2024 VCE Portuguese written external assessment report

General comments

Students generally performed well in the 2024 VCE Portuguese written examination, with high-scoring responses demonstrating strong comprehension and the ability to extract relevant details from aural and written texts. However, some students did not provide complete and accurate answers, often summarising or translating information instead of addressing the specific requirements of the questions. In Question 9, many students did not integrate information from both the visual and written texts as required, which significantly impacted their responses. To improve, students should focus on carefully reading the key words in questions and taking detailed notes during the listening and reading times to ensure their answers are precise and comprehensive.

To enhance their exam performance, students are encouraged to practise their listening and note-taking skills with diverse spoken texts in different Portuguese varieties. Practising identifying key words in questions will help students to select the information needed to respond effectively during the examination. Additionally, students should work on understanding text types; improving their grammar, vocabulary and spelling; and avoiding common errors such as incorrect verb conjugations, false cognates and applying English sentence structures to Portuguese texts. Developing these skills throughout the year will help students provide clearer and more accurate responses during the examination.

Specific information

Section 1: Listening and responding

Part A – Listening and responding in English

Question 1a.

* Tuesday morning
* Thursday morning (but only after 10am)
* Friday afternoon

Question 1b.

* enrolment form
* birth certificate

The majority of responses did not address this question correctly as they did not identify the enrolment form as one of the documents that the speaker had already organised. This indicates a need for students to pay closer attention to the specific details presented in the listening text.

Question 2

* free car parking
* meat for free
* discounts based on their friends’ creativity
* (book a table) drinks are on the house/free
* register using a QR code to get a 10 per cent discount for the first six months

Most responses identified that drinks are on the house/free and that registering using a QR code provides a 10 per cent discount for the first six months as well as free car parking. However, many responses did not provide a complete answer to the question about the restaurant’s strategies, missing details like ‘meat for free’ and ‘discounts according to friends’ creativity.’

To improve this, students should focus on key details during the listening tasks. Undertaking guided listening with specific prompts, practising with similar questions, and engaging in peer discussions can help reinforce attention to detail. Additionally, listening activities that require identifying multiple strategies will help students become more attentive to text details, ensuring they capture all relevant points.

Question 3

* Football was banned for women, which led them to play clandestinely until 1980.
* One of the pioneers of women's football almost lost her passion because she couldn’t join a team due to the lack of players (during the ban).
* Nowadays, the number of fans for men's and women's football is still not comparable, resulting in little investment in girls' football.
* There are still few opportunities for championships, with no proper publicity to promote the expansion of the sport.
* In terms of uniforms, can you believe that until 2015, female players didn't have their own and played in the men's team’s uniform, which weren't as comfortable?

Part B – Listening and responding in Portuguese

Question 4a.

* *para determinar o número de participantes* (to determine the number of participants)
* para organizar a viagem de finalistas (to organise the finalists’ trip)

Question 4b.

* *A Joana está triste por não participar*. (Joana is sad as she cannot attend.)
* *A mulher/ela está entusiamada com a viagem se todos realmente forem*. (Female/she is excited about the trip if everyone goes.)
* *O homem/ele está super curioso de explorar a ilha com os amigos*. (Male/he is super curious about experiencing this trip with his friends.)

To improve their responses to this question, students need to describe the specific emotions, rather than offering a general answer. For example, instead of simply saying, ‘the students were feeling excited’, responses should identify each student's unique emotion.

By identifying the specific emotions, students will be able to provide a more thorough response. Paying attention to the specific details will help students improve their comprehension and accuracy in answering the examination questions.

Question 5

*De acordo com a Sara e o Miguel a inteligência artificial desempenha hoje em dia um papel importante no mundo do trabalho o que leva a que as pessoas tenham de continuar a aprender para se manterem competitivas. Hoje em dia o trabalho remoto é praticamente onipresente, o modo como as carreiras sa͂o avaliadas evoluiu na͂o havendo critérios rígidos estabelecidos pelas empresas, e o trabalho tanto em equipas diversificadas como individual faz parte do dia-a dia.* (According to Sara and Miguel, artificial intelligence now plays an important role in the world of work, which means that people have to continue learning to remain competitive. Today, remote working is practically omnipresent, the way in which careers are assessed has evolved, with no rigid criteria established by companies, and working in diverse teams, as well as individually, is part of everyday life.)

Question 6a.

* *Existem duas escolas internacionais na capital que seguem os sistemas Australiano e o Americano*. (There are two international schools in the capital that follow the Australian and American systems.)
* *As escolas fazem os exames nacionais na mesma época do país ao qual a escola internacional pertence*. (Schools take national exams at the same time as the country to which the international school belongs.)
* *As escolas seguem os feriados nacionais de Timor Leste*. (The schools follow the national public holidays of East Timor.)

Question 6b.

*Na capital de Timor Leste segue as mesmas regras do Brasil, cerca de 25 alunos por turma. Na capital os edificios são mais modernos e já têm acesso a tecnologia como o Brasil. No interior, eles ainda trabalham com quadros negros e giz. Eu também reparei que eles são ecologicamente conscientes como a gente, pois ‘os livros passam de uns alunos para os outros’.* (In the capital of East Timor, the same rules as in Brazil follow, around 25 students per class. In the capital, the buildings are more modern and already have access to technology like in Brazil. In rural areas, blackboards and chalk are used. I also noticed that they are environmentally friendly like us, as ‘books are passed from one student to another’.)

To improve their responses, students should focus on paying attention to the specific details in the text and on breaking down the information clearly, to address each part of the question separately. For example, in Question 6a., responses should mention the two international schools, the national examinations and the public holidays as distinct points. In Question 6b., they should separate the details about the capital and rural areas and avoid mixing up these details.

Additionally, students would benefit from underlining key phrases in the text and organising their answers into clear, concise points. Re-reading their responses after writing them can help ensure they haven’t missed any important details. Practising with similar questions and focusing on breaking down the text into manageable parts will also help students improve their attention to detail and the accuracy of their answers.

Section 2

Part A – Reading and responding in English

Question 7

* night / nocturnal creature
* giant serpent
* glowing eyes
* colour of the leaves
* venomous / poisonous

Question 8

* the fascination of instant information
* the fear of missing out on relevant news
* staying in touch with family and friends wherever they are / observing their expressions, haircut and emotions
* sending or receiving emails in a professional, personal or even school context
* paying your bills via your phone

Part A – Reading and responding in Portuguese

Question 9

* *Eisenhower foi uma pessoa eficiente, por isso deveremos usar a matrix* *dele*. (Eisenhower was an efficient person, so we should use his matrix.)
* *Tarefas importantes e urgentes devem ser priorizadas (dar exemplos) (da imagem)*. (Important and urgent tasks should be prioritised (give examples, from the image).)
* *Tarefas que não são nem importantes nem urgentes devem ser menos priorizadas (da imagem)*. (Unimportant and non-urgent tasks should be the least prioritised (from the image).)
* *Às vezes, podemos nos afastar da matrix, por exemplo quando nos sentimos criativos, para o nosso bem estar, e, se tiver tarefas de grupo, e tiver que ajustar às necessidades das diferentes pessoas*. (Sometimes you can step away from the matrix for your wellbeing, for example, when you feel creative and if you have group tasks and have to accommodate different people.)

Responses to this question addressed most of the key information, ideas and opinions, covering the main points. They showed depth through the development of these points and demonstrated strong knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structures. There was some authentic and creative manipulation of Portuguese to fulfill the task requirements, with information and ideas organised well to meet the task's objectives. However, some responses demonstrated a limited understanding of the text and did not include examples from the written and/or visual text provided, so this is an area requiring more attention in future.

Section 3: Writing in Portuguese

In Section 3, students were expected to focus on the key features and skills specific to one type of writing: persuasive, imaginative or informative.

* **Persuasive writing:** responses needed to convince the reader through the use of a clear stance, effective arguments and targeted appeals. Students were expected to use a variety of persuasive techniques, like engaging vocabulary, second-person address, rhetorical questions and superlatives. Arguments needed to be structured logically and tailored to the audience, using exaggeration or humour where appropriate.
* **Imaginative writing:** responses needed to show creativity and engage the reader by building a vivid atmosphere, context or characters. Expected skills included varied sentence structures, descriptive language with adjectives and adverbs, and perhaps non-linear sequencing (like flashbacks) to produce impact. Control over pacing and tone was key to evoke emotions or convey a mood.
* **Informative writing:** students were tasked with providing accurate, objective information in a clear and organised manner. This required the use of facts, explanations and possibly statistics to present ideas comprehensively. The expected style was impersonal and straightforward, with logical sequencing and minimal use of adjectives or personal opinions, focusing on clarity and precision in conveying information.

In all cases, responses were expected to demonstrate appropriate vocabulary, structure and language manipulation suited to the chosen writing type, showing an understanding of the specific purposes and skills involved.

High-scoring responses demonstrated clarity, depth and a strong command of genre-specific techniques. They were well organised, used appropriate vocabulary and successfully engaged the reader or clearly conveyed ideas.

High-scoring responses in persuasive writing, such as writing an email convincing a friend to do a TAFE course, effectively engaged readers by addressing them directly and appealing to their emotions. These responses highlighted personal strengths, built a strong case for the benefits of the course, and inspired enthusiasm towards the opportunities it could provide.

High-scoring responses in imaginative writing, like describing what happens next in a story to be published in the school newsletter, created vivid scenes through the use of descriptive language. They drew readers into the story, evoking a sense of wonder and mystery while maintaining originality and creativity.

High-scoring responses in informative writing, such as an article in the school newsletter on the importance of keeping the school clean, presented information in a clear, logical sequence. They used direct language to effectively convey the importance of maintaining a clean school environment and its impact on the community.

Overall, students demonstrated strong creativity and depth in their use of information, ideas and opinions. Their responses were generally well structured, with information and ideas presented in a clear sequence. However, there is room for improvement in making their writing more relevant and appropriate to the specific context, purpose and audience. Additionally, enhancing their manipulation of language structures and expanding their vocabulary in Portuguese would increase the effectiveness of their responses.