much importance seemed to be given to the study of language issues.

A creative work cannot be so “distant” from the original one, because candidates have to show that they have a good knowledge of the work. This aspect should be taken into account when candidates are producing creative tasks.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

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|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0 - 2 | 3 - 4 | 5 - 8 | 9 - 11 | 12 - 14 | 15 - 17 | 18 - 20 |

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Candidates produced good comparisons overall but they generally struggled to determine which would be the best strategies to find a response that emphasises the comparable nature of the two texts. Some introductions failed to explain the point of the comparison/contrast which should be the focus of the discussion throughout the paper. Furthermore, some

candidates included limited references to how the authors create specific effects by using literary and linguistic approaches and well-structured arguments.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

In general candidates showed evidence of good analytical skills presenting good insightful comparisons and displaying adequate knowledge and understanding of the texts. Responses presented a variety of observations and comments that attempted to contrast a range of key ideas. Sensitive analysis of the content of the texts and contextual variation occurred.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Strengths: Candidates presented a good acknowledgement of the literary features and their overall effects and they successfully identified the tone and intended audience of the texts. It was observed that candidates were able to produce a good variety of observations and comments regarding the imagery of the texts and a balanced analysis of similarities and differences.

Weaknesses: Quite often candidates appeared to struggle with the use of appropriate terminology. Difficulties with sentence construction and structure were also evident in some candidates' work. Written expression and inaccuracy in spelling of basic key terms is a fundamentally self-limiting problem. Some also failed to compare and comment on the layout and structure of the texts. References to the texts could be more widely explored including specific evidence to support general assertions in the comparison.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers should ensure that candidates explore the required terminology i.e. transitional expressions of comparison and contrast (similarly, moreover, likewise, on the contrary, conversely, on the other hand) and contrastive vocabulary.

To improve language, teachers should ensure that candidates work on improving their spelling and acquiring a wider range of vocabulary.

Further comments

Some candidates added relevant contextual (external examples) information in their analysis of the chosen texts.

Some conclusions could have been expanded upon to cover other ideas that were raised but were not elaborated fully.

Some evidence of preference for texts on Section B was found.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0 - 3 | 4 - 6 | 7 - 9 | 10 - 12 | 13 - 14 | 15 - 17 | 18 - 20 |

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Candidates had to show their ability to do a detailed analysis of one of the two texts presented. The majority opted for Text 1 “Grande pedalada”, from a Portuguese magazine instead of Text 2 “Escutatório”, from a Brazilian author. It is important to appreciate the formal, stylistic and aesthetic qualities of the chosen text to demonstrate knowledge of the content, the context, the purpose and the audience. Most candidates were dealt with the significance of each passage and mainly commented it on with some supported references.

Language is an important criterion in this new Language A course. Candidates must show a very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise sentence construction, with accuracy in grammar and vocabulary in order to achieve high marks on this criterion.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

While the majority of candidates answered the two questions which accompanied the texts, others ignored them or just did not understand them. Text 1 stressed the importance of the title to the whole comprehension of the text and the effect in persuading the reader as well as the aspects of the language that would call the reader’s attention. These questions should have allowed candidates to comment on the engineer’s project, at the same time as readers would appreciate the enterprise. Also, it would lead to an analysis of the journalist’s passage with possibilities to comment on the literary language – to quickly call attention of readers – plus the informative features: references, data, pictures and map, which are typical in a journalistic text.

In text 2 the author talks, with irony, about daily behaviour. Those achieving good grades paid attention to the two questions. The first one had its focus on the author’s tone to discuss the theme and persuade readers to follow his idea. The second question had its focus on language, but it was related to how important the point of view was to the language and content of the text.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Criterion A: Both texts were easily understood by candidates. This was the criterion where most candidates achieved higher marks. However, valid ideas, worthy of better marks, were not always supported by references from the texts or were supported with inappropriate

justifications: “o fragmento do romance é irônico porque eu tive que ler duas vezes, esvaziar minha cabeça para entender (sic)”. The type of text and its context were not correctly commented on and some candidates included irrelevant comments.

Criterion B: This was a criterion where candidates found difficulties. The requirement to include the effects of stylistic features is outlined in the subject guide. However, some candidates decided to explore the texts as if they were literary extracts (commenting on the characters, narrator, etc.), which was not required.

Criterion C: This criterion also presented difficulties amongst candidates and a great majority could not achieve high marks. The guide specifies that candidates will be assessed in relation to how well the argument of the response is developed but many candidates did not show this in their responses.

Criterion D: Most candidates did not use appropriate terminology for the task. Severe mistakes in grammar and sentence construction were found for a Language A course.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Examiners would recommend that teachers provide opportunities to practise analysis of different text types.

Candidates should be encouraged to address the two questions providing references from the texts and should also comment on stylistic features with a carefully chosen language style.

The organisation of the essay is an important issue for the argument to be well developed.

Further comments

Candidates seemed to understand the passages but did not always respond following the requirements outlined in the subject guide. Teachers should ensure that candidates are aware of these requirements.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|-------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0 - 3 | 4 - 6 | 7 - 10 | 11 - 14 | 15 - 18 | 19 - 22 | 23 - 25 |

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

On Criterion A, the references to ideological and philosophic context were not very common and, for most of the works studied, these aspects would have been important to show a deep understanding of their message.

Candidates have shown more difficulties in relation to Criterion C - "Understanding of the use and effects of stylistic features". The main stylistic features mentioned referred to characterisation, narration, point of view and the title of the works studied. There were less pertinent references to setting, description and linguistic and rhetorical features.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Candidates have shown a good command of the structure of an argumentative essay (Criterion D). The understanding of the historical, political and social context was generally well presented (Criterion A).

Most of the candidates preferred to answer questions 1, 2, 4 and 5, showing a good understanding of the implications in these questions. However, answers to questions 3 and 6, more focused in literary features, were fewer in quantity but generally quite effective.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

In question 1, there was some tendency to explore the dominated characters instead of the "dominating" ones, as requested by the question. Candidates focused mainly on the main characters although in some cases, secondary characters would have been more appropriate to answer this question.

In question 4, candidates have shown a general good performance revealing a confident understanding of the way in which the context affects the message, the structure and the content of a literary work.

In question 5, candidates focused more on oppression and less on censorship.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Teachers should orientate the candidates in order to help them explore the references to literary features within the works more extensively. They should study the works exploring not only the historical, political and social context, but also developing the understanding of the philosophic or ideological background of the works; this would help candidates understand the value of the work in a local and worldwide dimension.

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------|-------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grade: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Mark range: | 0 - 4 | 5 - 7 | 8 - 10 | 11 - 14 | 15 - 17 | 18 - 21 | 22 - 25 |

The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Many candidates found it difficult to focus on answering the question they had chosen and their analysis was too broad and not relevant enough. Also, many candidates did not show an awareness or understanding of the use and effects of stylistic features (Criterion C) and marks for this criterion were, in many cases, very low.

Developing the argument was not an easy task for some candidates, and sometimes their essays were just a presentation of ideas which did not lead anywhere. The appropriate terminology was not always used by candidates and they often lacked accuracy in terms of language.

The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Most candidates showed good knowledge of the works they chose to write about and most of them scored well on Criterion A. They were able to organise and structure their answers effectively but, in many cases, there was no development of the argument. The use of language was generally clear and the choice of register appropriate.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

The most popular question was number 4, followed by numbers 1 and 2. Only a few candidates answered questions 5, 3 and 6 (however, candidates that answered one of the last two attained very high scores). Being the most popular, question 4 was also, for some candidates, a way of presenting the knowledge they had about the works but not a personal understanding or a relevant answer to the question.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

It would be advisable to go through the assessment criteria with candidates as, in many cases, they did not mention the importance of stylistic features in the texts and they scored very low marks on Criterion C.

Candidates should also be aware that their personal interpretation of the works is as important, or even more important, than the criticism they have read or heard.

As regards language, prepositions are frequently used wrongly and there were some candidates with quite limited vocabulary, repeating the same expressions too often.

Further comments

Most candidates showed a good understanding of the works they wrote about and most of them made good use of that knowledge.