

Portuguese B

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 13	14 - 28	29 - 44	45 - 58	59 - 72	73 - 85	86 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 12	13 - 25	26 - 44	45 - 59	60 - 73	74 - 87	88 - 100

Higher level and 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

The range and suitability of the work submitted

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

Timing: The majority of recordings fell correctly within the 8-10minute range.

Introduction: The vast majority of recordings started correctly, with clear identification of the candidate and of the candidate's topic. This was a great help to the examiners.

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

Teachers' question technique: The evidence of this session is that a growing majority of teachers ask sound questions which guide the interview efficiently and support the candidate appropriately. At the top of the range, there are teachers who skilfully encourage lively conversations

which are a real pleasure to listen to; and teachers who sensitively handle nerve-stricken candidates with superb tact and professional skill.

Recording quality: 99% of recordings were submitted via IBIS. This resulted in improved recording quality and prompt marking.

Candidate performance against each criterion

First language interference: The interference of a candidate's mother tongue did not have a negative effect on their communicative intentions, although it did interfere with the clarity of their speech, especially pronunciation.

Criterion A: Productive skills

The majority of the candidates showed confidence and maturity when describing the photograph. The level of language produced was good and accurate most of the time. There was a lack of higher level structures and the range of vocabulary used was sometimes limited but interesting.

Criterion B: Interactive and receptive skills

There were examples of excellent examining techniques. Some good opinions and responses were present during the interaction with the teacher.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates should be exposed to a large volume of authentic audio material as this will improve their intonation, clarity and fluency and minimise the negative effects of mother tongue interference.

Candidates should be encouraged and prepared to give more complex answers, including a good range of linguistic structures and a variety of opinions, thereby demonstrating their abilities to the full. This session, better candidates gave full justifications of their opinions and sought to employ a more interesting range of vocabulary.

Higher level and standard level written assignment

HL 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

SL component grade boundaries

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

Recommendations for IB procedures, instructions and forms

Centres are reminded that they must send their Language B Written Assignments by the date given by the International Baccalaureate.

Assignments must currently be hand written and not word processed.

Centres are reminded that all forms must be completed fully and correctly, some were submitted this year without the teacher signature.

It is imperative that the Language B Written Assignment instructions and guidance are read carefully and followed fully. Some of the issues encountered this year include;

- Assignments that had been written in pencil;
- Assignments that were difficult to be read due to poor handwriting;
- Assignments that exceeded the maximum word limit of 500-600 words;
- Assignments that were submitted with less than 150 words 'rationale';
- Assignments that were submitted without a 'rationale'.

The range and suitability of the work submitted

There was a wide range of topics chosen such as letters, alternative endings for a text, diaries, articles and interviews, all of them linked to one of the core topics. A healthy percentage of work achieved excellent or good.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: Language

The most important point to stress here is that hand writing must be clear.

Examples of excellent work presented ideas and content with clarity, stringing words together in smooth, coherent sentences, linking those sentences into logical, flowing paragraphs and weaving those paragraphs together to explain and develop a central, unifying aim. In addition to the precise range of vocabulary used, the choice of words was also carefully considered in order to convey ideas, thoughts or logic, which conveyed a clear message.

Some of the weaker candidates struggled to use the appropriate vocabulary, for instance, a variety of verbs that suited the writing purpose or choosing the appropriate connective.

Criterion B: Content

The best assignments presented a thorough appreciation of the literary work and definition of objectives. They also demonstrated appropriate research methodology, making explicit how the task was planned, how the data was collected and how it was analysed.

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

Criterion C: Format

Overall, the appropriate formatting was used in all assignments.

Criterion D: Rationale

The vast majority of the assignments presented a clear and convincing rationale, meeting the expectations of the criterion. However, some written assignments were submitted without the 'rationale' and automatically awarded '0' for Criterion D. In addition, this also had an impact on the marks awarded in Criterion B.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

Practice Makes Perfect

Writing has always been difficult to master. In order to better prepare candidates for the written assignment, teachers should employ a variety of practice activities which will help candidates to absorb some of the structures, diction, vocabulary, and rhythm required for the type of text they are producing.

Further comments

It is strongly recommended that teachers follow the Language B Subject Outline guidance on the Written Assignment, pages 29-34

Teachers should create a Submission Checklist before sending candidates' papers to be marked, making sure 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 - 10	11 - 21	22 - 29	30 - 37	38 - 44	45 - 51	52 - 60

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

There were some sets of questions in which candidates seemed to perform badly overall, for example; finding the correct phrase from the article (Q11-Q12), finding the main idea of the text (Q18), and the true and false activity in which both the appropriate box should be selected and the justification given (Q20-Q22).

Text A

This text did not cause a lot of difficulty for the majority of candidates due to its descriptive nature, the range of tenses used (future simple) and the simplicity of the vocabulary employed.

Text A questions

The most difficult question appeared to be Q4 in which some candidates struggled to identify the correct examples within a given paragraph.

Text B

This text seemed to be the most difficult text for the majority of candidates due its literary nature. Fiction texts typically have literary elements such as characters, setting, problem/solution and plot and candidates should be familiar with these.

Text B questions

The most difficult questions appeared to be Q11-Q16, where candidates struggled to identify the correct example and find the main idea of the text (Q18).

Text C

Overall, candidates seemed to have some difficulties with this text. This is probably due to the fact that they were not familiar with the information presented and therefore struggled with new words and expressions.

Text C questions

The most difficult questions appeared to be Q20-Q22 (true and false) and Q24-Q25 regarding specific vocabulary.

Text D

This text seemed to present few difficulties for the majority of candidates due its informative nature, descriptive vocabulary and simple sentence structure.

Text D questions

Most questions were answered correctly.

Text E

This text did not cause major problems to the candidates due its informative nature, descriptive vocabulary, simple sentence structure and paragraph layout.

Text E questions

Most of the questions were answered correctly.

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

Most candidates understood the texts reasonably well and used the information presented to them to complete the tasks.

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

Strengths: candidates handled the vocabulary matching questions well throughout.

Weaknesses: candidates must read the instructions for each set of questions carefully. For instance, the true and false activity required candidates to select the appropriate box and give the required justification in order to gain one mark. Some candidates did not complete both parts and, as a result, were not awarded the mark.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates require more practice of:

- The format of exam questions - what a specific question is looking for
- Managing their time during the exam and allowing time to proof read their work
- Language and grammar and, in particular, the strategies required to deduce the meaning of unknown words in an unseen text.
- A wide range of texts, including literary texts, following the 2013 Language B guide pages 39-40.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 7	8 - 14	15 - 22	23 - 28	29 - 33	34 - 39	40 - 45

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

There were some sets of questions in which candidates seemed to perform badly overall for example; finding the correct phrase from the text (Q3-Q4 and Q6-8) and the true and false activity in which candidates were required to select the appropriate box and cite the required justification (Q12-14).

Text A

Overall, candidates seemed to have some difficulties with this text. This is probably because they were not familiar with the information presented and, therefore, struggled with the new words and expressions.

Text A questions

The most difficult question appeared to be Q1 (true sentences). Unfortunately in a number of papers Q5-7 were left blank, probably due to a lack of comprehension or possibly a lack of time.

Text B

This text did not cause major problems to the candidates due its informative nature, simple yet descriptive vocabulary and straight forward sentence structure.

Text B questions

The majority of these questions were answered correctly.

Text C

This text presented some difficulties for the majority of candidates due its informative nature, descriptive vocabulary and compound sentence structures.

Text C questions

The most difficult questions appeared to be Q24 (true and false), Q25-26 regarding specific vocabulary and Q29 regarding specific information.

Text D

This text did not cause major problems to the candidates due its informative nature, simple yet descriptive vocabulary and straight forward sentence structures.

Text D questions

The majority of questions were answered correctly.

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

Most candidates made a good effort of understanding the texts and using the information presented to them to complete the tasks.

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

Strengths: candidates handled the vocabulary matching and multiple choice questions well throughout.

Weaknesses: candidates must read the instructions for each set of questions carefully. For instance, the true and false activity required candidates to select the appropriate box and give the required justification in order to gain one mark. Some candidates did not complete both parts and, as a result, were not awarded the mark.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Candidates require more practice of:

- The format of exam questions - what a specific question is looking for
- Managing their time during the exam and allowing time to proof read their work
- Language and grammar and, in particular, the strategies required to deduce the meaning of unknown words in an unseen text.
- A wide range of texts, including literary texts, following the 2013 Language B guide pages 39-40.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 7	8 - 13	14 - 20	21 - 26	27 - 32	33 - 38	39 - 45

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

Overall, candidates performed better in section A than section B. This is probably because the written tasks in section A deal only with the message itself (clearness, development and organization of ideas) whereas the written tasks in section B deal with the more challenging requirement of developing of an argument (clearness, convincingness and reaction to the question).

In both sections A and B there were some problems presented by mother-tongue interference, such as false friends and pronunciation-influenced spelling mistakes. These errors in detail, whilst not affecting communication, certainly indicated a faulty command of the language.

The biggest issue for concern was the failure to follow criteria C. Many candidates were not able to conform to the appropriate conventions for the chosen text type and the majority of candidates achieved only 2 or 3 marks in this area. Only a small number of candidates were awarded a 4 here.

Finally, clear and legible handwriting is one of the skills that candidates need to acquire to meet the demands of the academic environment. Examiners cannot give credit for what they cannot decipher.

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

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

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

Section A

Strengths: Overall, the majority of candidates were able to show a good command of the language and were able to communicate and express their ideas. Some of them managed to communicate the required details reasonably well, displaying a good control of grammar and using some structures with confidence.

Weakness: The majority of candidates did not appear to have a basic, sound understanding of the ground rules of the required text-types. Many scripts demonstrated text-types which were unrecognisable or inappropriate. Whilst a few scripts read as simple essays and showed some aspects of addressing the audience, overall effective, appropriate and consistent rhetoric was rare.

In addition, there was a lack of appropriate detail and description which would have resulted in more interesting writing.

Section B

Strengths: Overall, it seemed that the majority of tasks showed creative ideas and personal experience to make the writing authentic. Stronger candidates manipulated tenses successfully, wrote past participles, used complex sentence structures and showed no difficulty in the development of their ideas.

Weakness: One of the tasks required candidates to organise and exploit contrasts between concepts – physical and virtual interaction. Performance in this task suggested that the (relatively few) candidates who chose this option were not particularly skilled, or trained, in the process of analysing opposed ideas nor in the process of then organising clear contrasts effectively. Most specifically, most candidates simply described each interaction and then added a brief conclusion summarising what was already vaguely implicit. To have contrasted in each paragraph one aspect of both interactions would have been more incisive and imaginative and would have explained the contrasts more vividly and effectively. No candidate deployed this approach effectively. This suggests that teachers need to train their candidates more profoundly in the basic skills of intellectual analysis and organisation.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Practice makes perfect. Writing has always been difficult to master and in order to better prepare candidates for the written examination, teachers should deliver a variety of practice activities which will help candidates absorb some of the structure, diction, vocabulary and rhythm of the text they are producing.

Teachers need to train their candidates more profoundly in the basic skills of intellectual analysis and organisation; such as careful definition, how to compare and contrast and techniques for organising a linked argument.

Furthermore, the practice tasks should include a full range of text types, be handwritten and be timed in order to allow for the completion of the task and time for proof-reading. Such practice will be invaluable to candidates in an exam.

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

In both sections A and B there were some problems presented by mother-tongue interference, such as false friends and pronunciation-influenced spelling mistakes. These errors in detail, whilst not affecting communication, certainly indicated a faulty command of the language.

The biggest issue for concern was the failure to follow criteria C. Many candidates were not able to conform to the appropriate conventions for the chosen text type and the majority of candidates achieved only 2 or 3 marks in this area. Only a small number of candidates were awarded 4 marks here.

Finally, clear and legible handwriting is one of the skills that candidates need to acquire to meet the demands of the academic environment. Examiners cannot give credit for what they cannot decipher.

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

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

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

Strengths: Overall, the majority of candidates were able to show a good command of the language and were able to communicate and express their ideas. Some of them managed to communicate the required details reasonably well, displaying a good control of grammar and using some structures with confidence.

Weakness: The majority of candidates did not appear to have a basic, sound understanding of the ground rules of the required text-types. Many scripts demonstrated text-types which were unrecognisable or inappropriate. Whilst a few scripts read as simple essays and showed some aspects of addressing the audience, overall effective, appropriate and consistent rhetoric was rare.

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