

May 2014 subject reports

Portuguese B

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 - 83	84 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 11	12 - 24	25 - 41	42 - 56	57 - 70	71 - 85	86 - 100

Higher level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 12	13 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 26	27 - 30

Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 12	13 - 17	18 - 21	22 - 26	27 - 30

General Comments

The quality of the audio recordings was excellent and forms were correctly filled in however some IA samples were uploaded after the deadline.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Overall, the conduct of the tests and the performance of the candidates were good across both levels.

The majority of recordings fell correctly within the 8-10 minute range and the overall length of the interviews was correctly managed by the majority of centres.

Most recordings were introduced correctly, with clear identification of the candidate and of the candidate's topic. This was a great help to examiners.

All visual material used was connected with the options, culturally relevant to Portuguese language and well presented.

Many teachers asked sound questions which guided the conversation efficiently, and supported the candidate appropriately. Some teachers were able to skilfully encourage lively conversations and others sensitively handled nerve-stricken candidates with tact and professional skill.

100% of the recordings were submitted via IBIS resulting in improved recording quality.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Productive skills

The majority of candidates showed confidence and maturity when describing the photograph.

The most able showed an excellent command of oral Portuguese with clear pronunciation and correct intonation. They interpreted the visual stimuli and thoroughly explored its relationship with the topic, showing consistency and good organization of ideas. In addition, they used specific vocabulary for the topic and demonstrated an authentic use of idiomatic expressions. They were able to understand more complex ideas and to present their responses to them in a clear and coherent manner. The interaction was natural and fluid with a total commitment to the subject at hand.

Some candidates made gender errors but, overall, the use of language was fluent and, in general, authentic. Some candidates showed difficulties when presented with more complex ideas.

Criterion B: Interactive and receptive skills

The majority of candidates were able to initiate, expand and develop their theme within their conversations with the teacher. They were able to modify and explain their responses

communicating all points clearly, with the most able demonstrating spontaneity at points.

The weaker candidates were able to maintain a dialogue but in a more passive manner, rarely taking the initiative or guiding the discussion. The candidates were able to demonstrate that they understood the essentials of the discussion/topic but it required effort from the teacher to maintain the interaction.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates must be aware that their first language can interfere with their fluency and clarity in Portuguese. It is recommended that candidates are therefore exposed to a wider range of authentic audio material.

Candidates should be encouraged and prepared to give more complex answers which include a wide range of linguistic structures and a variety of expressions of opinion, thereby demonstrating their ability to the full.

Higher level written assignment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 18	19 - 21	22 - 25

Standard level written assignment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 19	20 - 22	23 - 25

General Comments

Centres are reminded that they must submit Language B Written Assignments by the date specified and in the format specified by the International Baccalaureate. Teachers are advised to check the latest documentation relating to this on the OCC.

All forms must be fully and accurately completed; some were submitted this session without a teacher signature.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

It is imperative that the Language B Written Assignment instructions and guidance are read carefully and followed fully.

Some difficulties arose due to poor and illegible hand writing and it should be reiterated to candidates that punctuation should be respected.

A wide range of topics, all linked to the core, were chosen and the majority of the work received was of an excellent or good standard and within the specified word range. The assignments demonstrated a variety of writing topics including; alternative endings for a text, articles, interviews, blogs, radio programs, letters, diaries, newspaper articles and emails.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Language

Excellent work was presented with clarity, stringing words together in smooth, coherent sentences; braiding those sentences into logical, flowing paragraphs; and weaving those paragraphs together to explain and develop a central, unifying claim. The choice of vocabulary was also carefully mastered in order to convey thoughts express a clear message.

The weaker candidates struggled to use vocabulary and grammar in a coherent way and transitions between ideas were not fluid.

Criterion B: Content

The best assignments presented an eloquent justification of why the theme had been chosen followed by a clear definition of the objectives of the assignment. Appropriate research methodology was clearly evident including how and where the research was performed and its impact.

Weaker candidates, on the other hand, struggled to use the sources for the task and to meet the objectives stated in their rationale.

Criterion C: Format

Texts types met the tasks requirements and their conventions were appropriate, effective and varied.

Criterion D: Rationale

The vast majority of the assignments presented a clear and convincing rationale, however, in HL, it should be noted that the rationale is not intended to summarize the literary text. On the contrary, it should be used to state the aims of the assignment and how these aims have been achieved.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

In order to better prepare candidates for the written assignment, teachers should employ a variety of practice activities which will help candidates absorb some of the structure, diction, vocabulary and rhythm of the text they are producing.

Further comments

Guidance on the Written Assignment can be found in the Language B Guide and needs to be followed in all cases. It is advisable to create a Submission Checklist before sending candidates' papers to be marked, therefore ensuring that all necessary details have been included and guidelines met.

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 8	9 - 16	17 - 24	25 - 31	32 - 37	38 - 44	45 - 60

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

Some candidates struggled with the vocabulary in the texts.

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

Even working with more challenge texts and questions some candidates were, however, able to deal with the lexis and reading comprehension tasks.

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

It was noted that some candidates did not read the instructions carefully and therefore could not answer accordingly.

In some cases, where a letter was required as an answer, candidates wrote different letters both inside and outside the box, resulting in a mark of zero.

Candidates are reminded that when asked to 'use words from the text', they will not be awarded marks if they ignore this and use their own phraseology.

Poor, illegible handwriting resulted in a mark of zero in some cases.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

It is advised that candidates are familiar with the full range of text types, including literary, that are listed in the Language B guide and that training is given on each of the different question types and the response requirements of each.

Timing was clearly an issue for some candidates and therefore more practice in this area, including proofreading work on completion, is required.

Greater attention should be given to the skill of deducing meaning when encountering an unknown word within a text.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 5	6 - 11	12 - 17	18 - 23	24 - 29	30 - 35	36 - 45

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

Some candidates found the vocabulary challenging and struggled to complete the examination during the time allowed.

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

Even working with more challenge texts and questions some candidates were able to deal with the lexis and reading comprehension tasks.

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

It was noted that some candidates did not read the instructions carefully and therefore could

not answer accordingly.

In some cases, where a letter was required as an answer, candidates wrote different letters both inside and outside the box, resulting in a mark of zero.

Candidates are reminded that when asked to 'use words from the text', they will not be awarded marks if they ignore this and use their own phraseology.

Poor, illegible handwriting resulted in a mark of zero in some cases.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

It is advised that candidates are familiar with the full range of text types, including literary, that are listed in the Language B guide and that training is given on each of the different question types and the response requirements of each.

Timing was clearly an issue for some candidates and therefore more practice in this area, including proofreading work on completion, is required.

More practice should be given to the skill of deducing meaning when encountering an unknown word within a text.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 6	7 - 13	14 - 20	21 - 26	27 - 33	34 - 39	40 - 45

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

Overall, candidates performed well both in section A and B. Section A writing deals only with the message itself (clarity, development and organization of ideas) and section B deals with the development of an argument (clarity, convincingness, and reaction to the question).

Some assignments in both sections A and B included a number of false friends or pronunciation-influenced spelling errors which, while not affecting communication, indicated a faulty command of the language.

Once again, poor, illegible handwriting hindered the performance of some candidates. More practice of producing written work under timed, examination conditions would benefit many.

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

Overall, the use of language and the ability to communicate were good. Many scripts read well, and displayed a wide range of vocabulary and phrasing, often deployed in an expressive and fluent way.

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

Section A

Overall, the majority of candidates were able to demonstrate a good command of the Portuguese language and express their ideas clearly; displaying control of grammar and using a variety structures with confidence.

The weaker scripts did attempt to address the audience and additional detail and description was required in order to produce interesting writing.

Section B

Overall, the majority of assignments used creative ideas and personal experience to make the writing authentic. Stronger candidates manipulated tenses successfully, using past participles, and complex sentence structures and showed no coherency problems.

The weaker candidates demonstrated that they were not particularly skilled, or trained, in the process of analysing opposing ideas, nor in the process of presenting their work effectively. They would benefit from instruction in the skills of intellectual analysis and organisation.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

It should be emphasised that reading questions carefully is vital to creating a successful piece of writing.

In order to better prepare candidates for the written paper, a variety of practice activities which will help candidates to absorb some of the structure, diction, vocabulary, and rhythm of the text they are producing would be beneficial.

Candidates need profound training in the skills of intellectual analysis and organisation. For example; comparing and contrasting ideas and organising a linked argument. They should be experienced in handling a wide range of text types under exam conditions, allowing time to proofread their work.

Standard 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

Some responses were affected by false friends or pronunciation-influenced spelling errors. These errors in details, while not affecting communication, certainly indicated a faulty command of the Portuguese language.

Poor, illegible handwriting hindered the performance of some candidates and further practice of producing written work under timed, examination conditions would benefit many.

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

Overall, the use of language and the ability to communicate fluently were good. Many scripts read well and displayed a range of vocabulary and phrasing, often deployed in an expressive way.

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

The majority of the candidates were able to show a good command of the language and communicated their ideas clearly, displaying good grammar and a variety of linguistic structures.

The weaker candidates struggled to address the audience effectively.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

It should be emphasised that reading questions carefully is a vital requirement for producing a successful piece of writing.

In order to better prepare candidates for the written paper, a variety of practice activities to help candidates to absorb some of the structure, diction, vocabulary, and rhythm of the text they are producing would be beneficial.

Candidates need profound training in the skills of intellectual analysis and organisation, for

example; comparing and contrasting ideas and organising a linked argument. They should be experienced in handling a wide range of text types under exam conditions, allowing time to proofread their work.