2023 VCE Portuguese written external assessment report

General comments

Students responded well to the majority of questions in the 2023 VCE Portuguese written examination. Students who received high marks demonstrated excellent comprehension and the ability to identify relevant information from both aural and written texts. However, some students were unable to provide complete answers to the questions, select the main points or present their ideas clearly. In order to provide accurate answers, students must take notes during both the listening and reading sections. Students tended to summarise information from aural or reading texts into their answers rather than responding specifically to what was asked. In some cases, providing a summary or translation of information from the texts rather than the specific answer required for the question resulted in no marks being awarded. Students will be able to provide more accurate answers if they take notes during the listening and reading sections, as well as carefully read key words in the questions.

As part of their exam preparation, students should practise their listening and note-taking skills by listening to spoken texts from a variety of sources and in different varieties of Portuguese. Throughout the year, students should practise reading key words in questions in order to select the information needed for their responses. Students should also become more familiar with the characteristics of text types and writing styles. They must focus on language (spelling, grammar and vocabulary) in order to further improve their writing. The following were the most frequently encountered errors in the exam:

* errors with verb conjugations
* false friends
* English spelling of Portuguese words or vice-versa
* use of English sentence structure in Portuguese texts.

Specific information

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

Section 1: Listening and responding

Students were graded on their ability to identify and analyse information and also accurately and appropriately convey general and specific aspects of texts.

Part A

Text 1

Question 1a.

* bracelet becomes black
* customer wants it replaced

Question 1b.

* send to the technical department (for an evaluation)
* offer a refund

Text 2

Question 2a.

* animal adoption / social change
* consumption/sale of socially responsible products or merchandise
* infrastructure in remote locations
* status of the elderly
* phone number for donations to needy children

Question 3a.

* She got to know a different landscape (desert) that she hadn’t seen in Brazil.
* Australians welcome people from other nationalities, cultures, philosophies and lifestyles.
* It was challenging to adapt to the cuisine.
* She was surprised that Australians do everything during the day, with few options at night.
* She was lucky to meet a lot of extroverted people.
* It was difficult to make close friends as she didn’t have enough time to build intimacy.

Part B

Text 4

Question 4a.

* passa de geração em geração na comunidade (passes from generation to generation in the community)
* autor desconhecido (authors unknown)
* representa histórias tradicionais típicas da comunidade portuguesa (depicts traditional stories typical of the Portuguese community)
* ser comunitário – uma referência no tempo de qualquer comunidade (it is communal – a reference in time to any community / different from other countries)

Question 5a.

* Os portugueses residentes na Austrália podem votar em várias cidades, incluindo Adelaide, enquanto os brasileiros podem votar nas mesmas cidades, com excepção de Adelaide. (Portuguese living in Australia can vote in several cities including Adelaide, while Brazilians can vote in the same cities with the exception of Adelaide.)
* Os brasileiros utilizam um sistema de votação electrónica e os portugueses utilizam o papel. (Brazilians use an electronic voting system and the Portuguese use paper.)
* Portugal vota para primeiro-ministro e membros da Assembleia. Já o Brasil elege o presidente, governadores, senadores e deputados federais e estaduais. (Portugal votes for a prime minister and Assembly members; Brazil elects a president, governors, senators and federal and state deputies [only one of each may be referred to].)
* No Brasil, os que trabalham no dia das eleições não são pagos, mas tem um dia de folga, enquanto que em Portugal eles são pagos e ainda tem um dia de folga. (In Brazil, those who work on an election day are not paid but have one extra day off, while in Portugal, they are paid and have the following day off.)
* No Brasil, não é obrigatório, mas você pode votar com 16 anos. Em Portugal, você só pode votar com 18 anos. (In Brazil, it’s not mandatory but you can vote when you turn 16. In Portugal, you can only vote when you are 18.)

Question 6a.

* O preço que eles oferecem é menor porque a tarifa é compartilhada. (The price they offer is lower because the fare is shared.)
* Não há gratuidade para idosos ou meia tarifa para estudantes. (No gratuity for seniors or half fare for students.)
* A tarifa pode ser paga em prestações através do cartão de crédito. (The fare can be paid in instalment by credit card.)

Question 6b.

* proporcionar mais disponibilidade/opção para viagens para cidades menores (provide more availability/options for trips to smaller cities)
* obter ajuda financeira dos anunciantes (get financial help from advertisers)
* fazer uma análise dos feedbacks dos usuários (analyse user feedback)

Section 2: Reading and Responding

The majority of students were able to select pertinent information. Students should pay closer attention to the key words in this section, carefully read the text and the question, and look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary. They should also ensure that they understand the questions before answering them, and provide only the information that is required.

Part A

Text 7

Question 7

Using a process of self-improvement and experience in developing soft skills, such as:

* educating young people to have an impact on citizenship
* implementing projects which have impact on the community
* giving feedback to young people to improve their leadership skills

Text 8

Question 8

* recognised by her use of bold colours
* received many awards for her contribution to arts in the world
* an inspiration for young artists that explore the relationship between art and culture
* known for being aware of social reality and strongly committed to the great causes of her time
* impact can be widely seen in contemporary painting, sculpture and print making
* influenced those who challenged traditional representations of the female body

Part B

Text 9

Question 9

Text type: blog entry

Kind of writing: persuasive

Audience: local community

Suggested points:

* use water wisely
* don’t waste water
* stop fishing for entertainment
* co-work places
* don’t overuse resources for modernising buildings / preserve old buildings
* installation of hand air dryers instead of paper
* bird habitat and lack of food lead to immigration
* many species could become extinct
* interrelationships

Section 3: Writing in Portuguese

Students are assessed on their ability to:

* demonstrate depth of treatment of information, ideas, and/or opinions;
* write a text that is appropriate to context, purpose and audience;
* structure and sequence information and ideas; and
* manipulate language structures and vocabulary in Portuguese.

Students could choose from a number of topics. They could write an imaginative story, a personal interview script, or an evaluation report. Students who did not score well did not write clearly or express opinions or ideas. They did not read the question carefully in some cases and did not write the text in the required text type. In terms of content, more breadth and depth were frequently required.

Students can improve their writing performance by taking the following steps:

* choose a topic of interest to them
* read the question carefully, paying attention to key words and the type of text required
* revise the content of their response to make sure the text flows
* consult a dictionary to improve vocabulary
* check their spelling
* check their work for errors such as lack of tense agreement, incorrect use of tense, English spelling of Portuguese words, omission of articles and prepositions and failure to pluralise.

Question 10

Text type: letter

Kind of writing: reflective

Audience: Year 7 students

Suggested points/responses might include:

* I remember it was an overwhelming day.
* Speak to the person sitting next to you / try to get to know someone in the class.
* Pay attention to all the information given; may seem overwhelming but is necessary.
* There will be several activities organised to help you to get to know the school.
* The barbeque was the best part.
* How you made high school friends.
* How you had to choose electives.
* How you studied.
* Expectations from teachers.

Question 11

Text type: diary entry

Kind of writing: personal/descriptive

Audience: self

Suggested points/responses to include:

* description of the object
* feelings evoked by the object
* importance of the person who gave the gift
* the relationship between the gift and your country of origin
* the relationship between the gift and the person who gave it
* the relationship between the gift and the feelings generated by it

Question 12

Text type: report

Kind of writing: informative

Audience: local community

Suggested points/responses to include:

* new computer room
* upgraded Wi-Fi
* lift to the 1st floor
* doors open as students approach the door
* toilets for people with disability upgraded / alarm system installed in them
* kitchen robots
* facial recognition to enter school
* alarm when someone external to school is detected
* security cameras
* ramps