

2016 VCE Portuguese written examination report

General comments

Overall, students responded accurately and appropriately to most of the questions in the 2016 Portuguese written examination. Some students responded accurately and appropriately to the requirements of the questions. Other students were often unable to complete all of the questions and tended to make careless errors, mostly in spelling and grammar, and often did not make full use of their dictionaries. On the whole, many students produced very good responses throughout the examination.

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

Part A – Answer in English

The majority of students seemed to understand the aural texts. They responded appropriately and demonstrated good listening and responding skills. They generally paid attention to the finer details and were therefore able to achieve high scores. Some students, however, still need more practice in selecting the main points from a text or in presenting their ideas more clearly.

To improve their performance in Section 1, students are reminded to:

- practise listening exercises
- listen to different texts, including different text types
- practise selecting the key points
- learn how to respond in full sentences
- listen to spoken Portuguese in the media
- learn how to take notes while listening to texts
- pick out key words in questions in order to respond accurately
- learn a range of vocabulary from the topics and themes in the *VCE Portuguese Study Design*.

Students should also take particular note of the key words in questions and ensure that they respond to all of these key words in their responses.

Text 1

Question 1a.

The purpose of Luis's call to Maria is to:

- find out why she didn't attend university the previous week
- invite her to a (rock) concert.

Question 1b.

Three things that Luis has to do are:

- drive to Maria's place at 6.00 pm
- collect Lena/pick up Lena
- purchase the tickets (the following day).

All parts of the answer were required.

Text 2

Question 2

He:

- had enthusiasm in his tone (when speaking)
- states that things couldn't be better and that he is having a great time/having fun
- states that he has never had a vacation like this
- lists all the activities he has been doing with some cool people
- tries to encourage/invites everyone to join him (the following weekend) as he can guarantee that they will have a great time.

Text 3

Question 3

Who

- people who like walking
- anyone of any age because age is no obstacle

Reasons

- People can choose their own routes according to their strength and fitness level.
- It is good for the mind and contributes to knowledge ('knowing the regions through which the route passes').
- There are many routes available in Portugal already but a 'Grande Rota' is in the plans for the future.

Part B – Answer in Portuguese

Students were required to demonstrate an understanding of general and specific aspects of texts by identifying and analysing information. They were then required to convey the information accurately and appropriately in Portuguese. Higher-scoring responses included all required aspects. Lower-scoring responses tended to include many careless errors or omit some of the required details.

Text 4

Question 4a.

Relevant answers included:

- training in the Caribbean in preparation for a space flight for 16 weeks
- six-day stay in Earth's orbit.

Evidence that the company is popular was that 43 out of 200 people had already secured a reservation.

Question 4b.

- They can travel free of charge to an astronomical observatory, without travelling into space.

- They can visit the websites of the observatory in Lisbon, or the observatory of Tokyo University.

Text 5

Question 5

Possible answers included:

- the oceans contain 97% of the water resources of the planet
- they are a rich source of biological and natural resources (superior to tropical forests)
- they are an economic resource and an energy reserve (essential to determining Earth's climate)
- they represent highly productive systems (constantly recycling chemicals, nutrients and water)
- they are used extensively for transport and trade.

Text 6

Question 6

Possible answers included:

- quite positive/not too difficult/not too many issues/not complicated, whereas others have experienced issues
- he entered with a tourist visa, and (in November 2014) received permission to stay for a year
- his first job was at McDonald's, and he then worked as a painter, but because he did not have a work contract he had difficulty renewing his permanent resident visa
- he hopes to find a job in technology to improve his living standard
- he found learning the language quite challenging but it was essential for him and he speaks it quite well now.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Most students were able to select relevant information when answering questions; however, due to a limited range of vocabulary and not using dictionaries appropriately, some students had difficulty selecting the correct information from the text and did not perform well on some questions.

To improve their performance in Section 2, students could practise:

- selecting key words and translating them correctly
- reading carefully and verifying unfamiliar words in the dictionary when unsure of their meaning
- ensuring that they understand the key words in the question before answering the question.

Text 7

Question 7

Students were presented with a short scenario. Then, in their own words, they were required to use evidence from the text to support the view that there is much to see and do in Timor-Leste. Students should not have copied sections from the text.

Relevant responses included the following:

- visit museums in the capital, Dili, and interesting/unusual historic and cultural experiences
- take part in adventure travel experiences, such as hiking to jungle caves/local villages
- drink/taste coffee on the terrace of a grand 'pousada'
- lots of photographic opportunities (for example, beaches, seascapes, rugged cliffs)/take nice photos
- snorkel in pristine reefs and dive to discover world-class sites.

Text 8

Question 8

For this question, students were presented with an article on students and technology. They were then required to provide evidence from the text where it could be inferred that the author of this research may have concerns about the use of technology.

Relevant responses included the following points.

- today's youth belong to a digital generation because of the statement that they have a 'perfect relationship' with the new technologies
- the hours young people spend with technology (e.g. use of statistics)
- they spend more time on computers than studying or practising sport
- the internet is used to form relationships
- young people are too dependent on technology and so there is a need to take some time away from it from time to time

Part B – Answer in Portuguese

Students' responses for this section were assessed on how well they demonstrated an understanding of the stimulus text. Students were required to write text appropriate and relevant to the context, purpose and audience. They were required to structure and sequence information and ideas, as well as manipulate language structures and vocabulary in Portuguese.

Question 9

For this question, students were required to read a short scenario and answer a question in approximately 150 words in Portuguese. They were required to write an article for their school newspaper, with reference to the text, in which they suggested to students the value of blogging.

Possible responses included:

- reference to opportunities for everyone to freely express their opinion
- reference to providing greater contact between those who write and those who read
- reference to blogs having the possibility of being harmful – for example, denigrating and offending others
- the real importance of blogs (two or three ideas).

All responses were required to use and refer to information from the text. Features of the text type related to a newspaper article needed to be evident.

Section 3 – Writing in Portuguese

This section was assessed on how well students:

- demonstrated depth of treatment of information, ideas and/or opinions
- write text appropriate and relevant to context, purpose and audience
- structure and sequence information and ideas
- manipulate language structures and vocabulary in Portuguese.

In this section of the examination, students could choose from a variety of topics, kinds of writing and text types.

Most students were able to clearly give their opinions and ideas in writing; however, more breadth and depth in terms of content was needed in responses to Question 11.

When completing their writing task, students should:

- avoid using words whose spelling or meaning they are unsure of, and use the dictionary when necessary
- proofread their work to ensure that it has continuity, that it makes sense and that the writing is fluid.

Students should learn to correct mistakes in areas such as agreement of tenses, subjects and verbs in phrases, and omission of articles and prepositions.

Question 10

Students were asked to imagine a situation where they have lived in their city for the past 10 years – a city that is a great place to live and work, and where there are lots of things to see and do. Their friend is planning to move from Brazil to another Australian city. Students were required to write a letter to their friend persuading him to come to their city instead.

- Kind of writing: informal
- Text type: informal letter
- Audience: friend

Responses may have included:

- introduction, middle, conclusion
- reference to living in 'your' city for the past 10 years
- city being a great place to live and work
- lots of things to see and do
- ideas to persuade Lucas to come to 'your' city
- concluding comments.

Question 11

Students were given a scenario and were required to write an imaginative story for a local magazine.

- Kind of writing: imaginative
- Text type: story (title/topic, structure, content, author/fictional name, register, style, layout)
- Audience: readers of a local magazine

Responses may have included:

- situation, complication, resolution, conclusion
- reference to travel, events, experience, the bird's point of view, events
- development of the story
- an appropriate conclusion.

Although some students attempted this question, most responses did not adequately utilise the stylistic techniques, features or ideas of imaginative writing to create a sufficiently engaging piece.

Question 12

Students were required to write an email to their best friend about an exchange to a Portuguese-speaking country.

- Kind of writing: personal, reflective
- Text type: an informal email (appropriate greeting leading into email, introduction, middle, conclusion, concluding statements, final greeting)
- Audience: friend

Responses may have included:

- reference to the final week as an exchange student in a Portuguese-speaking country
- ideas about how the student adapted to the country
- reference to a funny incident in detail
- reference to what presented the greatest challenge for the student
- 'your' personal opinion
- conclusion.