

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MANDARIN CHINESE

Paper 0547/11
Listening (Multiple Choice) 11

<i>Question Number</i>	<i>Key</i>	<i>Question Number</i>	<i>Key</i>
1	B	16	A
2	A	17	C
3	C	18	A
4	B	19	C
5	D	20	B
6	D	21	B
7	B	22	A
8	C	23	D
9	B	24	B
10	A	25	C
11	D	26	C
12	A	27	A
13	F	28	B
14	B	29	A
15	E	30	C

General comments

The June 2023 Listening paper consisted of 30 multiple-choice questions. Overall, candidates performed very well and most candidates attempted all questions. Candidates should take care when they transfer their answers onto the answer sheet and shade **one** letter only.

The Mandarin extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and complexity. They featured simple exchanges, short monologues, conversations, and interviews. The emphasis of the questions moved from assessing the candidates' ability to identify information contained in short factual pieces to testing their ability to understand specific information, descriptions of events, opinions, emotions, and explanations in longer extracts.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1 – 5

Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise. The extracts were straightforward and short. For **Question 1**, the majority of mistakes made was choosing option **A** 饼干 instead of **B** 梨. **Question 2** proved to be more challenging than the other questions in this exercise. About twenty percent of the candidates chose option **C** 围巾 instead of **A** 盒子. For **Question 3**, the majority of mistakes made was choosing option **B** 毛笔 instead of **C** 尺子. For **Question 4**, many of those who answered incorrectly chose option **A** or **D**.

instead of **B** 肚子疼. Candidates performed the best with **Question 5** in this exercise. Almost ninety percent of the candidates answered this question correctly.

Questions 6 – 10

In this exercise, candidates heard a longer extract which was about what Wang Shan did yesterday. Candidates performed very well in this exercise.

Candidates performed the best with **Questions 6, 8, 9**. Ninety-six percent or more candidates answered these questions correctly.

For **Question 7**, a very small portion of the candidates chose option **A** or option **C** instead of option **B** 牛仔褲. For **Question 10**, Eighty-eight percent of the candidates recognised option **A** 一大瓶酸奶. The majority of the mistakes made was choosing option **D** 橙汁 instead.

Questions 11 – 15

This was a matching exercise in which candidates heard five individuals talking about their future jobs. Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise.

Over eighty percent of the candidates answered these questions correctly and, for **Question 12**, ninety percent of the attempts were correct.

More mistakes were made by choosing option **B** for **Question 11**, and option **C** for **Question 13**. For **Question 14**, two thirds of the mistakes were made by choosing options **C** or **D**.

For **Question 15**, eighteen percent of all the attempts were incorrect; 14 percent of all the attempts chose option **C** incorrectly, and option **C** was the distractor in this question.

Questions 16 – 20

In this exercise, candidates heard a conversation in two parts with a short pause. In the dialogue, Li Ming talked to his friend about his experience at a summer camp. Candidates are requested to tell if Li Ming's opinion of different aspects of his experience positive, negative or both positive and negative. The exercise represented increased difficulty of the test.

Question 16 proved to be the most accessible question in this exercise, with most of the candidates giving the correct answer.

Question 17, on the other hand, proved to be the most challenging question in the exercise. A third of the candidates chose option **A** instead of option **C**. It is possible that those candidates only understood the first clause of the sentence, which is 猴子们很可爱, but not the following clause, which is 我也有点怕它们.

About a quarter of the candidates answered **Question 18** incorrectly, within which two thirds chose option **B** and one third chose option **C**. Perhaps those candidates did not understand the term 豆腐 or did not understand that part of the sentence.

A small number of the candidates incorrectly chose option **B** for **Question 19**. Perhaps they only understood the first clause of the sentence, which is 爬山很累 and did not understand the second clause of the sentence, which is 可以帮助我们健身.

Question 20 was the second least well-performed question in this exercise, with some candidates choosing option **A** and more choosing option **C**, indicating a lack of understanding of the sentence.

Questions 21 – 25

Candidates heard an introduction by Ma Long about a large park. There was a longer pause in the two-part introduction. This was an appropriately demanding exercise at this stage of the paper.

Question 21 proved to be challenging, with many candidates incorrectly choosing option **C** or option **D**. *It showed a lack of understanding of the text.*

Question 22 proved to be the most accessible question in this exercise, with ninety-two percent of the candidates giving the correct answer.

The majority of the candidates answered **Question 23** correctly; a quarter of the candidates gave incorrect answers, indicating a lack of familiarity with animal names.

Candidates' attempts at **Question 24** indicated a lack of familiarity with the word 教堂. A third of the candidates chose option **C** and option **D** instead of option **B** 教堂.

Question 25 proved to be the most challenging in this exercise, with half of the candidates giving incorrect answers. The majority of candidates who selected a wrong answer chose **A** 面条, which was what the general tourists liked. What Ma Long liked, as stated in the recording, was **C** 粥. Candidates need to listen to the recording more carefully as well as look at the questions more carefully.

Questions 26 – 30

Candidates heard an interview with Zhang Hai, who was a taxi driver. This was an appropriately challenging exercise, but candidates performed well.

Candidates performed well at **Question 26**. Among the incorrect options chosen, two thirds were option **A**. The recording actually said that Zhang Hai's parents were 农民, while Zhang Hai himself had worked as a 工人. Candidates need to pay more attention to details when listening to the recording.

Question 27 was the best performed question in this exercise. Only a small portion of the candidates gave the wrong answer, all of whom chose **C** 老师教的.

Question 28 was also well attempted. The majority of the incorrect answers given by candidates were option **C** 很早下班, while in the interview Zhang Hai actually said that he 不能很早下班.

Candidates performed well at **Question 29**. Among the incorrect options chosen, over two thirds were option **B** 野餐, but 野餐 was never mentioned in the interview.

Question 30 was also well attempted, although it also proved to be the most challenging one in this exercise.

It is necessary that, particularly at this stage of the examination, candidates need to listen to whole chunks of the information before choosing their answers to questions. Just picking out phrases can lead to choosing incorrect options.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MANDARIN CHINESE

Paper 0547/12
Listening (Multiple Choice) 12

<i>Question Number</i>	<i>Key</i>	<i>Question Number</i>	<i>Key</i>
1	D	16	B
2	B	17	C
3	A	18	A
4	D	19	C
5	C	20	A
6	C	21	A
7	A	22	C
8	D	23	D
9	C	24	B
10	B	25	D
11	B	26	B
12	E	27	C
13	A	28	A
14	F	29	A
15	C	30	C

General comments

The June 2023 Listening paper consisted of 30 multiple-choice questions. Overall, candidates performed very well and most candidates attempted all questions. Candidates should take care when they transfer their answers onto the answer sheet and shade **one** letter only.

The Mandarin extracts heard by candidates gradually increased in terms of length and complexity. They featured simple exchanges, short monologues, conversations, and interviews. The emphasis of the questions moved from assessing the candidates' ability to identify information contained in short factual pieces to testing their ability to understand specific information, descriptions of events, opinions, emotions, and explanations in longer extracts.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1 – 5

Overall, candidates performed well in this exercise. The extracts were straightforward and short.

For **Question 1** and **Question 3**, the mistakes made was spread among the incorrect options, indicating that the candidates who did not give the correct answer were perhaps not familiar with the tested vocabulary or even the category of the vocabulary.

Candidates performed the best with **Question 2** in this exercise. Almost ninety-eight percent of the candidates answered this question correctly.

Candidates performed well at **Question 4**. More of the mistakes made were choosing option **A** 喉咙疼 instead of **D** 脚疼.

Question 5 was attempted very well. The majority of the mistakes made were choosing **B** 商店 instead of **C** 人.

Questions 6 – 10

In this exercise, candidates heard a longer extract which was about what Wang Shan did yesterday. Candidates performed very well in this exercise.

Candidates performed the best with **Questions 6, 7, 8**. Ninety-six percent or more candidates answered these questions correctly.

Candidates performed well at **Question 9**. Some candidates chose option **A** or option **B** instead of option **C** 种花.

Question 10 proved to be the most challenging question in this exercise, with many candidates choosing option **A** 春卷 or option **C** 饺子 instead of option **B** 粽子. Perhaps they are not familiar with this piece of vocabulary.

Questions 11 – 15

This was a matching exercise in which candidates heard five individuals talking about their future jobs. Candidates performed very well in this exercise, achieving nearly ninety percent and above in all the questions.

For **Question 11** two thirds of the mistakes made were choosing option **F** 橄榄球 instead of option **B** 羽毛球. For **Question 14**, half of the mistakes made were choosing options **B** 羽毛球 instead of option **F** 橄榄球.

For **Question 13**, all the mistakes made were choosing option **D** 公园 instead of **A** 咖啡馆. 公园 is a distractor in this question and candidates are advised to listen to the whole statement before making their judgement.

Questions 16 – 20

In this exercise, candidates heard a conversation in two parts with a short pause. In the dialog, Li Ming talked to his friend about spending Spring Festival in Canada. Candidates are requested to tell if Li Ming's opinion of different aspects of his experience positive, negative or both positive and negative. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test.

Candidates performed very well in this exercise, achieving nearly ninety percent and above in all the questions.

In each of **Question 16**, **Question 17** and **Question 19**, the majority of the mistakes made were choosing option **A** instead of the correct answer, indicating a lack of clear understanding of the recorded conversation.

In **Question 18**, three quarters of the mistakes made were choosing option **C** instead of the correct answer, again indicating a lack of clear understanding of the recorded conversation.

Questions 21 – 25

Candidates heard an introduction by Ma Long about a department store. There was a longer pause in the two-part introduction. This was an appropriately demanding exercise at this stage of the paper, but overall candidates performed very well.

Question 21 proved to be the most challenging in this exercise. Instead of the correct answer option **A**, many candidates incorrectly chose option **B** and some chose option **C** and **D**. Candidates are advised to listen to the full statement that provides full information for the question.

Candidates did very well answering **Question 22**. Among the mistakes made, two thirds were choosing option **A** 蔬菜 instead of **C** 海鲜.

For **Question 23**. The majority of the mistakes made were choosing option **A** and option **C**.

Candidates overall answered **Question 24** and **Question 25** very well.

Questions 26 – 30

Candidates heard an interview with Zhang Yue who had opened a children's library. This was an appropriately challenging exercise, but candidates performed well.

In this exercise, candidates performed the best at **Question 26**. Among the incorrect options chosen, two thirds were option **A** and one third were option **C**. Perhaps the candidates that made those mistakes just heard the phrase 老师 but not 图书管理员.

Question 27 was very well attempted as well. A small portion of the candidates gave wrong answers by choosing option **A** or option **B**.

Question 28 was relatively more challenging. Still, almost ninety percent of the candidates answered the question correctly. The majority of the candidates who did not answer this question correctly picked option **C**. It seems that those candidates heard the phrase 喜欢看书 but did not have a full understanding of that part of the interview.

Candidates performed very well at **Question 29**. Among the incorrect options chosen, three quarters were option **B** 听故事, which is the distractor in this question.

Question 30 was also very well attempted, with ninety-five percent of the candidates answering it correctly.

It is necessary that, at this stage of the exam, candidates need to listen to whole chunks of the information before choosing their answers to questions. Just picking out phrases can lead to choosing incorrect options.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MANDARIN CHINESE

Paper 0547/13
Listening (Multiple Choice) 13

Question Number	Key	Question Number	Key	Question Number	Key
1	C	11	F	21	A
2	C	12	A	22	C
3	B	13	C	23	B
4	A	14	E	24	A
5	A	15	B	25	D
6	D	16	C	26	C
7	A	17	A	27	B
8	A	18	C	28	C
9	C	19	B	29	A
10	B	20	A	30	B

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MANDARIN CHINESE

Paper 0547/21
Reading

Key messages

In order to perform well for this paper, candidates should:

- Study and consolidate the entire vocabulary list for defined content.
- Consolidate common key question words, time phrases, synonyms and antonyms.
- Have a plan on timing for each question, depending on the complexity of the questions.
- Read the questions carefully and provide answers based on the texts in the paper rather than using own experiences or assumptions.
- Provide an answer for short-answer questions, brief answers with clear content are sufficient.
- Demonstrate genuine understanding of a passage. Random lifting cannot result in any mark.
- Attempt every question in the paper, even the questions they feel less confident about.

General comments

There were many excellent responses to this paper and few candidates left questions unanswered. Amongst the responses, some candidates chose to respond to the question in full sentences, using their own words with the details required by the questions. Last but not the least, it was noticed by the Examiners that the presentation in written answers were generally better than previous year.

Looking forward, more attention needs to be paid in learning the key question words, such as what, when, where, how, how long and why, as these will help candidates to understand the questions and locate answers correctly for **Question 8 and Question 11**.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1 – 5

Overall candidates performed well in this exercise as there were lots of positive responses. Candidates were most familiar with the key vocabulary in **Question 2** and **Question 4**. A few candidates did not understand 银行 (bank) in **Question 1** as different options were chosen. Furthermore, candidates found 葡萄 (grapes) in **Question 3** challenging. In **Question 5**, some candidates got confused between 牙膏 (toothpaste) and 台灯 (desk lamp) and answered C instead.

Question 6

The performance in this set of questions were outstanding as they were the best answered questions in the whole paper. Almost all candidates secured full marks in **Question (a)** and **(c)**. Very occasionally errors occurred on **Question (b)** and **(d)** as option A or D were chosen.

Question 7

Very positive responses were seen in this question. The vast majority of the candidates demonstrated very good understanding of the vocabulary 种树 and 本子, whilst a few candidates did not find 幼儿园 easy. As a result, performance in **Question (b)** and **(c)** were better than **Question (a)**.

Question 8

The passage was about Xiao Gang's experience in a boarding school. The candidates handled this sets of questions at ease and the presentation of the written answers had improved from last year. Compared to other questions, **Question (b)** was proven to be quite challenging.

- (a) The performance was very positive. Those candidates who lifted the whole paragraph would not be credited with the mark. Isolated answer like 一所艺术 instead of 一所艺术学校 were not sufficient enough to secure a mark.
- (b) Over half of the candidates handled this question successfully. Similar to last question, the excessive lifting the whole paragraph were not a good reflection of genuine understanding. Incorrect answers like 两个月 or 两个月前搬 were seen quite frequently.
- (c) Most candidates did well in this question. 还有乒乓球桌 was accepted too.
- (d) This was a well answered question with few candidates writing 学校 or 外面.
- (e) Best performed question in this section. A very high percentage of the candidates shown secured knowledge about the subjects tested. Candidates are reminded to put the answers separately in each line where there are marks listed separately.
- (f) Most candidates gave correct answers like 老师非常有经验 or 老师很有经验. However, a small number of candidates wrote 有经验, which was quite different from the meaning in the passage, therefore, no credit was given. It is important the candidates included the details which links to the original meaning.
- (g) Very strong performance was seen. A few candidates did not attempt this question.
- (h) Similarly, this question was very well answered. Only a handful of candidates missed out the key part 给家里 in their answer. Some errors like 者给家里打电话 could be avoided in the future.

Question 9

The performance of this set of multiple matching exercise was very good. Most candidates demonstrated a good level of understanding of the four pieces of short texts relating to parks. Candidates demonstrated a very good command of the vocabulary used in the texts, but some were not sure about 门票 or the whole sentence 买门票总是要等很久. As a consequence **Question (d)** was found very challenging. To tackle this type of question, it is important that candidates know the synonyms as well as antonyms.

Furthermore, a few candidates left some multiple-choice questions unanswered which rules out any chance of getting a potential mark. The candidates need to remember to attempt all questions to maximise their potential marks.

Question 10

The overall performance was good in this question. Candidates attempted almost all five questions.

Question (a), (c) and (e) were the best performed questions. It was noticed that some candidates may not have understood the text on the whole and only tried to spot words, therefore, not always securing the mark. In **Question (b)**, a common wrong answer was option A 坐公共汽车 as it appeared in the text. **Question (d)** 文具 was proven to be challenging as a number of candidates missed out the mark by having chosen option C 手机 instead.

Question 11

In this final exercise, candidates were asked to read an extended passage in Chinese, and to demonstrate their understanding by answering short-answer questions referring to it, also in Chinese. The questions were asked in the same order as the information was presented in the passage. A small number of candidates decided not to attempt certain questions, in particular **(c), (g) and (h)**. Candidates would benefit from making an attempt at answering these questions rather than omitting them entirely. As this is the final exercise, both the passage and questions became more difficult. Even though there were some excellent responses, such

as (b) and (d), generally speaking, candidates found this exercise challenging compared to the rest of the paper.

- (a) There were a wide range of answers to this question. Typical wrong answers included 计师, 银行家, 了会计师.
- (b) As mentioned above, this question was well answered with an occasional missing verb 去.
- (c) A very well answered question in general. Common error included 只能听父母, which did not reflect genuine understanding required at this level. It therefore did not allow for a mark.
- (d) Very strong performances in this question. A vast majority of the candidates managed to give either a concise answer 技术学校 or answered in a full sentence 他在一所技术学校学习.
- (e) It was fair to say this was the most challenging question in the paper according to candidates' performances. The correct answer was 一年. Many candidates gave 两年 which was the distractor in the text. This might be due to the candidates getting confused with 一开始 and 原本.
- (f) Most answers secured the mark by writing 自己选择任何科目. A small number of candidates left this unanswered.
- (g) A wide range of answers were seen in marking this question. Answers like 爱说话 which is similar to 变得开朗了 was credited with the mark. Quite a few candidates gave answer including 以前不爱说话, 现在变得开朗了, which was not precise enough and therefore did not receive the mark.
- (h) Half of the candidates secured both marks successfully. Candidates were able to identify the key information 在他们过生日时 from the passage. Answer like 过生日时, without the subject, was unclear.

In conclusion, centres should continue to support candidates in writing Chinese characters accurately and to remind candidates to give thorough answers relating to the questions.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MANDARIN CHINESE

Paper 0547/22
Reading

Key messages

In order to perform well for this paper, candidates should:

- Study and consolidate the entire vocabulary list for defined content.
- Consolidate common key question words, time phrases, synonyms and antonyms.
- Have a plan on timing for each question, depending on the complexity of the questions.
- Read the questions carefully and provide answers based on the texts in the paper rather than using own experiences or assumptions.
- Provide an answer for short-answer questions, brief answers with clear content are sufficient.
- Demonstrate genuine understanding of a passage. Random lifting can not result in any mark.
- Attempt every question in the paper, even the questions they feel less confident about.

General comments

Candidates performed very well in this year's examination. The vast majority of candidates understood the requirements of the specification very well and applied themselves well in this series. A small percentage of candidates scored full marks. Few questions were left blank in the responses.

Looking forward, more attention needs to be paid in learning the key question words, such as what, when, where, how, how long and why, as these will help candidates to understand the questions and locate answers correctly for **Question 8** and **Question 11**.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1 – 5

In the first five questions, the candidates' performance was strong overall. A large number of candidates were more familiar with the key vocabulary in **Question 1** and **Question 3**. A few candidates mixed 下棋 with 跑步 or 体操 in **Question 2**. Similarly, a small number of candidates got confused with 沙拉 in **Question 4** and therefore chose an incorrect answer. The performance in **Question 5** was lower as almost one third of the candidates did not recognise the vocabulary 镜子.

Question 6

The performance on this question was the best in the whole paper as it was very rare to see candidates make wrong choices in **Question (a)**, **(c)** and **(d)**. When those occasional errors occurred, it was **Question (b)** with the vocabulary 西红柿.

Question 7

Most candidates across the ability range answered all these questions and all three questions were correctly ticked by almost all candidates. Only a few candidates found vocabulary like 导游 or 长城 challenging. Furthermore, a few candidates struggled with the concepts of 明信片 or 信 and did not get a mark.

Question 8

Most candidates secured high marks. The majority of candidates also used the correct pronouns in their response as they made sure to replace the first person ‘我’ with the third person ‘小刚’ or ‘他’.

- (a) Most answers were accurate and concise although some candidates answered 小刚, 学校今年 or 小刚也参加了.
- (b) This was a well answered question with only few candidates only writing 广州 or 郊区.
- (c) In general, candidates performed well in this question. In the first question, the most common mistake was 公共汽车 without verb 坐, a less common error was 爸爸妈妈开车送小刚. The second question was better answered than the first one. Some longer answers like 因为家里的车坏了, 所以爸爸妈妈不可以开车送小刚 were seen, which demonstrated good language command as well as genuine understanding of the passage. Some candidates answered both questions together, 因为家里的车坏了, 我只好坐公共汽车来。 which was awarded one mark.
- (d) The performance on this question was the best in the set of questions. Errors like, 七月五号 were seen. Also, very rarely, answers like 十五号 appeared, which was not specific enough for a mark.
- (e) Good performance overall. A few candidates struggled to give full answers and gave answers such as 踢球很好玩.
- (f) Most candidates handled this question very well. Amongst incorrect answers, a wide range of examples were seen, such as 工作人员都, 工作人 or 工作员. A few candidates located the answer from the passage correctly but wrote 夏令营的工作人员都会孝大家做饭. The wrong character 孝 caused ambiguity. Moreover, long lifting occurred in this question.
- (g) Very strong performance was seen. On very few occasions 鸡蛋 was given. Without the key verb 炒, it had impacted the comprehension.
- (h) This question was very well answered. Only a handful of candidates missed out 明天 in their answer.

Question 9

The performance in this set of multiple matching exercise was good. Most candidates demonstrated a good level of understanding of the task and there were some very successful attempts at the exercise. **Question (d)** was proven to be the most challenging question in this exercise. A high percentage of candidates answered incorrectly by ticking option C instead, as the vocabulary 汤包 appeared in both text C and D. A very small number of candidates ticked two options, which resulted in no mark. Furthermore, a few candidates left some multiple-choice questions blank which rules out any chance of getting a potential mark. The candidates need to remember to attempt all questions to maximise their potential.

Question 10

The overall performance was good in this question. Candidates attempted almost all five questions.

Question (a) and **Question (d)** were the best answered questions. Some candidates may not have understood the text fully and only tried to word spot, therefore, not always securing the mark. In **Question (b)**, a common wrong answer was option A. In **Question (c)**, option C was chosen by some candidates, probably due to the fact the vocabulary was quite close to the keyword 不吃肉 in the text. **Question (e)** was proven to be the most challenging as a number of candidates chose option B or D.

Question 11

Most candidates demonstrated a very good understanding to the whole text. They were able to locate short and accurate parts from the text to answer the questions. This set of questions were more challenging than earlier questions in the paper.

- (a) There was a wide range of answers to this question. Typical wrong answer was 德国人. Candidates who answered 土生土长的德国人 were awarded a mark.
- (b) Lots of good answers were seen, such as 打过很多工 or 中学毕业后打过很多工. Quite a few candidates included 他从小成绩优秀 in the answer, which caused ambiguity.
- (c) A very well answered question. A common error was to include 本来可以找到一份好工作. Furthermore, answers including 但 before 他先去了中国旅游, did not reflect understanding required at this level, and therefore, missed a mark.
- (d) Very strong performances in this question. Answers like 爱上了广西的人 demonstrated excellent understanding of the text. Quite a few candidates included 不是因为那里风景美丽 in their answers.
- (e) Best answered question in the set of questions. Some candidates failed to include 更 in the answers. 他想帮助更多有需要的孩子 was written on a few occasions too. It is important that candidates give detailed answers where appropriate to secure a better mark.
- (f) This was the most challenging question in the paper according to candidates' performances. The correct answer was 给学校发电子邮件. Many candidates gave extra information such as 家长怕孩子考试成绩不好, 给学校发电子邮件 or 给学校发电子邮件, 校长只好不让他教了, which did not show the understanding expected at this level.
- (g) Most answers secured the mark by writing 大山. More able candidates gave more details by giving answers like 去更远的大山里做义工. However, a few mistakes were found e.g., 运 and 远. Common errors included 中国 and 离开中国.
- (h) More than half of the candidates secured both marks successfully. There was a good range of co-verbs like 用, 给 or 买 used to support their answers in the first question. In the second question, almost all candidates had understood that 安克 cooks food for the candidates, however, some candidates did not express the ideas in enough detail to warrant a mark e.g. 他给孩子们做吃; 给他们做吃; 他做吃 was commonly seen. Other answers like 他真心热爱孩子们 or 他走的时候孩子们都哭了 were irrelevant to the question.

In conclusion, centres should continue to support candidates in writing Chinese characters accurately and to remind candidates to give thorough answers relating to the questions.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MANDARIN CHINESE

Paper 0547/23
Reading

Key messages

In order to perform well for this paper, candidates should:

- Study and consolidate the entire vocabulary list for defined content.
- Consolidate common key question words, time phrases, synonyms and antonyms.
- Have a plan on timing for each question, depending on the complexity of the questions.
- Read the questions carefully and provide answers based on the texts in the paper rather than using own experiences or assumptions.
- Provide an answer for short-answer questions, brief answers with clear content are sufficient.
- Demonstrate genuine understanding of a passage. Random lifting can not result in any mark.
- Attempt every question in the paper, even the questions they feel less confident about.

General comments

The outcome for this year's examination was very positive. It was clear that the candidates and teachers had understood the requirements of the course very well. Amongst the responses, some candidates chose to respond to the question in full sentences, using their own words with the details required by the questions.

Looking forward, more attention needs to be paid in learning the key question words, such as what, when, where, how, how long and why, as these will help candidates to understand the questions and locate answers correctly, especially for **Question 8 and Question 11**. Some candidates also need to take care when writing characters to iron out the careless errors in order to maximise their potential.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1 – 5

Excellent performance on **Question 4** as a vast majority of the candidates secured the mark. Candidates were familiar with the key vocabulary 咖啡馆 in **Question 1** and it was easily handled. A few candidates did not understand 体操 in **Question 2** and 梨 in **Question 3** and chose different options. Furthermore, candidates found 台灯 in **Question 5** challenging.

Question 6

The performance in this set of questions was outstanding as they were the best answered questions in the whole paper. Most of the candidates secured full marks in **Questions (a), (b) and (d)**. Very occasionally errors occurred on **Question (c)** as 打扫 was less known by the candidates.

Question 7

Very accurate responses were seen in this question. A vast majority of the candidates demonstrated very good understanding of the vocabulary linked to the weather and local area in **Questions (a) and (c)**. Also, most candidates secured the mark in **Question (b)** as they were familiar with the vocabulary 小鸟.

Question 8

The passage was about how Zhang Li spent her weekend with her mum. Overall, candidates found certain questions harder than others. A possible solution to improve performance is working on question words and wider recognition of characters.

- (a) All candidates attempted the question, and a lot of candidates understood the question word 什么时候.
- (b) Candidates handled this question successfully as they were able to identify 十分钟 from the passage. Incorrect answers like 十分 were seen.
- (c) Most candidates did well in this question. Candidates had clear understanding about the item bought and the reason given.
- (d) The responses were mixed. A good number of candidates secured the mark by giving 上面画了很多小猫 whilst others left it blank.
- (e) This was the best performed question in this section. A very high percentage of the candidates secured the mark.
- (f) Very strong performance was seen. A few candidates left this blank.
- (g) A good number of candidates tackled this question with ease. Some candidates were unfamiliar with the vocabulary 沙拉. In addition to that, 盘沙拉 was seen and the word 盘 seemed unknown to some candidates.
- (h) This question was very well answered. Candidates were able to identify the opinions tested in the question.

Question 9

Candidates tackled this set of multiple matching exercise well. The performance in **Question (a)** was the best. Excellent understanding of 不用花钱 and 免费, which enabled the candidates to secure the marks in **Question (b)**. Candidates were good at identifying that the preposition 旁边 was a distractor for 体育馆, therefore, answered **Question (c)** successfully. However, a few candidates found **Question (d)** and **(e)** challenging as the performance was a bit mixed. A better knowledge of synonyms and antonyms would be helpful to handle this section.

Question 10

It was good to see that candidates attempted all five questions. **Questions (a), (c)** and **(e)** had better responses than others. Some candidates may not have understood the text on the whole and only tried to word spot, therefore, not always securing the mark. In **Question (b)**, a common wrong answer was option B 有很多学生去 as it appeared in the text, but candidates did not notice 学生 was related to 小广场 rather than 生活超市 in the question. **Question (d)** proved to be tricky for quite a number of candidates. It seemed some candidates answered this question using their own assumptions as 她变得有名了 was quite popular answer.

Question 11

In this final exercise, candidates were asked to read an extended passage about Da Lun's experience about a dragon boat festival, and to demonstrate their understanding by answering short-answer questions referring to it, also in Chinese. The questions were asked in the same order as the information was presented in the passage. A small number of candidates decided not to attempt certain questions, such as **Questions (f)** and **(h)**. Candidates would benefit from attempting to answer these questions rather than omitting them entirely.

- (a) The required key information was 新加坡. Most candidate secured the mark. Typical wrong answers also included 英国 and occasionally candidates copied the whole sentence, which did not award the mark.

- (b) Good responses were seen. A couple of candidates included the extra information 虽然没有春节热闹 which caused ambiguity.
- (c) Best answered question in the set of questions. Candidates were able to locate the character 前 in the passage and answered this question successfully.
- (d) Positive responses were seen as able candidates identified the required information 米总是掉出来 at ease. Less able candidates tended to include the sentence 试了几次, 他终于会包了, which was not awarded a mark.
- (e) Some candidates handled this successfully, but some candidates thought 达伦是学校龙舟队的队长 was the answer.
- (f) Most candidates were able to locate the sentences relating to this question. More able candidates were able to identify the two piece of key information correctly, whilst less able candidates included 除了老师教大家 in the answer, which did not show genuine understanding.
- (g) A few candidates found this question challenging. The correct answer was 五个小时. Answers like 两个小时 or 五个小 were seen.
- (h) This last question had very good responses. Some candidates left it blank.

In conclusion, centres should continue to support candidates in writing Chinese characters accurately and to remind candidates to give thorough answers relating to the questions.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MANDARIN CHINESE

Paper 0547/03
Speaking 03

Key messages

- Centres had generally prepared candidates well for the speaking test. Most Examiners understood the need to adhere precisely to the script in the *Instructions for Teachers/examiners* and not to rephrase any questions.
- Please carefully read the Paper 3 (Speaking) *Instructions for Teachers/examiners* that accompany the candidate cards each year to be fully aware of the requirements of the test.
- Examiners are reminded that it is very important to use the randomisation grid on p14 – 15 of the *Instructions for Teachers/examiners* so that candidate cards are correctly and fairly allocated.
- Role plays were conducted well by most Examiners but please be reminded to ask both parts of the question where applicable and to ask the question exactly as printed.
- In the topic conversations section, some Examiners need to make greater use of extension questions (e.g. 还有呢? 你能多说一点吗?) to elicit fuller answers from candidates.
- Examiners are reminded to use the alternative questions provided in **Questions 3 – 5** of the topic conversations only if a candidate does not understand the first version (and repetition) of the question. The alternative questions should not be asked if the original questions have already been answered.
- Most Examiners understood the need to ask no more than two further questions of their own if timings were short on topic conversations.
- Clerical work was usually very good in centres.
- The quality of recordings was usually very good.
- Centres are reminded to include the correct number of recordings according to the size of their centre and to include candidates at the very top and the very bottom of the mark range in the sample. Please consult the Samples Database to check the required size at www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples

General comments

The Speaking test is intended to be a test of spontaneous communicative ability; candidates should not know the content of the test beforehand. A wide range of performance was evident across the candidature and examples of performance at all levels of ability were heard.

Most centres followed the instructions concerning the randomisation grid and understood the need to test candidates according to the prescribed order of the cards and conversation topics. **Centres are reminded it is very important that the cards are distributed according to the grid provided on pages 14 – 15 in the *Instructions for Teachers/examiners*.**

Centres had usually prepared candidates well and Examiners were mostly aware of how to conduct the test efficiently and correctly. Examiners greeted candidates using the prompts provided and nearly all Examiners read the scenario for the role plays as instructed in **Chinese**. This is important to set the scene for candidates.

Role plays were generally conducted well. Examiners are reminded that questions can be repeated (but not rephrased) **once** only if the candidate does not answer a question or gives an ambiguous response. It is important for Examiners to read the role play tasks exactly as printed to ensure that they are not changing the nature and level of difficulty of the tasks. Examiners are reminded to ask both parts of the question where applicable unless the candidate has already answered the second part naturally in their first answer.

For the **topic conversations**, timings were not always appropriate. These were often too short and, in a few cases, too long. Some Examiners needed to ask more **extension questions** (e.g. 还有呢? 你能多说一点吗?) to give candidates the opportunity to develop their answers and go beyond brief or incomplete answers which do not communicate fully. Candidates need to understand the wordings of these extension questions so that they know when they need to give more detail.

If a candidate does not understand **Questions 3, 4 or 5** in the topic conversations (and a repetition of these questions), Examiners must ask the **alternative question**. These alternative questions give candidates another opportunity to understand the task. **Some Examiners asked the alternative questions when the candidate had already answered the first question clearly, or used the alternative questions as extension questions. This should be avoided, as it can be confusing for candidates.** Some Examiners went straight to the alternative questions without asking and repeating the original questions, which disadvantaged candidates, as they could not access the higher Communication bands.

When there was a PAUSE between two questions in the script, most Examiners gave candidates the time to answer the first question before asking the second one.

Centres are reminded that if a topic conversation lasts 3½ minutes or less, even after asking extension questions, the Examiner must ask **up to two further** questions of his/her choice on the same topic as the other questions to make sure that the conversation lasts 4 minutes. The further questions should be asked after each topic conversation not just at the end of both topic conversations. If the topic conversation still lasts 3½ minutes or less, the Examiner must stop the conversation.

Examiners are reminded to introduce the topic area at the start of each topic conversation as well as the transition between each section with a phrase in Chinese e.g. 我们现在进行具体对话一, 休闲时间。

Clerical checks and sample size

In most centres, the clerical work had usually been completed very efficiently and centres are thanked for this. It is essential that all clerical work is checked very carefully to ensure that candidates receive the correct mark. Centres generally understood the requirements of the sample size and samples were nearly always correct. (Please consult www.cambridgeinternational.org/samples if you are unsure.) Please always remember to include the work of candidates at the top and bottom of the mark range. Please also ensure the working mark sheet (WMS) is correctly completed by each Examiner with the candidates' correct names and numbers, a record of the role play and topic conversation cards and that it is signed and dated by the Examiner.

Recording quality

A high proportion of the recordings received were of a very good quality. Thank you to centres for this. Please check all recording equipment prior to the live exams and before despatching the sample. Please also try to ensure reasonably quiet conditions for recording to avoid background noise. If an external microphone has been used for recording, please make sure that it is nearer to the candidate than to the Examiner. The recording should not be stopped during the three parts of each candidate's speaking exam. The Examiner, and not the candidate, must introduce the candidate by name and number.

Application of the mark scheme

In the **role plays**, marks can only be awarded for the **set questions**. To score 2 marks, an answer may be brief, but the language should be appropriate to the task, substantially accurate and not be ambiguous in terms of the message being communicated.

In the **topic conversations**, when applying the mark scheme for **Communication**, it is necessary to think carefully about how well the answers gave the required information and how consistently this was done across the two topics. Performances where answers convey most of the required information but are brief, sometimes irrelevant and with little development, would fall into the *Satisfactory* category. To score marks in the *Very Good* descriptor for Communication, candidates need to respond confidently to the original questions (they should not need the alternative questions), be able to offer consistently relevant information and to show that they can develop their ideas and opinions, adding relevant detail where necessary and justifying their answers. In the mark scheme for **Communication**, the word **rephrasing** means that the alternative question has been asked. It should be noted that if conversations are short, candidates could be disadvantaged as they may not have the opportunity to develop their material. When applying the mark

scheme for **Quality of Language**, the key descriptors considered here are the ability to use a range of structures as listed in the syllabus, and the ability to use a range of appropriate vocabulary. Pronunciation is also a key descriptor. To score high marks for Quality of Language, candidates need to show control of a wide range of accurately used language and structures (this can include past and future time frames) as well as very good pronunciation, fluency, intonation and expression.

Comments on specific questions

Role plays

The situations at the start of each role-play should be read aloud in Chinese by the Examiner before commencing the test. This is reassuring for the candidate, and establishes that he/she is playing a role, not merely answering for themselves. Most candidates approached the role-plays well with many scoring good marks. The weakest candidates also showed that they could score marks for partial communication on some tasks. The first two tasks on each card were of a very factual nature and gave candidates the opportunity to answer briefly. They did not require longer and more developed answers. Candidates mostly answered these two opening questions well. On each card, the last three tasks were more challenging and gave candidates the opportunity to show that they could use past and future time frames correctly and develop their answers with opinions and simple explanations. A useful technique for candidates to adopt in the 10-minute preparation time is to think very carefully about useful vocabulary and structures which could occur in their given role play scenario.

In Card 1, task 1, weaker candidates found it difficult to answer 多远? *how far?* In **task 3**, some candidates were not able to produce an answer for 有什么好玩的地方? *what fun/interesting places?* In **task 5**, weaker candidates found it difficult to understand the word 城市 *city* or were not able to give the name of another city in China.

In Card 2, most tasks were answered well. In **task 1**, weaker candidates did not always understand the word 功课 *homework* and some forgot to add a measure word before the word *hour* in their answer. Some candidates did not understand the keyword 活动 *activity* in **task 4**.

In Card 3, task 2, some candidates did not understand 城市 *city*. In **task 3**, the question word 多久? *how long?* proved challenging to some candidates. It was pleasing to see this year that the noun 礼物 *present* was better understood.

In Card 4, tasks were generally answered competently. Weaker candidates struggled with the **task 1** question 你从什么时候? *from what time?*

In Card 5, task 1, some candidates were not able to give a place within the school 在学校的什么地方? *where in the school ...?*

In Card 6, questions were generally answered well. In **task 5**, weaker candidates were not always able to state why they thought doing sport was important or not.

In Card 7, In **task 2**, some candidates were not able to state some of the activities people did at Spring Festival. In **task 5**, weaker candidates did not understand 节日 *festival*.

In Card 8, questions were generally answered well. In **task 4**, weaker candidates did not understand 你小时候养过什么别的宠物? *What other animals did you have when you were younger?*

In Card 9, questions were generally answered well. In **task 2**, weaker candidates did not understand 设施 *facilities*. In **task 4**, several candidates did not understand the noun 季节 *season*.

Topic conversations

Examiners are reminded to introduce the topic area in Chinese just before the start of each conversation. The first three topics were based on one of the sub-topics of Areas A and B as listed in the syllabus. The last four topics were taken from one of the sub-topics in Areas C, D or E of the syllabus. All these sub-topics were familiar to candidates and a full range of performance was seen with each conversation having its

easier and more challenging questions. The first two questions in each conversation were closed and straightforward in nature and were set at an easier level to start off the conversation. They could be answered briefly and with factual language, although stronger candidates took the opportunity to give more developed responses containing relevant details. The final three questions on each card were more open and required candidates to communicate relevantly in past and future time frames. Each topic conversation also gave candidates the opportunity to express opinions and develop where possible their reasons for their opinions.

Topic 1 Transport In **Question 1**, weaker candidates often answered with their parents' occupation rather than answering how their parents got to work. The word 父母 *parents* was not always understood.

Question 2 was generally answered well. In **Question 3**, weaker candidates often required the alternative question as they did not understand 好处 / 坏处 *advantage/disadvantage*. In **Question 4**, weaker candidates did not understand 经历 *experience* so needed the alternative questions. **Question 5** was understood well but some candidates were not able to explain why they wanted/did not want to learn to drive in future.

Topic 2 Family The first question was answered well and many candidates elaborated on who was in their family. **Question 2** proved challenging to weaker candidates who did not understand the word 性格 *character*. In **Question 3** several candidates did not pick up the need to use a past time frame 做过 *have done*. Additionally weaker candidates did not understand the phrase 有趣的活动 *interesting activity* and needed the alternative question. **Questions 4** and **5** were generally answered well by most candidates

Topic 3 Leisure time **Questions 1** and **2** were generally answered well by most candidates. In **Question 3**, some candidates confused 网上 *online* with 晚上 *evening*. However, after repetition of the question they were able to comprehend what was needed. In **Question 4** several candidates did not pick up on the need to use a past time frame. In **Question 5**, weaker candidates did not always understand the word 活动 *activity*.

Topic 4 Technology Most candidates answered the first 2 questions well. In **Question 3**, some candidates did not pick up on the future time frame verb 打算 *to plan*. Moreover weaker candidates did not always understand the word 周末 *weekend* but could respond to the alternative question. **Question 4** was answered well by most candidates but as in previous questions, weaker candidates often required the alternative question as they did not understand 好处 / 坏处 *advantage/disadvantage*. **Question 5** proved challenging to some candidates who did not understand 付钱 *to pay*. Some candidates were not able to give a reason as to why they like/do not like paying for things with a phone.

Topic 5 Education In **Question 1**, weaker candidates found it hard to understand the word 课程 *course*. **Question 2** was generally answered well. In **Question 3**, some candidates did not pick up on the future time frame verb 打算 *to plan*. In **Question 4** as in previous questions, weaker candidates often required the alternative question as they did not understand 好处 / 坏处 *advantage/disadvantage*. **Question 5** proved challenging for a number of candidates who did not understand the phrase 学校交换活动 *school exchange visit*. Many answered with a school activity. Weaker candidates did not pick up on the past time frame.

Topic 6 The international world **Questions 1** and **2** were generally answered well by most candidates. In **Question 3**, some candidates could not give examples of how they learn languages. **Question 4** proved challenging for several candidates; the key words 参观名胜古迹 *visiting sites of interest* and 纪念品 *souvenirs* were not always understood. In the alternative question, weaker candidates did not often understand 什么地方 *what places?* In **Question 5**, candidates were not always able to clearly explain the advantages and disadvantages of travel.

Topic 7 The world of work candidates could generally answer **Questions 1** and **2** satisfactorily. In **Question 3**, weaker candidates were not always able to articulate why working at home or office was preferable. In **Question 4**, many candidates did not understand the word 义工 *voluntary work* and did not pick up on the need for a past time frame. In **Question 5**, weaker candidates struggled with the question word 什么样的人? *what type of person?*

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MANDARIN CHINESE

Paper 0547/41
Writing 41

Key messages

- Avoid using pinyin (and English) particularly for **Question 1**.
- Elaborate with detailed relevant information to achieve the top band marks for **Question 2** and **Question 3**.
- A significantly smaller number of characters than the recommended word count will affect **Question 2** and the completion of task for **Question 3**.
- Read the scenario carefully for **Question 3**, answer all the questions and pay attention to different time frames.
- If a task is 'What housework did you do last time?' and the candidate answers 'I did lots of housework' (and nothing else), then they do not meet the criteria for the top band of task completion.

General comments

This is the second year that the new syllabus and mark scheme has taken place, therefore a majority of candidates were familiar with **Question 1**. There were a number of impressive performances from centres. Some candidates used complex structures and difficult or unusual characters, even idioms, which demonstrates their linguistic ability was improving.

Even though the format in **Question 1** has been changed, apart from gap 2 'a good aspect of your personality' which seemed a bit challenging, all other gaps were well managed with proper words from the core vocabulary list due to the topics e.g. job application were common and familiar to candidates.

The numbers of candidates significantly increased this year and the overall quality of work from candidates on **Questions 2** and **3** has improved from last year. It was pleasing to see that some candidates wrote notes either in English or Chinese next to each question to make sure communication marks were well achieved. The change in the mark scheme explicitly assesses the range of language applied in candidates' work and this was heavily reflected in this year's response. It was wonderful to see a greater variety of expressions and structures attempted by most candidates although there is room for improvement in the accuracy of the usage.

Candidates were not penalised for writing too much. It should be remembered that a composition requires a certain number of words to address all the bullet points in the question with a level of detail, and variety in vocabulary and sentence structures is rewarded. Candidates should be reminded that if they write significantly fewer than 80 characters for **Question 2** or 150 characters for **Question 3**, they will not produce enough evidence of their ability to gain access to the highest marks.

Centres should be aware answers have to be relevant to the questions, and all the bullet points need to be addressed with as much relevant information as possible. Since this is a writing examination, Chinese characters should be used as often as possible and both English, pinyin and numerical digits e.g. 6点、3年、5月8日、星期4 should be avoided.

Candidates did not need to copy out the questions, particularly for **Question 3**. Writing straight to the points and expanding accordingly without pre-setting sentences too much would have been more efficient to use the recommended word count. Letter or email format, long openings and ending greetings are not essential which could take up candidates' exam time and the space for recommended word counts.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates were asked to fill in a form for applying a summer job. Most of the candidates were able to fill the gaps with ease. There were plenty good and easy answers for all the gaps except gap 2 'a good aspect of your personality'. Handful candidates misunderstood 语言 which was on last year paper in 42 which was another variation as for 41.

For gap 1 想申请的工作, majority of the candidates wrote jobs without mistakes, e.g. 老师、银行家、工人、医生、电工、侍应生、老师、律师、服务员、宠物店店员、兽医 etc.; some candidates included a verb in their answers e.g. 在餐厅做工、做法、饭馆的工作、卖包子人、教英语课 etc. were accepted, but centres should remind candidates that no verbs are needed in **Question 1**.

Gap 2 性格好的方面 seemed challenging to candidates though able candidates produced many impressive answers, e.g. 自律、开朗、喜欢开玩笑、乐于助人、友善、乐观、有礼貌、热情、诚实、吃苦、外向、耐心、大方、幽默活泼、很有意思、善良、有趣、安静、热爱交流、热爱生活 etc. However, 很好、我格好 could not gain marks.

Compared to the two tasks above, gap 3 + 4 were very well answered with different languages. Most of the candidates provided different languages like 中文、德语、汉语、法语、英语、西班牙语 etc. Some of answers were not accurate such as 中语, and some characters were not written accurately with some strokes missing or adding extra strokes.

For last task gap 5 places, the majority were able to write a working place, e.g. 餐馆、学校、医院 or a city 北京、伦敦、上海 or a country 中国、英国、法国、马来西亚 etc. which all qualified for a mark.

Accuracy of characters generally was good, however, there were several common mistakes. They were either adding or missing a radical or with a wrong radical or using a character with a similar phonetic sound. Centres could train their candidates to avoid the similar mistakes for future exams. The common mistakes were listed below:

1. mis-formed characters creating different meanings: 老师 (师)、打网班、人商、在比 (北) 京
2. missing radicals: 央 (英) 国、去 (法) 语、上每 (海)

Candidates should be aware that answers written in Pinyin, in English or a combination, e.g. 中 guo、fan dian etc. have not been awarded marks and so this practice should be avoided.

Question 2

The question requires the candidates to write about their Sundays. Most of the candidates fully understood the requirements of the question and responded very well to it. The best candidates were not only able to understand rubrics and to answer the bullet points to fulfil the communication aspect, but also were able to use their linguistic knowledge accurately on character writing, vocabulary, for both simple and complex sentence structures by using linking words. They were able to provide consistently relevant information and opinions. Some of them tried to extend each task with extra details.

Bullet point 1: the vast majority did very well and answers like 星期天我一般早上九点起床 were good enough to qualify for a mark. Some candidates consistently provided extra information, e.g. 这比平时晚一点儿因为从星期一到星期五我要上学 which pushed the marks to the top band. Some candidates included the question word 几 in their answers 我八几点起床 which caused confusion.

The majority were very familiar with the food topic, so they could respond to bullet point 2 very well with extended information, e.g. 我早饭吃面包, 喝牛奶; 我妈妈给我做好吃的早饭, 有面条、包子, 我也喝果汁.

Many candidates wrote several interesting places for bullet point 3, e.g. 足球场、网球场、咖啡厅 etc. On the other end of the spectrum, a few candidates might not understand the question word 哪些 and they listed a few of the activities, e. g. 打网球、走路 without mentioning places, so sadly lost marks.

Bullet point 4 were very well answered with popular activities like 看电视、听音乐、看书、做饭 etc. 聊天、散步、做作业 were also often seen.

Most of the candidates were familiar with the question word 谁 and wrote accurate answers for bullet point 5. However; a few candidates did not use the future time frame which was showed in the question and used past time phrases, e.g. 上个星期天, thus, communication had not been clearly achieved. Centres should advise candidates to be more vigilant to the tense in **Question 2**, in which there is always a question in the future time frame and candidates should distinguish past time phrases and future time phrases and particles, e.g. 会、想、打算 etc., also include them in their answers, e.g. 我下个星期会和我的朋友一起玩儿.

To score the top band for **Question 2**, candidates need to include details. Therefore, even though some candidates answered all the bullet points, they did not score the full mark as they needed to expand their answers and to provide a level of detail.

Candidates should be reminded when they copy the characters or sentence structures from the bullet points, they should be more careful of looking at whether the characters were correctly written without missing any parts or the questions words have been removed from the answers. Also, whether the answer words were in the correct place. There were some mistakes listed below which need to be improved.

Some candidates felt restricted by the notion of 80 – 100 characters and did not demonstrate their full capabilities, which could be observed by crossed sentences which could have made the essay much more interesting and fuller. A significantly smaller number of characters than the recommended word count will affect the marks even if all the questions have been answered.

There were plenty good examples for each task, e.g:

- 我星期天会比平时起床晚一点儿, 大约早上十点到十一点。
- 我白天哪儿都不去, 我在家学习中文, 有时候我做家务。
- 我经常和我的朋友一起去商场买东西, 比如衣服和文具。
- 我常常吃鸡蛋、饺子, 喝牛奶, 非常美味。
- 我常常也打网球, 所以我有好的身体。
- 吃完面包后我会去公园散步, 顺便看看蓝天和绿油油的草地。
- 我喜欢去湖边, 因为非常美丽而且五颜六色。

In contrast, there were some areas which need to be improved:

Grammar:

- Wrong words order: 我说去语跟爸爸; 打羽毛球和我弟弟; 我玩和我弟弟很多东西
- Use of 是 with adjectives: 我的饭吃是一个鱼; 我星期天是很方便
- Use of wrong words or word missing: 这个是我的作做业, 我工作我的中国; 我常常去在家; 我去了汽车
- Misuse of 也: 我和我的家也我的朋友玩
- Misuse of 了: 公园是很好了、我和妈妈常常去了这个公园
- Mixed tenses: 上个星期天我想跟弟弟去这个公园
- Misuse of 给: 我妈妈给我开车去公园

Characters and words:

- Candidates should spend time practising simple common characters such as: 没、家、不、们、和、很、汉字、中文、东西、喜欢、有、朋友、友好 etc.
- Mixture of characters, Pinyin and English: 我白夫常常去 London; 以我们看一个 dianying; 我的朋有 you young.
- Misspelled characters with the same phonetic sound character or similar shape: 我早饭吃苹果的喝水; 我喜欢吃面巴(包)和鸟(鸡); 我喜又(欢)我的星期天; 我去书查; 我下(不)喜反(欢)我哥哥朋友; 他的冢(家)是美国人; 但是我们不(没)有汉国(语); 为国(因为)我的爸爸很喜欢鱼; 我葛(喝)茶
- Proper words not used despite of understandable meanings: 我早饭吃马(鸡)。我白(的)星期天太大了; 星期八我不要了吃中国吃; 我和我的好朋有(友)说话一点; 我常常去公园和电景(影院)
- Careless mistakes and missing some characters: 期天; 我床十点; 我会星期一去学

Question 3

The styles of the questions did not change much this year and there were two options for candidates to choose from: **(a)** to write a letter to a grandpa talking about a new mobile phone that you recently received; **(b)** to write an article for a magazine, talking about your views of doing housework. The option **(a)** was popular than **(b)**, around 25 per cent of the candidates opted for **(b)** since the word for doing housework 做家务 only appeared last year. The majority could respond to all the bullet points with a good level of detail and link ideas effectively with appropriate connectives.

(a) New mobile phone

Completion of the tasks

The majority covered the required information, also provided additional and detailed information which was relevant to the bullet points. The weight of task completion was 10, so candidates learnt experience from last year and were aware that they should give detailed information, opinions/reactions and explanations to reach the top band.

Some candidates were confused about question words in **task 1** 什么样 and **task 4** 怎么样. In some good essays, to answer 什么样, candidates described what it physically looked like, including type, brand, size, colour and so on, but 怎么样 is to ask for comments, so able candidates answered with 好看、有用、方便、有意思、好玩、不太好、简单, many of them discussed the advantage and disadvantage of this mobile phone.

Question words for **task 2** 'who', **task 3** 'why' and **task 5** 'how many years' did not cause issues to complete the tasks. 妈妈、爸爸、父母、朋友、因为是我的生日、我考试考得好、我的手机坏了 etc. were the most popular answers. However, some candidates misunderstood 什么样 'what it looks like' as 怎么样 'what do you think of this mobile phone', so they did not describe its physical appearance, but went straight to opinions, e.g. 便宜、容易用、不贵 etc.

There were almost no irrelevant essays for 3(a) due to the familiarity of the topic. Elaborating and expanding the answers is important to achieve good marks. Some good examples are listed below.

- 收到手机的时候, 我开开心心地跳起来了。
- 我哥哥也给我买了东西, 我过了一个很开心的生日。
- 我觉得这个手机太完美了, 什么功能都有, 它可以打电话、看视频、学习等等。
- 我不喜欢红色, 在我个人看来, 蓝色非常漂亮。
- 虽然红色不是我最喜欢的颜色, 但是收到新手机我还是很高兴。
- 这个手机我打算用六年, 我要把它用到坏了。
- 这个手机又漂亮又新潮, 我可以用它一边听音乐一边做作业。
- 手机上可以做很多事, 比如说跟朋友们打电话, 所以我不需要给他们写信了。

Range

It was very pleasing to see some extended, well-linked sentences frequently appear in the candidates' work. This year it appeared common to see that some complex connectives had been used such as: 虽然...但是...; 不但...而且...; 因为...所以...; 除了...以外, 也/还...; 除此之外, 不仅如此, accurately used 都, 到, 还, 有没有 which again has shown their high linguistic ability.

A wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the tasks also have been seen frequently, e.g.

- 我不会太快换手机因为我觉得对环境不好。
- 这个手机我打算用最少的三年因为它功能齐全, 非常实用, 没有必要太快买新的手机。
- 因为我在化学课的排名总是学校第一, 所以妈妈买了这部手机奖励我。
- 这款手机很便宜, 而且有三个摄像头。我是会摄影的, 用这个手机拍照很好看, 它的性价比很高。

Accuracy of characters and grammar

The new mark scheme laid more emphasis on accuracy compared with the previous year. Most candidates wrote very accurate characters, some candidates showed some errors in their writing, some even with Pinyin and English words which would affect the marks. Occasionally using Pinyin or wrong characters with the same phonetic sound for communication purpose could be accepted for task completion, but it would be penalized in this category.

There were some areas could be improved, e.g:

Characters: 身体 (体)、很员 (很贵)、生白 (日)、西 (四) 月、动物 (物) 园、坏 (环) 境、喜饭 (欢)、医上 (生)、兑 (说)

Grammar:

- Mixed past tense and future tense particle: 在我的新手机, 我打算用十五年了、
- Mixed up words: 我的手机是 apple 样的。
- Use 和 to link adjectives or sentences: 这个手机很好和有用; 他不喜欢和觉得不是很必要; 人常常看手机和不看他的家人
- Wrong measure words: 这个手机我打算用四个年
- Wrong words order: 我打算用左右六年; 我的爸爸买我的手机三年前; 我会说跟我的家人
- Use of 是 with adjectives: 我的手机是很小; 父母是很好和很有意思、手机是不好
- Misuses of verbs or function words: 我可以多说我的朋友; 人可以很多点看手机; 不看他的家人
- Misplace adverbial modifier and attribute: 如果我用我的新手机学习画画, 就我妈妈让我去画画; 我的手机很又好玩又有用
- Misuse 又 to link 2 nouns: 这个手机又白色又黑色
- Misuse of adjectives: 我的爸爸想我不很大看手机; 我打算用很少年
- Misuse of nouns: 他们用太多的点
- Misuse 了: 上个周末是了我的生日

(b) House work

Completion of the tasks

做家务 was newly added to the syllabus last year and a quarter of candidates opted in. For the candidates who chose this option, they had enough ideas to complete the tasks with their true experience. However, some candidates spotted 家 and interpreted 家务 as family or home. Response like: 在家, 一般朋友上网家务; 我上次做家务是很 fang 便因为我和姐姐去看电影 etc. were not acceptable.

Task 1 'who does housework normally at your house' was answered very well even for some weak candidates. Candidates were also familiar with the **task 2** question word 'when was the last time you did housework' but some of them had written dates like 一月 22 日 or with present tense adverbs 常常、经常, e.g. 我上次做家务常常是星期六和星期日; 我上次做家务是上个每周 etc. which cannot be awarded marks.

For the **task 3**, a handful of candidates misunderstood 哪些 as where 哪儿 and produced sentence like 我上次做中国, 在北京些家务 so they could not gain marks.

Task 4 was asking your parents' opinion about the housework you have done, there were some interesting comments, the majority of them were positive and occasionally with negative comments, e.g. 很好、很快、很干净、很努力. However, some candidates wrote their own opinions by mistake, e.g. 我觉得很累、很不开心. Centres should advise their candidates to read the questions with more care and try to use the sentence patterns from the questions as a starting point.

Some candidates might not feel it was very easy to give reasons for **task 5** due to the limitation of their vocabulary even though they understood the question. 可以做好吃的饭、帮助爸爸妈妈、让妈妈休息、以后有用、上大学需要、自己照顾自己、挣零花钱 etc. were perfect answers and the words are in the latest syllabus.

Centres should be aware that if the whole answer to **Question 3** was irrelevant (e.g. contains no evidence of being related to the bullet points set), *Task completion*, *Range* and *Accuracy* would be awarded 0. However, if **Question 3** was attempted but communication was not achieved (e.g. the candidate misunderstood the question), a maximum of 4 for *Range* would be awarded. If the words count was significantly less than the recommended length, the capping system would be applied. Therefore, reading the options and annotating the questions before writing out the essay are important stages in the exam.

However, there were some very good examples below:

- 上个周末我家务做两个小时左右,做了各种各样的事,比如:喂我的狗、洗衣服等等。
- 我的父母觉得我做得十分好,因此给了我一些钱,我非常开心。
- 我认为中学生做家务十分重要,因为这能培养年青人的责任心。
- 做家务很重要因为只有这样才能体会到父母的不容易。
- 但是我父母却觉得我的碗不但洗得不干净,而且还油油的。

Range

It was very pleasing to see some complex connectives have been used such as: 虽然……但是……; 不但……而且……; 只要……; 的时候; 以后; 因为……所以……; 除了……以外, 也/还……; 比如; which again has shown their high linguistic ability.

A wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the tasks also have been seen, e.g. 耐心、注意力、独立、放弃、挑战、锻炼 etc. Some sentence structures were really impressive e.g.

- 他们为我感到自豪和骄傲。
- 你不但可以帮助家人,而且可以让他们更开心,这样也会让你更开心。
- 虽然非常辛苦,但是我特别高兴。
- 父母工作忙就更应该帮助他们减少压力,学习怎么自己做家务。
- 中学生学会做家务很重要因为这样他们就可以学会做一个勤快的人。
- 要是这个星期我做家务,那下个星期就是哥哥做。

Accuracy

Candidates who chose 3 (b) did well in grammar and structures which could be seen in the above examples. However, some areas could be improved:

Characters:

下(不)会、汗(干)净、听(所)以、洗(失)衣服、方(房)间、身(体)体

Grammar:

- Mixed tenses: 我上次做家务是明天
- Mixed Pinyin, English with character: 很 lei、xin 苦
- Words order: 她买了商店西边我的家
- Anglicised structures: 我做得又好又兴趣; 我很多喜欢
- Use of 是 with adjectives: 是难、是好玩、是很累
- Use 和 to link two sentences or clauses: 我去那里
- Misuse 又 to link 2 nouns: 在我家一般又姐姐又哥哥做家务
- Missing verb: 星期四我和姐姐家务
- Misuse of 很: 作业比家务很重要
- Misuse the conjunction words and linking words: 除了做家务,我上个周末去了公园所以打乒乓球
- Misunderstood words: 我和我弟弟的家务是去学校和做很好的小人; 六时候

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MANDARIN CHINESE

Paper 0547/42
Writing 42

Key messages

- Avoid using pinyin (and English) particularly in **Question 1**.
- Elaborate with detailed relevant information to achieve the top band marks for **Question 2**.
- A significantly smaller number of characters than the recommended word count will affect the completion of task for **Question 2** and **Question 3**.
- Read the scenario carefully for **Question 2** and **Question 3** and answer all the questions and pay attention to different time frames.
- If a task is 'What have you learnt?' and the candidate answers 'I have learnt a lot (of things)' without any details, then they do not meet the criteria for the top band of task completion.
- Similarly for 3 (b), if a task is 'What is the advantage/disadvantage of eating vegetarian food?' and the candidate answers 'there are many (or big) advantage/disadvantage of eating vegetarian food (and nothing else)', then they do not meet the criteria for the top band of task completion. The same principle for 3 (b) task 1, 'What vegetarian food have you had?', if the answer is merely 'I had many (or one) vegetarian food', then they do not meet the criteria of 'gives detailed information and explanations'.

General comments

This is the second year that the new syllabus and mark scheme have taken place, candidates performed better than the previous year in general especially for **Question 2** and **3**. There were a number of excellent performances from centres in the South East Asian regions. Some candidates used complex structures and difficult or unusual characters, even idioms, which demonstrates their linguistic ability is higher than the level that GCSE requires.

However, the vast majority found **Question 1** very challenging with a minority achieving full marks.

The overall quality of work from candidates on **Questions 2** and **3** have been improved from the previous year. The change in the mark scheme explicitly assesses the range of language applied in candidates' work and this was heavily reflected in this year's response. It was wonderful to see a greater variety of expressions and structures attempted by most candidates although there is room for improvement in the accuracy of the usage.

Candidates were not penalised for writing too much. There was no need for candidates to count the number of characters written (after they have achieved the minimum required characters), since some were restricted by the notion of 80 – 100 characters and did not really demonstrate their capabilities, which could be observed by crossed out sentences which could have made the essay much more interesting and fuller. It should be remembered that a composition requires a certain number of words to address all the bullet points in the question, and variety in vocabulary and sentence structures is rewarded. Therefore, a long, but less varied essay will not be awarded as many marks as one with greater variety and interest. However, candidates should be reminded that if they write significantly fewer than 80 characters for **Question 2** or 150 characters for **Question 3**, they will not produce enough evidence of their ability to gain access to the highest marks.

Centres should be aware answers have to be relevant to the questions, and all the bullet points need to be addressed with as much relevant information as possible. Since this is a writing exam, Chinese characters should be used as often as possible and both English, numerical digits and pinyin should be avoided.

Candidates did not need to copy out the questions, particularly for **Question 3**. Writing straight to the bullet points and expanding accordingly without pre-setting sentences too much would have been more efficient to use the recommended word count. Letter or email format with long openings and ending greeting is not essential which could take up candidates' exam time and the space for recommended word counts.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates were asked to fill in a form about volunteering work, in which they must provide information of gender, places where the volunteers work, means of transport that the volunteers use, and which holiday the volunteers will plan to do the volunteering work. Most of the candidates were able to respond to which place the volunteers work for, such as, 小学、老人院、养老院、孤儿院、医院、动物园、超市 etc. which seemed to suggest candidates understanding what 义工 was, however, many candidates were not able to respond to **Question 1** which asks the candidates to write what gender (性别) the volunteer is, even though 性别 is on the vocabulary list in the new syllabus. The answers to the questions varied due to misinterpretation or misunderstanding the word 性别 as 性格、国籍 or 姓名 even though that is on the form.

In addition, 交通方式 were the most challenging words which are on the vocabulary list in the new syllabus, and some candidates misunderstood as 沟通方式, so words like 发电子邮件、打电话、说中文、面交、手机 etc. appeared in the answers. However, for candidates who understood the task wrote some meaningful answers e.g. 公共汽车、公交车、出租车、巴士、地铁、走路、骑自行车、跑步 etc.

For gap 5 哪个假期, many candidates demonstrated understanding of the meaning, and responded with valid type of holidays e.g. 寒假、暑假、春假、圣诞节假、复活节假、下个春节、中秋节、学校十二月的假期、年终假期 etc. Some time expressions e.g. 星期六、星期日、中国的假期、冬假、暑假 have been accepted. However, centres should encourage candidates to write the appropriate holiday words from the syllabus and avoid using numerical numbers e.g. 2023 年 5 月 4 日 as answers.

A handful of candidates misunderstood gap 5 as 去哪儿 and wrote places. Candidates should revise the core vocabulary list in the syllabus before the exam since the characters in the questions all come from it.

Besides many positive performances, there were several common mistakes when writing words about means of transport, places and holidays. They were either adding or missing a radical or with a wrong radical or using a character with a similar phonetic sound. The mistakes listed below are in the brackets.

For example: 汽车 (气-very common mistake)、图书馆 (官, 管)、公 (工) 园 (元)、医院 (园)、老人院 (园, 圆, 阮, 阮)、饭馆 (官)、饭 (反) 店 (点)、汽 (气) 车、自 (白) 行、公共 (公) 汽 (气) 车、新 (亲) 年、暑 (署) 假 etc.

Candidates should be aware that answers written in Pinyin, in English or a combination, e.g. 图书guan、fan店、han假、xīn年 etc. have not been awarded marks should be avoided.

Question 2

The question requires the candidates to write about a shop that they like including information about where the shop is located; when the shop is open; who often goes to the shop; how the shop looks and what they will buy next time. Most of the candidates fully understood the requirements of the question and responded very well to it. The best candidates were not only able to understand rubrics and to weave all the bullet points into the writing to fulfil the communication aspect, but also were able to use their linguistic knowledge accurately on character writing, vocabulary, for both simple and complex sentence structures. However, there were a few high-ability candidates who did not achieve full marks due to their answers lacking in details, despite possessing a high level of language proficiency.

On the other end of the spectrum, some candidates could not fully achieve the top band in responding to bullet point 4. A candidate only provided what the shop has, such as 商店有书, they did not meet the requirement of the question without providing any descriptive words.

Centres should remind their candidates to read the scenario which has an English translation apart from Chinese characters with more care since some candidates wrote their favourite restaurant instead of a shop.

Bullet point 1: the vast majority did very well and answers like 这个商店在我家后面、商场附近、在中国北京、在我的学校、离我家不远 were fine. Some were very impressive with 离我家很近, 走路五分钟就到了、我最喜欢的商店就在小区旁边、从我家走路去非常方便 etc. However, some candidates focused on other tasks and sadly missed this one.

The majority could respond to bullet point 2 albeit many still got the word order wrong, e. g. 九点上午开门 putting morning before 9 o'clock or 它开门八点每天. Good details were 那个商店平时早上九点开门, 但是周末比较早, 八点就开门了; 书店从星期一到星期五八点开门, 但是星期六九点半才开始. Some candidates wrote a character 九 like a question word 几 or including 几 in the answer, e.g. 八几点开门 which affected communication.

Candidates were doing very well for bullet point 3 about who often goes there though some candidates missed the word 常常. Centres should advise candidates to follow the sentence structures on the task then extend their answers with detail to avoid missing points. Family members, friends, candidates were the popular answers and characters were written accurately.

However, for the bullet point 4 'how the shop looks' posed a challenge for quite a few candidates. Some just simply wrote 商店里有书 without describing words. Able candidates did not only describe the shop, but also extended to the shop assistants or different products in the shop. Most common answers such as 商店很大、很好、漂亮、有五颜六色的衣服、虽然不新, 但是环境非常干净、食物新鲜、有各种各样的东西、东西便宜. More advanced candidates used 售货员都非常亲切、有礼貌、很友善、热情、老板和我聊天、不仅有物美价廉的商品, 还有令人舒适环境 etc. to support their justifications.

Most of the candidates were familiar with the questions word 什么 and wrote accurate answers for bullet point 5, e.g. 下次我会去买面包和水果. Some able candidates wrote justifications with details to score top marks, e.g. 下一次我会去那里买新衣服, 因为新年快要到了; 下一次, 我会到那里买一件裙子, 作为妈妈的生日礼物; 下次, 我会去那里买铅笔盒, 因为我的铅笔盒已经很旧了, 再用就坏了。

However; a few candidates did not understand 下次 and 会 which are all for future time frame and mixed them up with past tense particle 了 in one sentence, e.g. 下次我会去商店买了书和本子 thus, communication had not been clearly achieved. Some candidates used all present tense for all the tasks including bullet point 5, e.g. 我去衣服店买裤子. Centres should advise candidates to follow the sentence structures on the tasks and not omit the future time frame word 下次 and particle 会 in their answers.

There is a new mark scheme for **Question 2**, to score the top band, candidates need to include details. Therefore, even though some candidates answered all the bullet points, they did not score the full mark as they needed to expand their answers and to provide a level of detail.

Candidates should be reminded when they copy the characters or sentence structures from the bullet points, they should be more careful of looking at whether the characters were correctly written without missing any parts or the questions words have been removed from the answers. Also, whether the answer words were in the correct place. There were some mistakes listed below which need to be improved.

Some candidates were restricted by the notion of 80 – 100 characters and did not really demonstrate their capabilities, which was also observed by crossed out sentences which could have made the essay much more interesting and fuller. A significantly smaller number of characters than the recommended word count will affect the marks even if all the questions have been answered.

It is commendable this year that some candidates used excellent connective words to structure complex sentences, in addition to incorporating adjectives effectively. There were plenty good examples for each task, e.g:

Use of Conjunctions and conjunctive patterns/adverbial phrases:

- 东西不但很便宜，还很好用。
- 商店不仅很大，而且很美丽。
- 商店里不只卖早餐，还卖一些生活用品和文具。
- 那儿的店员不仅长得漂亮，卖的服装也都物美价廉。
- 下次我会去那里买练习本因为考试要到了。
- 这个商店在我家附近，所以我可以骑自行车过去。
- 商店的环境非常适合看书，因为顾客都很安静。
- 我下次想去那里买毛巾，因为三条才十五块。
- 这个商店每天早上九点半就开门。
- 商店虽然很小，但是卖各种各样的食物。

Good adjectives/ describing the shop/idioms:

- 安静、干净、整齐、环境很舒服、气氛很热闹、东西很便宜、服务员很有礼貌、商店的员工热情友好、多彩缤纷的又流行又不贵的衣服
- 那里的物品多得让人眼花缭乱。
- 这个商店应有尽有，各式各样的饮料和零食都有。
- 商店时常人山人海，十分热闹。
- 那里的工作人员非常友好。
- 这个商店里有各种各样的糖果和巧克力，全都美味可口。
- 这个文具店挺大的，也有很多文具。
- 这个商店装修得很好，卖的东西也很齐全。
- 我觉得这个商店特别漂亮。
- 服务员十分友善，乐于助人。
- 这个商店里面很干净。
- 这个商店又大又干净。
- 这个商店很有名。
- 这个商店非常大，而且有各种各样的区，比如水果区，文具区，肉类区等等。
- 那家商店的装修非常现代化，让我感到新鲜和舒适。
- 这间咖啡厅可以让人非常放松。
- 我觉得那个商店的小吃很开胃，很好吃，那里的服务员都很好，很友善。
- 商店里人山人海，非常热闹。

Detailed information:

- 我的家附近有一个商店。商店的旁边有一个公园，对面有一条高速公路。
- 这个商店每天早上六点开门，但是如果是假期的时候，这个商店不开门。
- 这间商店的环境非常舒服，因为里面有空调。这个商店也提供了各种各样的产品选择。
- 书店比商店街里别的商店大。
- 我会和妈妈一起去，一起选送给妹妹的书。
- 每天上午十点开门，晚上九点才关门。
- 我很喜欢那个和我家相距一条马路的商店。

- 下次我会去那里买各种各样的裤子和五颜六色的衣服。
- 这个商店在我家附近，只需要走路五分钟左右就能够到达。
- 我家附近有一个商店，商店在医院的右边。
- 从我家出发只需要二十分钟的车程就可以抵达。

On the contrast, there were some areas which need to be improved:

Grammar:

- **Incorrect word order:** 商店开门八点；商店九点早上开门；商店很(附)近我的家；都超市六点开门；我去商店放学以后；我去书店跟妈妈；商店在右边我家；我会买很多面包在商店；它做的衣服是最美的在我眼里；商店常常看都学生；人们常常去商店下午一点；我想买给她新衣服；我常常去那里一起我的朋友；我们喜欢买和在那里；书店是在左边的公园和右边的小卖部；商店可以找到在学校的旁边；朋友买边吃边去花园；这商店有开门在早上六点；这个商店在前面我的家；我喜欢中文看书和英文看书；但是不都衣服是红色的
- **Use of 是 with adjectives:** 这个商店是太大；是很大；是白色；商店员是很友好；商店是美丽；食物是新鲜；书店是大
- **Use of 和 to link two sentences or clauses:** 商店很干净和美丽；这个商店有很好和大；因为这个是超市和都超市六点开门；商店每天六点开门和星期六不开门；商店特别干净和他们的服务员对我们很好；这间商店太大了和里面都很干净；书店是在左边的公园和右边的小卖部；商店每天早上八点开门和晚上十点关门
- **Use of adverb 也:** 他每天十二点开门，也我买鱼肉
- **Misuse of location:** 书店旁边在我的学校
- **Use of verbs:** 商店有很好吃；它们不远我的家；书店是公园左边；他要开始大学
- **Use of measure word:** 我下次要买三个衣服；这是一个公里；一了书包；一座商店
- **Use of 了:** 下次我去了那里；我以后会去那里买了新衣服；我下次去买了面包；我下次去那里的时候买了游戏；这个商店老了
- **Misuse idioms:** 有丰富多彩的衣服；商店里有人山人海

Characters and words:

- **Mixture of characters, Pinyin and English:** 商点在我学校的 pang bian、有很多 ge 种 ge 样的足球、非常 pian yi、我们 tong 常心 chi 一去买花
- **Misspelled characters with the same phonetic sound character or similar shape, not proper words used despite guessable meanings:** 哪(那)个商店是读(卖)文具、百(白)色、店里长长(常常)人山人海、卖(买)礼物、桌了(子)、哪(那)里、人门(们)、个(各)种个(各)羊(样)、奇(椅)子、受(爱)、有(友)好、左付斤(在附近)、商点(店)、工作人员很有(友)好、早上匕(七)点开门、安净(静)、星其(期)六、商店在上每(海)、我们做(坐)车去、革(鞋)子、毛(帽)子、买水果和采(菜)、我的歌歌(哥哥)明日生日了、在我家的遍(旁)边、方更(便)、朋友和老师(师)都去、卖冰期了(冰淇淋)、个中个条(各种各样)的食牛(物)、三月(明)治、果汁(汁)、买水课(果)
- **Use of English words for the name of the shop or the location.** It is not encouraged to write English words in the Mandarin writing exam. Candidates should be encouraged to try to use alternatives, e.g. 商店在美国 instead of 商店在 LA.

Question 3

There are two options for candidates to choose from: **(a)** to write an email to a friend talking about a teaching experience that they recently had, **(b)** to write an article for a magazine, talking about vegetarian food. The option 3(a) was extremely popular, a familiar topic related to candidates than 3(b), thus vast majority (87 per cent) attempted 3(a), whereas 3(b) was less popular choice which may due to the word 素食 is only appeared in the new syllabus recently. However, candidates who chose 3(b) normally showed very good language proficiency in content, range and accuracy.

(a) Teaching

Completion of the tasks

The majority did not only cover the required information, but also provided additional and detailed information which was relevant to the bullet points. The bullet points were noted and helped candidates structure the

essay well. Due to task completion accounting for 10 marks now, candidates should give detailed information, opinions/reactions and explanations to reach the top band. For example, bullet point 1 was 'what have you taught him/her?', if the candidate answered 我教了他很多东西 and nothing else, it did not meet the criteria for the top band of task completion. Similar cases for bullet point 4, 我学到了很多 (东西) did not count as completing the tasks.

Centres should remind their candidates to include enough information or a wide range of sentence structures in their answers, not just merely answer the questions. It is frustrated to see the following answers could not score the top band though the candidate understood the tasks without problem. For example, 我教了他数学, 他学得很快。我教他因为他是我的朋友。我学到了要有耐心。我以后不想当老师, 因为我很难。

In other aspects, there was some misinterpretation of **Question 3a**. Some candidates wrote an email to candidates they taught instead of their friends. Others misunderstood the bullet point 4 'what you have learned from your teaching experience'. The candidates responded with what they have learned in general, such as they have learned various subjects, or that they have studied up to which year group.

Most of the candidates managed to complete all tasks albeit not all with the required level of detail. It was frustrating to see some strong candidates fail to give enough details to secure full marks despite giving accurate information for each point. Elaborating and expanding the answers is important to achieve good marks. Some good examples are listed below.

Candidates were more familiar with questions words this year. For bullet point 1, many subjects had been mentioned, e.g. 数学、科学、英文、画画 etc., amongst which, 华文、中文 were the most popular ones.

For bullet point 2, candidates should write about 'how he/she learnt' after the writer taught him/her, but some candidates wrote 'how the learner did in that subject(s) before the writer taught'. Candidates used the words and structures in the syllabus and provided many interesting opinions and describing words, e. g. 学得很快、很好、很专心、很努力、很认真、很快就学会了、很聪明、学得很开心、最近的考试考得好、分数很高 etc. However, a few candidates misunderstood as 'how to learn 怎么学', answered like 做了很多练习题、一边听音乐一边做作业 which sadly cannot be awarded marks for **task 2** without opinion words.

For bullet point 3 and 5, the majority could give valid reasons and used 因为 structures. 因为他是我的弟弟; 我邻居的孩子; 我妈妈朋友的儿子; 我想赚零花钱; 我希望帮助有需要的学生; 我喜欢跟小孩子一起学习 etc.

For bullet point 4, the question structure 学到了 was a bit challenging, but able candidates still produced interesting answers, e.g. 怎么跟小孩子沟通; 教别人的时候, 自己也能继续学习; 我学到了善用时间; 教她的同时, 我学会了要有耐心; 学到了中学物理; 复习了生物课程; 从学生身上学到了各种知识 which showed their maturity.

On the other end of the spectrum, some misunderstood the bullet point 4 'what you have learned from your teaching experience'. The candidates responded with what they have learned in general, such as they have learned various subjects, or that they have studied up to which year group, e.g. 我学了画画; 我学了中学九年级.

In **Question 3**, there were still a considerable number of candidates who wrote very long and elaborate introductions and endings to their emails. It is recommended to keep greetings as short as possible which would leave more time to candidates to write more useful content in the examination. On the other hand, writing general opening and ending formalities, e.g. '好久没有收到你的信了。你身体好吗? 最近忙吗?'; '快给我写信好吗? 祝你身体健康, 万事如意!' which could be pre-learnt and did not attribute much to the final scores.

Centres should be aware that if the whole answer to Question 3 was irrelevant (e.g. contains no evidence of being related to the bullet points set), Task completion, Range and Accuracy would be awarded 0. However, if **Question 3** was attempted but communication was not achieved (e.g. the candidate misunderstood the question), a maximum of 4 for Range would be awarded. If the words count was significantly less than the recommended length, the capping system would be applied.

There were plenty good examples for each task, e.g:

- 我教他了中文的听说读写，因为他的爸妈想要他长大的时候去中国上大学。
- 我刚开始教她时发现，虽然她学得比较慢，但是她一直努力，没有放弃。
- 一开始的时候，连初级英文的普通字也不会写。
- 上课的时候很专心，而且学习的时候也很努力。
- 他非常聪明，练习题总是拿满分。
- 他学习能力很好，学得很快。
- 他学习的速度非常快。
- 他一定可以拿到下个华语考试的第一名。
- 他不但一直认真地学习，也十分专心地聆听我的话，没有一心二用。
- 我为何不会喜欢这种上课那么投入的学生呢。
- 之所以选择帮助她学习，是因为她是我邻居的孩子，再加上我刚好学校放假，想赚一些零花钱。
- 他是一年级的学生，也是我的学弟。
- 教她的同时我学会了教一个学生要有耐心，因为有了耐心，学生会越学越好。
- 我帮助他是因为他家里贫穷。
- 我帮他因为我感觉如果朋友遇到困难时，我们都需要乐意帮他。
- 我帮他因为他可以考个好成绩，拿奖学金。
- 在教她的过程中，我自己也学到了如何保持耐心以及如何和小孩好好沟通。
- 他时常会跟我说有关中国的事情，这让我增长见闻，知道其他国家的事情。
- 她不但认真地学习，也十分专心地聆听我的话，没有一心二用。
- 我学会了怎么了解他们。
- 我学到了该怎么去和小朋友沟通，也学到了换位思考。
- 除此之外，我得到了教书的经验。
- 除此之外我学到了书本上学不到的知识。
- 通过帮助他我学到了乐于助人的精神。
- 我觉得非常有成就感，因为我自己也学到了怎么耐心地和别人相处。
- 我以后想当老师，因为我发现小朋友的思想非常有趣。除此以外，他们的陪伴给我带来了安慰。
- 我想成为一名老师，因为学习是个无际的过程，我可以从学生身上学到各种宝贵的知识和道理。
- 以后，我想当一位老师。我希望可以帮助有需要的学生，特别是孤儿和贫穷的学生，我希望他们也可以得到教育。
- 我长大后想当个老师，因为我觉得帮助下一代的孩子很重要。
- 我想把我会的东西教给小孩子，这样等他们长大了，也能去帮助需要帮助的人。
- 去教导每位学生和帮助每位学生。
- 因为我除了会帮助学生，还会跟它们一起开玩笑和做朋友。
- 当我在教他的时候，我学到教人学习到底有多难，导致我以后不想当老师。
- 我不想当老师，因为当老师十分辛苦，这也让我更加地感恩老师的努力。
- 我觉得教书很重要。
- 当老师时，我也是希望把我教的科目教得很有趣。
- 当一名老师是我的梦想，我希望像我的启蒙老师这样，把知识传授给小朋友。
- 长大以后我想当老师，因为我想像我的老师一样关心学生。

Range

It was very pleasing to see some extended, well-linked sentences frequently appearing in candidates' work. This year it appeared common to see that some complex connectives have been used such as: 虽然……但是…; 不但……而且…; 因为…所以……; 除了…以外, 也/还…, 不仅, 终于, 为了, 除此之外, 不仅如此, accurately used 都, 到, 还, 有没有, 通过, 经过 which again has shown their high linguistic ability. Some candidates even used some grammar structures in **part 2** on the syllabus, such as 让、使、被、把、着 etc. advanced structures, e.g. 通过教她让我学到了教小学生必须有耐心和爱心 which was qualified to the top band.

However, candidates should be reminded not over using 因为…所以……structures too much which could not show the range. As well as that, the purpose of using the conjunctives is to make the essay more interesting and coherent, not just for the sake of its appearance in the essay. They also need to check the pairing of conjunctives is appropriate, for example, 不但……而且…, NOT 虽然……而且…

A wide range of vocabulary and idioms appropriate to the tasks also have been seen frequently, e.g. 有趣的故事、有意思的活动和方法、简单的方法、她的父母要求我帮忙、学习新知识、让我高兴、一心二用、一石两鸟、利大于弊、独一无二、大开（开阔）眼界、忙得不可开交 etc.

Some good examples were listed below:

- 她学得比我想象中的快，而且画出来的东西也非常漂亮。
- 他的学习速度比普通人快一些。
- 我认为当一名老师非常辛苦因为要照顾很多小朋友，还要改非常多的作业，所以我目前并没有当老师的想法。
- 我明白了帮助他人的快乐，所谓‘助人为快乐之本’。
- 我学到了耐心、不生气，怎么和小孩子讲话、相处。
- 教书也需要耐心，不能教不会就放弃。
- 我学到了做事一定要有耐心，才能事半功倍。
- 她不仅勤劳，还积极向上；再难也不会抱怨。
- 像看到一株幼苗被培育成长。

Accuracy of characters and grammar

The new mark scheme laid more emphasis on accuracy and this year, it was getting better compared with the previous year, but there are still some rooms to improve especially for some basic and common words. Most candidates wrote very accurate characters, some candidates showed some errors in their writing, some even with Pinyin and English words which would affect the marks. Occasionally using Pinyin or wrong characters with the same phonetic sound for communication purpose could be accepted for task completion, but it would be penalized in this category.

There were some areas to be improved.

Characters:

- Knowing in some situations ‘ask’ in Mandarin is NOT 问:
 - a. ‘ask me to help’ should be ‘求我帮忙’
 - b. ‘ask me to teach her’ should be ‘请/求我教她’
 - c. ‘ask for help’ should be ‘请求帮助’
 - d. ‘ask for money’ should be ‘要钱’

Candidates should spend time practising simple common characters such as: 没、家、不、们、和、很、汉字、中文、东西、喜欢、有、朋友、友好 etc. There were some other frequent mistakes: 时后（候）、不（下）一年、职（聪）明、斗（科）学、中语（文）、化（华）语、高心（兴）、票（漂）亮、医（因）为、作（昨）天、方更（便）、文（问）题、数学果（课）、老（教）英语、考（教）英语、这（怎）么、医（因）为、一（以）为、花（化）学、多小（少）钱、容宜（易）、怒（努）力、方偏（面）、觉的（得）、很块（快）、东面（西）、方发（法）、学校/佼（校）、犬（太）累

Grammar:

- Missed past tense particle 了 or use it in present tense sentences: 我教他画画；我学到大学；我经常教了他汉字；每个周六，我去了他家教他数学
- Mixed tenses: 下个星期二我教了明明英文
- Wrong words order/anglicised sentence structures: 我教他英文在学校上个星期；我已经四个月教了一位小学生；我们开始了一个月前左右；我想教在英国；我是学生的国际学校
- Used 上 and 下 wrongly for time adverbs: e.g. 上年 instead of 去年, 下年 instead of 明年, 上个月/上星期 instead of 下个月/下星期 or vice versa, etc.
- Use of 是 with adjectives: 我是很好；他学得是很好
- Use of measure word: 我们一起读一个书
- Use of 和 to link two sentences: 我们一边做作业和学到了东西
- Use of verbs: 我的朋友文（让）我去教她；所以他们得的（对）我很好；我没有哪（拿）我的书；她的妈妈有（要）我教她。

- Missing verbs: 他想非常成功的人; 不知道我要什么工作; 你知道你想什么工作吗; 以后我想老师
- Use of adverbs with 的:
- Misplace adverbial modifier and attribute: 很久了, 我想做老师; 不是丽丽而已学到新东西; 他的语法特别提高了; 我们完成每个事情慢慢地; 她真快会明白; 她写的汉字非常很好的; 所以提高了她的英语水平很多
- Use of 比: 现在他说英文比我一样好; 英文比别的课文很难
- Use of 把: 我一定也把你帮助
- Use of 对: 因为我对人喜欢帮人; 我要分享一下我的经历对你
- Use 又 link 2 nouns: 今天我帮助一个小学生又法语又中文

(b) Vegetarian food

Completion of the tasks

This was the less popular choice which could mean that the subject including content and vocabulary was not familiar to candidates since 素食 is newly added in the syllabus. Some candidates were not sure of the meaning of vegetarian food but did spot the character for food 食, so wrote either fast food or food in general and included meat in the essay so lost some marks in task completion. To broaden candidates' choices, centres could suggest candidates to study all vocabulary on the core vocabulary list including the newly added ones.

For bullet point 1, it seemed challenging for weak candidates to list kinds of vegetarian food they had. However, most of the candidates understood **task 2** 你觉得怎么样, and produced relevant opinions. For bullet point 3 and 4, majority wrote 不便宜、贵、不方便 etc. for **tasks 3** and 健康、对环境好、保护动物、容易做 etc. But some candidates repeated opinions for **task 2** e.g. 好吃 which cannot show the range of vocabulary and structures. A few candidates even used it for 坏处 which should use negative words. Although the language is grammatically correct, the whole piece was not coherent and it affected task completion marks. Centres could encourage candidates to learn both negative and positive expressions and adjectives.

For **task 5**, almost all the candidates understood the question word 哪里 and wrote proper places which were very pleasing. However, handful candidates were still ignored future tense time frame 下次 and 打算 in the question and add 了 after 吃 which caused confusion. Teachers could encourage candidates look for past time frame particles 了、过 or phrases indicating past time frames e. g. 最近、昨天、上个月 or 是。。。的 structure and future time frame particles 打算、计划、想、要、会 or phrases indicating future time frame e. g. 明年、将来、下次 in the questions and include them in their answers.

There were some very good examples below:

- 吃素食的好处是能保护我们的环境, 同时也能保护动物。
- 下次我打算去我学校附近的餐厅吃素食。听说即使那里的食品有点儿贵, 但是那里的环境优美、服务周到。
- 我吃过各种各样的素食, 比如咖喱、面包、酸奶等等。我觉得这些食物美味可口。
- 我吃过各种各样的素食, 例如卷龙菜, 西红柿等。虽然我小时候不喜欢吃素食, 但是我现在越来越喜欢吃蔬菜。
- 虽然素食没有肉, 可是我还觉得它真美味可口。
- 吃素食也不能乱吃, 不然会食物中毒。

Range

It was very pleasing to see some complex connectives have been used such as: 虽然……但是…; 不但……而且…; 因为…所以……; 除了…以外, 也/还…; 使、让、被、为了、除此之外、不仅如此、从而、当然、以免 accurately used 都、到、还、有没有、通过、经过 which again has shown their high linguistic ability.

Wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the tasks also have been seen, e.g.

- 在日常生活中，我们身边都会有许多素食主义者坚信着自己的原则，但还是会有人不理解素食。
- 要是有些人比较喜欢每餐大鱼大肉，那他们会觉得吃素食会使生活变得枯燥无味。
- 多吃素食可以避免便秘，这对身体的排泄很有帮助。身体的毒素将会在排泄过后大大减少，这样也避免了不少病例如肠癌、肾病等等。
- 虽然说素食会越吃越不想吃，但它却能够让我们远离病痛，不让我们容易被感染。
- 吃素食的坏处是人类体能也需要肉类来补充蛋白质。有些人可能只吃素食，所以他营养不良；
- 吃素食的好处就是人们可以避免杀生，可以用素食来代替肉类，这大大减少了对动物的猎杀和破坏自然环境。

Some idioms and proverbs were really impressive e.g. 琳琅满目的蔬菜；食物令人垂涎三尺

Accuracy

Most candidates who chose 3 (b) did well in grammar and structures. However, there are some areas to improve:

- Mixed tenses: 常常吃过西餐素食
- Words order: 的时候在超市买菜
- Negative for 有: 我不有吃过素食
- Misuse 了: 我很喜欢都了；但是很贵了
- Conflict information: 我吃过很多素食，比如牛肉、鸡肉、猪肉炒面等等
- Use of 是 with adjectives: 素食可以是不方便；吃素食的好处是好吃和可以吃跟你的朋友
- Use 和 to link two sentences or clauses: 吃素食的好处是好吃和可以吃跟你的朋友

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MANDARIN CHINESE

Paper 0547/43
Writing 43

Key messages

- Elaborate with detailed relevant information to achieve the top band marks for **Question 2** and **Question 3**.
- A significantly smaller number of characters than the recommended word count will affect **Question 2** and **Question 3** marks.
- Read the scenario carefully for **Question 3**, answer all the questions and pay attention to different time frames.
- Similarly, if a task is 'What is the disadvantage/advantage of wearing school uniform?' and the candidate answers 'there are many disadvantages/advantage of wearing school uniform (and nothing else)', then they do not meet the criteria for the top band of task completion.

General comments

This is the second year with the new syllabus and mark scheme and the majority of candidates were familiar with the structure of **Question 1**. It was pleasing to see that this question was accessible to the majority of candidates and there were a number of impressive performances from centres. Some candidates used complex structures and difficult or unusual characters, even idioms, which demonstrated an improvement in linguistic ability.

Most of the gaps in **Question 1** were well managed with proper words from the core vocabulary list due to the topics being common and familiar to candidates.

The overall quality of work from candidates on **Questions 2** and **3** has not differed too much from last year. The change in the mark scheme explicitly assesses the range of language applied in candidates' work and this was heavily reflected in this year's response. It was wonderful to see a greater variety of expressions and structures attempted by most candidates although there is room for improvement in the accuracy of the usage.

Candidates were not penalised for writing too much. It should be remembered that a composition requires a certain number of words to address all the bullet points in the question with a level of detail, and variety in vocabulary and sentence structures was rewarded. Candidates are reminded that if they write significantly fewer than 80 characters for **Question 2** or 150 characters for **Question 3**, they will not produce enough evidence of their ability to gain the highest marks.

Centres should be aware answers have to be relevant to the questions, and all the bullet points need to be addressed with as much relevant information as possible. Since this is a writing examination, Chinese characters should be used as often as possible and both English and pinyin should be avoided.

Centres should be aware that if the whole answer to **Question 3** was irrelevant (e.g. contains no evidence of being related to the bullet points set), *Task completion*, *Range* and *Accuracy* would be awarded 0. However, if **Question 3** was attempted but communication was not achieved (e.g. the candidate misunderstood the question), a maximum of 4 for *Range* would be awarded. If the word count was significantly less than the recommended length, the capping system applies.

Candidates did not need to copy out the questions, particularly for **Question 3**. Writing straight to the point and expanding accordingly without pre-setting sentences too much would have been more efficient to use

the recommended word count. Letter format, long openings and ending greetings are not essential which could take up candidates' exam time and the space for recommended word count.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates were asked to fill in a form for joining a gym. Over half of the candidates were able to fill the gaps with ease since the topic areas e.g. job, sports, length of time etc. which were been tested were very familiar to candidates.

For gap 1 职业, a majority of the candidates wrote occupations without mistakes, e.g. 大学生、医生、工人 etc., but a few wrote Pinyin or 不知道 which cannot be awarded marks.

Gap 2 + 3 were very accessible and candidates did really well with success e.g. 游泳、打篮球、网球、足球、乒乓球 etc. A few candidates did not write 球 clearly.

Gap 4 was also very well answered with different lengths of time, e.g. 三小时、四十分钟、一天 etc. However, a few candidates confused it with what time and wrote 一点 and unfortunately lost marks.

Gap 5 was the most challenging one for candidates even though 付钱 is on the vocabulary list. Apart from the normal payment method, there were some impressive answers such as 电子付钱. Centres should advise candidates to revise the core vocabulary list in the syllabus before the exam since the characters in the questions all come from it.

Accuracy of characters generally was good, however, there were several common mistakes. They were either adding or missing a radical or with a wrong radical or using a character with a similar phonetic sound. Centres could train their candidates to avoid similar mistakes in future exams.

Question 2

The question requires the candidates to write about their favourite teacher. The topic was very familiar to the candidates and most of them fully understood the requirements of the question and responded very well to it. They were able to provide consistently relevant information and opinions.

Most of the candidates were familiar with the questions word 教什么 in bullet point 1, 哪国人 in bullet point 2, 为什么喜欢他/她 in bullet point 4 and 什么时候 in bullet point 5 which often appeared in previous years, therefore, the vast majority did very well.

Candidates needed to describe appearance for bullet point 3 which caused some difficulties. But on the other end of the spectrum, some candidates wrote 他比我爸爸长得更好看; 他不但非常高, 而且有大大眼睛.

For bullet point 5, the answers should be in a future time frame and the vast majority performed very well. Some used 我每天有他的课 which was tolerated but for future reference, centres are reminded their candidates should follow the sentence structures in the tasks and to pay more attention to the future time frame and future particles.

There is a new mark scheme for **Question 2**; to score the top band, candidates need to include details. Therefore, even though some candidates answered all the bullet points, they did not score the full mark as they needed to expand their answers and to provide a level of detail.

Candidates are reminded when they copy the characters or sentence structures from the bullet points, they should carefully look at whether the characters were correctly written without missing any parts or the question words have been removed from the answers. Also, whether the answer words were in the correct place. There were some mistakes listed below which need to be improved.

Some candidates appeared to be restricted by the notion of 80 – 100 characters and did not fully demonstrate their capabilities, which was shown by crossed sentences which could have made the essay

much more interesting and fuller. A significantly smaller number of characters than the recommended word count affected the marks even if all the questions have been answered.

There were plenty of good examples for each task, e.g:

- 我觉得他很聪明。
- 他跟我一样，也是法国人。
- 因为他不严格，所以我喜欢他。
- 我明天早上就上他的化学课。

On the contrast, some areas needed improvement:

Grammar:

- misused verbs: 我喜欢字中文
- anglicised structures: 也我想字习
- missing characters: 她是很中文老师

Characters and words:

- mixture of characters and Pinyin: dui 母一个人很好
- misspelled characters with the same phonetic sound character or similar shape: 有（去）趣、觉的（得）

Question 3

The styles of the questions did not change much this year and there were two options for candidates to choose from: **(a)** to write a letter to a grandpa talking about a performing art club; **(b)** to write an article for a magazine, talking about your views of new school uniforms. 3 **(b)** was slightly popular than 3 **(a)** perhaps due to familiarising with the topic 校服. The majority could respond to all the bullet points with a good level of detail and link ideas effectively with appropriate connectives.

(a) Performing art club 表演俱乐部

Completion of the tasks

The tasks on the rubrics were slightly longer compared with 3**(b)** although this helped candidates to form the sentences in their answers if they understood the meaning of the tasks. The majority of the candidates who opted in covered the required information also provided additional and detailed information which was relevant to the bullet points. This year, the weight of task completion had increased to 10 instead of 5 in the previous year, so candidates were aware that they should give detailed information, opinions/reactions and explanations to reach the top band.

Question words for **task 1** 'which year group', **task 2** 'what' and **task 3** 'what benefit' were generally familiar to candidates so they completed the tasks well. However, the subject in **task 4** has been changed to 父母 which might a bit challenging. In addition, 继续 is newly added in the new syllabus so some candidates might not be familiar with this. Therefore, **task 5** 怎么办 linked to **task 4** would be affected and they could not complete the task.

Centres should be aware that if the whole answer to Question 3 was irrelevant (e.g. contains no evidence of being related to the bullet points set), *Task completion*, *Range* and *Accuracy* would be awarded 0. For example, a candidate wrote about a school for **Question 3a**. However, if **Question 3** was attempted but communication was not achieved (e.g. the candidate misunderstood the question), a maximum of 4 for *Range* would be awarded. For example, a candidate did not understand 表演俱乐部 and wrote an essay about painting extra-curricular activities and followed the questions in the tasks.

Candidates also needed to pay attention to essay length. If the word count was significantly less than recommended length, marks were capped.

Some good examples for each task are listed below:

- 因为我的成绩不好，所以父母不让我继续参加。
- 父母不希望我继续参加因为我花了太多钱。
- 爸爸妈妈觉得没有太多好处，但我觉得我进步很多。

Range

It was very pleasing to see some extended, well-linked sentences frequently appear in candidates' work. This year some complex connectives have been used frequently, such as: 虽然…但是…; 不但……而且…; 因为…所以…; 除了…以外, 也/还… etc. which has shown their high linguistic ability. However, there were some repetitions as well especially for 因为.

A wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the tasks also have been seen frequently, e.g:

- 我从小二年级起，到现在高二，一直都在参加表演俱乐部。
- 大家都兴高采烈，玩儿得很开心。
- 我认为即兴表演对我的反应及思考能力有极大的提升。

Accuracy of characters and grammar

The new mark scheme laid more emphasis on accuracy compared with the previous year. Most candidates wrote very accurate characters, some candidates showed some errors in their writing, some even with Pinyin and English words which would affect the marks. Occasionally using Pinyin or wrong characters with the same phonetic sound for communication purpose could be accepted for task completion, but it would be penalized in this category.

There were some areas which could be improved, e.g:

Characters: 虽（热）然、令（今）年、沿（没）有、但（担）心、级（极）大、玩的（得）、支技（持）、觉（决）定

Grammar:

- 每个星期我来帮手。
- 做了一个表演考试。
- 我就少一点去了。

(b) School uniform 校服

Completion of the tasks

About 60 per cent of the candidates opted this option and they had a good idea on how to complete the tasks. Question words in **task 1** 'when', **task 2** 'how much', **task 3** 'what looks like' and **task 4** 'why' were handled very well. Bullet point 5 'advantage/disadvantage of wearing school uniform to school' was asking for opinions and it seemed to raise a challenge to candidates.

This was shown in the examples below:

- 校服可以让我们看起来干净整齐。
- 如果有校外活动，也可以一眼认出我们学校的学生。
- 上体育课也可以穿我们的新校服因为比较宽松。
- 换了新校服后，在冬天也可以套一个大外套。
- 上学穿校服的好处是不用每天想穿什么衣服。
- 坏处是非常贵，以后不会再穿。

Range

It was very pleasing to see some complex connectives have been used such as: 虽然……但是…; 不但……而且…; 只要…; 的时候…; 以后…; 因为…所以……; 除了…以外, 也/还…; 比如…; which again have shown good linguistic ability.

A wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the tasks was also evident, e.g:

- 学校换校服是因为今年天气非常冷，家长说要换，所以学校加了一个冬天的校服。
- 新的校服是蓝色的，上衣是白色的。
- 新校服主要以红白色为主，虽然之前是黑蓝色的。
- 学校的校服更换让我们大部分的学生都不满意。
- 新的校服和老的校服相比，哪里都显得格格不入。
- 价格从一百块上涨到了一百五，而且材质穿起来也是那么的别扭。
- 上学穿校服的好处和坏处数不胜数。
- 穿着校服上学也是一种限制，我们将没有办法穿自己想穿的衣服来向朋友们展现出更美丽或帅气的一面。

Accuracy

Candidates who chose 3(b) did very well in grammar and structures which could be seen in the above examples. However, there were some areas could be improved:

Characters: 生（身）体、长库（裤）、比较（较）、宽松（松）、东（冬）天、冷（冷）、老师（师）、我门（们）、显的（得）、材制（质）

Grammar:

- 新校服不是很多钱
- 新校服是很大、是很便宜
- 我应gai觉的（得）你会很xi huan