

MANDARIN CHINESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0547/11
Listening

Key messages

Except for the last exercise, questions were objective, requiring non-verbal responses. The spoken Chinese in the examination gradually increased in terms of difficulty and length, and questions moved from testing candidates' ability to understand short factual information to, in the later exercises, testing their ability to understand and identify opinions, explanations in narrated accounts, and interviews. To do well in this examination, it is essential that candidates learn and are very familiar with the Defined Content for the syllabus. It is also essential that candidates do plenty of listening comprehension practice. To perform well in the last exercise that requires verbal responses, candidates also need to be able to write down their answers in characters or pinyin. These answers can be very short but straight to the point.

General comments

The June 2022 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. If a candidate makes two choices whether in pencil or ink, the mark cannot be awarded. Answers which candidates do not wish the Examiner to consider must be clearly crossed out.

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**, a few candidates chose option **D** 衬衫 instead of **B** 大衣.

Over ninety percent of the candidates recognised 西瓜 for **Question 2**.

For **Question 3**, nearly twenty percent of the candidates did not know 盘子.

For **Question 4**, many of those who answered incorrectly chose option **D** 银行.

Around ten percent of the candidates did not understand 信封 in **Question 5** and option **B** 邮票 was the most frequent error.

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.

For **Question 6**, many candidates understood 馒头, with option **A** being the most common error. Over eighty-five percent of the candidates recognised option **B** 超市, but **C** 邮局 was chosen by a few.

Most candidates tackled **Question 8** with ease.

Although **Question 9** was answered correctly by the majority, option **A** 做饭 was chosen by around ten percent of the candidates.

Nearly ninety percent of the candidates understood 看戏 in **Question 10**.

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.

Question 11 and 15 were attempted particularly well, with over ninety percent of the candidates answered them correctly.

For **Question 12**, over half the candidates chose the correct answer option **B** 工人, but **F** 农民 was the most frequent error. Candidates who chose option **F** probably heard 住在农村 and 爸爸妈妈都是农民 in the beginning of the question and were distracted by them.

A small number of candidates chose option **C** 记者 for **Question 13** instead of option **A**. The word ‘大学’ in ‘大学教授’ could be a clue for candidates. For **Question 14**, ‘小动物’ and ‘猫和狗’ could be clues for candidates to choose option **C** 兽医.

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 his first flight. Candidates needed to tell Li Ming’s attitude towards his experience. The exercise represented a step up in difficulty of the test.

For **Question 16** about food, around twenty percent of the candidates chose option **A** or **B**, probably understanding only one of the two clauses in the sentence, which first showed a negative comment 饭菜做得不好 but then a positive comment 零食特别好吃。

One fifth of the candidates who got **Question 17** wrong opted for **A**, probably missing the negative word ‘不’ in ‘不太喜欢’.

For **Question 18**, one sixth of the candidates answered incorrectly, perhaps assuming 挺有趣, 演得非常好 included both positive and negative comments.

Around twenty percent of the candidates chose option **B** or **C** for **Question 19**, maybe misled by the negative word ‘不’ in ‘还不错’。 **Question 20** was the most demanding in this exercise, with one fifth of the candidate choosing option **B**, possibly not understanding 对我很客气 as a positive comment.

Questions 21 – 25

Candidates heard an introduction by the neighbour Wang Li about their neighbourhood. There was a longer pause in the two-part introduction. This was an appropriately demanding exercise at this stage of the paper, with **Question 23** mostly correctly answered among the five.

For **Question 21**, over one fifth of the candidates chose option **C** 湖, possibly because they heard it mentioned first and did not pay attention to 我常常去树林散步 or because they did not read the question 王力在什么地方散步?

Similarly, over a quarter of the candidates opted for **D** for **Question 22** as 故宫 was the word mentioned first. Not understanding the question 去哪里只要二十分钟? could be another factor.

The majority of the candidates answered correctly for **Question 23**, with a few answering **C** 酒吧.

Question 24 seemed to be the most challenging in this exercise, with half of the candidates answering incorrectly. Most candidates who selected the wrong answer chose **B** 自行车, which was to the east of the block, instead of to the north as the question asked.

Nearly one fifth of the candidates selected **A** for **Question 25**, mixing up 拉小提琴 and 弹钢琴, and some others chose option **B** 唱歌, which showed they did not recognise the instrument 钢琴.

Questions 26 – 30

Candidates heard a longer interview with Zhang Yue discussing her Meixin Cake Shop. This was an appropriately challenging exercise, but candidates performed well, especially for **Question 27** and **Question 29**.

For **Question 26**, candidates needed to listen to the whole sentence, which highlighted that the reason Zhang Yue opened the shop was because she 觉得蛋糕很好看, instead of 喜欢吃蛋糕.

Nearly all candidates heard the conversation clearly for **Question 27**, knowing that it was **A** 张月的妈妈 who made the cakes, instead of **B** 蛋糕师, which was assumed by the interviewer.

For **Question 28**, even though **A** 咖啡 was mentioned previously, most candidates spotted that the most popular drink was **B** 中国茶.

For **Question 29**, most candidates understood that the elderly liked to go to the cake shop because they wanted to **A** 见朋友, instead of because the cakes were **B** 很便宜.

Question 30 was also well attempted, with only a few candidates opting for **A** 开第二家蛋糕店, asked by the interviewer.

MANDARIN CHINESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0547/12
Listening

Key messages

The spoken Chinese in the examination gradually increased in terms of difficulty and length, and questions moved from testing candidates' ability to understand short factual information to, in the later exercises, testing their ability to understand and identify opinions, explanations in narrated accounts, and interviews. To do well in this examination, it is essential that candidates learn and be very familiar with the Defined Content for the syllabus. It is also essential that candidates do plenty of listening comprehension practice. To perform well in the last exercise that requires verbal responses, candidates also need to be able to write down their answers in characters or pinyin. These answers can be very short but straight to the point.

General comments

The June 2022 Listening paper consisted of 30 multiple-choice questions. Overall, candidates performed 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. If a candidate makes two choices whether in pencil or ink, the mark cannot be awarded. Answers which candidates do not wish the Examiner to consider must be clearly crossed out.

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**, some candidates did not understand 衬衫 and the most chosen error was option **B** 大衣.

For **Question 2**, many of the candidates who answered incorrectly chose option **D** 水饺/饺子, perhaps misled by the 角 in 豆角.

Question 3 was well attempted, with option **D** 叉子 the more frequent error.

Around three quarters of the candidates answered correctly for **Question 4** and **5**. Among the three incorrect answers in **Question 4**, option **C** 剧院 was more frequently selected. As for **Question 5**, ten percent of the candidates chose **A** 墨水 and another ten percent chose option **D** 信封.

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.

Question 6 was probably the most difficult for some candidates in this exercise; option **A** 围巾 and **B** 手套 were the most frequent errors.

Question 7 was well attempted, with a few candidates choosing option **C** 网球 and **D** 自行车.

Most of the candidates attempted **Question 8** and **10** successfully, showing their good understanding of the vocabulary of food and daily activities.

Question 9 was also answered correctly by many candidates who knew the illness vocabulary well. There was no clear pattern of incorrect answers.

Questions 11 – 15

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

Question 11 and **Question 12** were attempted successfully. Many candidates selected the correct answer **E** and **F** respectively.

For **Question 13**, a few candidates chose option **D** 跳舞, which was Liu Hong's original plan, but she had to stay at home looking after her sister instead.

Most candidates understood 葡萄 in **Question 14** and selected **A** correctly. Only a few candidates did not recognise 小島 and chose other options for **Question 15**.

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 his trip to Guangzhou. Candidates needed to tell Li Ming's attitude towards his experience. The exercise represented a step up in the incline of difficulty of the test.

For **Question 16** about the toilet, only a few candidates did not recognise the positive comments 非常干净 and chose option **B** or **C**.

A few candidates selected **A** for **Question 17**, perhaps not noticing the negative comments 人特别多、比较挤 in the second part of the sentence. 慢得不得了 and 堵车 were both negative, and nearly 90 percent of the candidates understood them clearly in **Question 18**.

Same numbers of candidates answered **Questions 19** correctly, recognising the negative comment 不方便. Most candidates tackled **Question 20** with ease, spotting the positive comment 特别好吃.

Questions 21 – 25

This exercise was an introduction with a longer pause by a senior candidate Wang Li, talking about a youth activity centre. This was an appropriately demanding exercise at this stage of the paper.

To answer **Question 21** correctly, candidates had to listen to the recording and read the question carefully. Nearly one fifth of the candidates chose option **B** 服务台, perhaps not noticing the direction word 右边 in the passage or in the question.

Similarly, a few candidates selected option **D** 小鸟 for **Question 22**, probably missing the verb 喂 in '喂兔子'.

Question 23 appeared to be slightly challenging, with ten percent of the candidates choosing option **B**, not understanding 跳舞 or 体操.

Question 24 and **25** were well attempted, and there was no obvious pattern of incorrect answers.

Questions 26 – 30

Candidates heard a longer interview with Zhang Yue, who was the winner of the University Candidates' Chess Competition. This was an appropriately challenging exercise, but candidates performed very well, except for **Question 29** which was slightly more difficult.

For **Question 26**, only a few candidates chose option **A** 北京人. 四川 could be a clue for candidates to choose the correct answer **B** 成都.

Question 27 was also answered correctly by the majority; those who answered **A** probably did not hear the double negative phrase 不是“不愿意”教我.

Most candidates heard 我最喜欢的 clearly in **Question 28** and selected option **C** accurately, instead of option **A** 俱乐部, which was mentioned before.

Question 29 seemed to be more challenging for around one fifth of the candidates. The key word was 谁组织的, but those who answered it incorrectly perhaps missed the verb 参加 in the second part of the sentence ‘学生和老师可以参加’.

For **Question 30**, candidates had to listen to the whole sentence, understanding that playing chess made Zhang Yue **A** 思维更灵活, but the most important advantage was actually making him **B** 更耐心了.

MANDARIN CHINESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0547/13
Listening

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

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

MANDARIN CHINESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

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

The outcome for this year's examination was very positive considering this was the first year of the new syllabus. It was clear that the candidates and teachers had understood the requirements of the course very well. **Question 9** is the new style question and it was evident that candidates adapted very well to the style of the question.

Looking forward, more attention should 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**. Some candidates also need to take care when writing characters to ensure clarity and accuracy in order to secure the marks.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1 – 5

Majority of the candidates responded very well in these questions. **Question 1, 2 and 4** were the best performed questions as most candidate secured the marks. Some candidates found **Question 3** a little demanding and chose B 毛衣 (jumper) instead of 泳衣 (swimming suit). **Question 5** was the most challenging question amongst due to the fact candidates mixed up 钢琴 (piano) with 吉他 (guitar).

Question 6

All sub-questions were very well answered. Majority of candidates were familiar with the vocabulary tested and able to match the pictures and key words correctly. Some weaker candidates confused in (a) as they did not recognise 药店 (pharmacy). Similarly, 熊猫 (panda) in (b) seemed to be quite demanding to a small number of candidates. Furthermore, there were candidates were not sure about 海鲜 (seafood) in (c). It was clear that a vast majority of the candidates know 打篮球 (play basketball) very well as it was the highest scored sub-question.

Question 7

These multiple-choice questions require candidates to read the sentences in the box and choose the correct answer according to the questions. All sub-questions were all answered very well by most candidates; they were able to find the correct information from the passage with ease. A few candidates mixed up 售货员 (salesperson) with 芭蕾舞演员 (ballet dancer) in **(a)**, therefore, did not secure the mark. Almost all candidates knew the vocabulary 看书 (read a book) in **(b)**. On the contrary, in **(c)**, incorrect answers were chosen instead of 山区 (mountain area) D.

Question 8

Candidates performed very well again in this question. They showed confidence in locating the correct information for the questions. Most candidates also offered straightforward correct answers, showing good understanding of the text.

(a) and **(b)** were the most well answered sub-questions.

(c) was comparably less difficult. Occasionally candidates wrote 是旅游的好季节 as answer, which could not be rewarded.

(d) was well handled in general. A few candidates understood the question word 哪里 (where) but gave the distractor 很多地方 (lots of places) as the answer.

(e) proved straightforward, typically 爬山 (climb the mountain) was given in error.

Responses from **(f)** demonstrated good skills of identify the key information. Only a very small number of candidates copied the short sentence, which mark was credited.

(g) was successfully answered by most candidates. Common wrong answer appeared from time to time during marking. Answers like 我们参观了一个古老的庙，还在那里的餐厅吃了午饭 was not credited a mark as two places 庙 (temple) and 餐厅 (restaurant), which did not demonstrate genuine understanding though the verb 参观 was included.

Most candidates responded to **(h)** very well. Between them, **(h1)** was better answered than **(h2)**. Answer like 很好 were not able to offer the required information in full, as a result, not worthy a mark.

Question 9

The performance to this set of multiple matching exercise was excellent despite this was a new style question. Most candidates demonstrated a good level of understanding of the four pieces of short texts. **(b)**, **(c)** and **(e)** were the best answered sub-questions. A small number of candidates chose C instead of A for **(d)**.

(a) was the most demanding sub-question. It showed that quite a few candidates were not sure about 便宜 (cheap) in text D, but spotted the vocabulary 贵 (expensive) from text A. It is important that candidates know the synonyms as well as antonyms as suggested in the key message.

Question 10

Generally, the overall performance was very strong in this question. It was noticed that some candidates may not understand the text overall and only tried to spot/match the key words in the question with the same words in the reading text.

(a) and **(d)** were better responded to than **(b)**, **(c)** and **(e)**. For **(b)**, it required candidates to understand the whole second paragraph in the passage. A few candidates chose B or C as answer, which showed partial understanding. Less able candidates unsure of vocabulary and structure were not able to secure a mark in **(c)**. Common wrong answer for **(e)** was A.

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 **(f)** and **(g)**. Candidates would benefit from being advised to make 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 **(a)**, **(b)** and **(d)**, generally speaking, candidates found this exercise challenging compared to the rest of the paper.

(a) required the key information 在家上网. Most candidates secured a mark. A few candidates offered 不用出门, which did not demonstrate genuine understanding. A common wrong answer also included 特别 or 参加了一个特别的夏令营, which implied those candidates tried to use the word – spotting methods, therefore, not warrant the mark.

(b) was well performed. Strong candidates performed very well but some candidates lost mark in **b(2)** by missing the verb 认识.

(c) was very well handled. Only a very small number of candidates gave wrong answers like 对阅读课 or 不同的英文课.

(d) was well handled as lots of good responses were seen. A few weaker candidates gave 慢慢地就不怕了 or simply copied the text with 紧张 in it. e.g. 必须说英语, 所以她很紧张。

(e) had more mixed responses compared to other questions. Common wrong answers included, 节目表演 or 用英文讲故事. A few candidates copied 她不大可能会用英语讲故事 as their answer.

(f) had a lot of good answers too. However, a few candidates found it challenging to switch between negative to positive in their answers. Some used the distractor 爱记单词 as their answer, which did not demonstrate clear understanding.

(g) seemed to be the most demanding amongst other questions. The question required candidates to understand the first two sentences fully in the last paragraph of the passage. Those who only read the first sentence gave 英语有了进步, which did not secure the mark.

(h) as the last question had very good responses and most candidates scored the mark. Those who lost the mark was mainly due to careless mistakes, such as missing 长时间 in their answer.

MANDARIN CHINESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

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 cannot result in any mark.
- Attempt every question in the paper, even the questions they feel less confident about.

General comments

This was the first examination of the new specification. It was pleasing to see so many positive responses across centres. The vast majority of candidates have understood the requirements of the specification very well and applied themselves well in this season. **Question 9** is a new style question and candidates handled this type of question successfully.

Looking forward, more attention is 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**. Some candidates also need to take care when writing characters to ensure clarity and accuracy.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1 – 5

Overall candidates performed very well in this exercise. Candidates were most familiar with the key vocabulary in **Question 2** and **Question 4**, as it was evident those questions were better handled. Candidates found 衣柜 (wardrobe) in **Question 1** challenging. In **Question 3**, some candidates got confused between 裤子 (trousers) to 裙子 (skirt) and answered D instead. A few candidates did not understand 吉他 (guitar) in **Question 5**.

Question 6

All sub-questions were very well answered. The majority of candidates were familiar with the vocabulary tested and able to match the pictures and key words correctly. Some weaker candidates confused in **(b)** as they did not recognise 机场 (airport). Similarly, 明信片 (postcard) in **(c)** was challenging. There were a very small number of candidates were not sure about 冰箱 (fridge) in **(d)**.

Question 7

These multiple-choice questions require candidates to read the sentences in the box and choose the correct answer according to the questions. All sub-questions were all answered very well by most candidates; they

were able to find the correct information from the passage with ease. A few candidates mixed up 运动衣 (sports top) as 运动鞋 (trainers) in **(b)**. In **(c)**, incorrect answers were chosen instead of 鸡 (chicken), which was supposed to be a commonly known word.

Question 8

Generally, candidates showed confidence in locating the correct information for the questions in this question. Most candidates also showed care and precision in the answers. Quite a few candidates were also aware of using the correct pronouns in their response, made sure to replace the first person ‘我’ with third person ‘小黄’ or ‘他’, which really have been greatly improved of using pronouns in comparison to previous examinations.

(a) was well answered. Answers like 北两个月、经两个月了 caused confusion for some candidates. Candidates who located the phrases at the correct place, such as 已经两个月了 or 两个月了, were able to secure the full mark.

(b) the response for this question was positive. Some mistakes such as 不雪、木雪、者下雪 affected understanding and errors in writing character 不、都 interfered comprehension.

(c) was one of the best answered sub-questions. Lots of straightforward and correct answers were seen.

The majority of candidates were able to find the answers to **(d)** and **(e)** successfully.

(f) was well handled. Some candidates gave 孩子们 as answer, which was incorrect. There were some examples of extensive lifting from the text.

(g) the responses were a bit mixed in the sub-question. Whilst excellent answers were seen, a few candidates lost marks because they wrongly wrote Chinese characters 知识 as 失识, which caused confusion. Some typical wrong answer like missing the subject 孩子们, which made the answer unclear.

(h) was successfully answered. A few errors in character writing occurred. For example, 做 as 估; 灯 as 火, 教 as 孝, which all caused ambiguity. Some less able candidates lifted the whole sentence and did not secure the mark.

Question 9

The performance to this set of multiple matching exercise was excellent despite this was a new style question. Most candidates demonstrated a good level of understanding of the texts. **(b)** and **(d)** were the best answered sub-questions. For **(a)**, a few candidates were not able to relate 上班 and 工作 as synonyms. For **(c)**, it required candidates to understand the sentence 有了社交网站, 我的生活更有趣了 as well as 上社交网站有好处 in the stem, therefore, some candidates found this challenging. Compared to other sub-questions, responses to **(e)** were less positive as quite a few candidates seemed to word spot 游戏 (games) rather than have understanding of 电脑游戏 (computer games), as a consequence, not secured the mark.

Question 10

Again, the overall performance was very strong in this question. It was noticed that some candidates may not understand the text on the whole and only tried to spot/match the key words in the question with the same words in the reading text. **(a)** and **(c)** were better responded than **(b)**, **(d)** and **(e)**. For **(b)**, candidates located 有的人喜欢网购 in the text; however, missing the key word 大多数人 in the question which directs to the correct answer A. A common wrong answer for **(d)** is B. Some candidates chose A or B for **(e)**.

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 **(g)** and **(h)**. Candidates would benefit from being advised to make 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 **(c)**, **(e)** and **(f)**, generally speaking, candidates found this exercise challenging compared to the rest of the paper.

(a) required candidate to differentiate 爸爸(dad) from 妈妈(mum). Most candidate secured the mark.

(b) had mixed responses with strong candidates performing very well but some candidate lost a mark in **b(2)** by missing the key word 汉字. A few careless errors by missing the verb 写 also result in losing the mark.

(c) was very well handled. Only a very small number of candidates gave wrong answer 现代舞.

(d) proved more challenging as a few candidates gave the wrong subject like 中文学校 or just 学校, which caused confusing. Other typical wrong answers like 自己决定不去中文学校了 or 功课太多.

(e) and **(f)** were very well answered as lots of positive responses were seen.

(g) seemed to be the most demanding in this question. Many candidates gave 刘心讲中国的事 as their answer, which implied that candidates did not fully understand the relevant text well. It was good to see there were lots of candidates who secured the mark, which demonstrated thorough comprehension skills in details.

(h) was dealt with well by most candidates. There were a few wrong answers like long lifting from the text or errors in using the incorrect pronoun.

In conclusion, centres should continue to support candidates in writing Chinese characters accurately. Candidates should be reminded of keeping their answers concise and avoiding long lifting.

MANDARIN CHINESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0547/23
Reading

Key messages

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

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- 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

The outcome for this year's examination was very positive considering this was the first year of the new syllabus despite the entry to this paper was very small. It was clear that the candidates and teachers had understood the requirements of the course very well. **Question 9** is the new addition to this paper and candidates handled well to this question in general.

Looking forward, more attention is 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**. Some candidates also need to take care when writing characters to ensure clarity and accuracy in order to secure the marks.

Comments on specific questions

Questions 1 – 5

The majority of candidates responded very well in these questions. **Question 1, 3 and 4** were the best performed questions and most candidate secured the marks. Some candidates found **Question 2** a little demanding and chose A 衣柜 (wardrobe) instead of 椅子 (chair). **Question 5** proved challenging and typical wrong answers were B or D.

Question 6

It was pleasing to see all positive responses in this question. This was the best performed question in the whole paper with all candidates securing the marks.

Question 7

These multiple-choice questions require candidates to read the sentences in the box and choose the correct answer according to the questions. All sub-questions were all answered very well by most candidates; they were able to find the correct information from the passage with ease. A few candidates mixed up 出租车 (taxi) with 火车 (train) in **(b)**, therefore, chose C as the answer instead.

Question 8

Generally, candidates performed very well in this question. They showed confidence in locating the correct information for the questions. Most candidates also offered straightforward correct answers, showing good understanding of the text.

A few lapses occurred in **(a)**, as answers like 三天 or 上个月 were seen.

Most candidates secured the mark in **(b)**, however, a few candidates lost the mark by missing the verb 坐 in their answer.

(c), **(d)**, **(e)** and **(f)** was well handled with a majority of the candidates achieving the marks. Only a couple of individuals lost the marks as their answers caused ambiguity. For example, 估了六个、一个广场看.

(g) was successfully answered by most candidates. A candidate lost a mark due to errors in character writing as he/she wrote 可以看得很运 causing confusion with their answer.

Most candidates responded to **(h)** very well.

Question 9

The performance to this multiple matching exercise was excellent despite being a new style of question. Most candidates demonstrated a good level of understanding of the four pieces of short texts. Compared to other questions, some candidates found this question more demanding. **(b)** was the best answered sub-questions.

A small number of candidates chose A instead of D for **(a)**. For **(c)** and **(d)**, it seemed those candidates who got it wrong only paid attention to the vocabulary 度假 (go on holiday), then mistook D for the answer. The questions required overall understanding of text rather than word spotting. In **(e)**, it showed that quite a few candidates were not sure about 便宜 (cheap) in the stem, and guessed the answer. It is important that candidates know the synonyms as well as antonyms as suggested in the key message.

Question 10

The responses were a bit mixed for this question. It was noticed that some candidates may not understand the text overall and only tried to spot/match the key words in the question with the same words in the reading text. Most candidates handled this question well, **(d)** was the best answered. A few less able candidates lost marks choosing D instead of C for **(a)**; Option B was chosen instead of D for **(b)**; In **(c)**, one candidate ticked D instead of B. For **(e)**, option C was ticked. All of these errors indicated word spotting rather than good comprehension to the text.

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. There were some very good answers, but candidates found this exercise challenging compared to the rest of the paper.

(a) most candidates secured the mark.

(b) had quite mixed responses. A couple of candidates missed the mark by omitted the verb 是 and only wrote 放松的好机会, which impaired the comprehension. A few less able candidates gave answers like 在家做作业 and 旅行, which did not warrant the marks.

(c), **(d)**, **(e)** all received positive responses.

(f) was proven demanding to a couple of candidates as 跳舞 or 各种活动 were seen.

(g) was very well handled. Almost all candidates attempted this question and scored the mark.

The outcome for **(h)** indicated that most candidates found this very demanding. Some weaker candidates either left the answer blank or put 不想参加 as answer. Some candidates identified the answer location in the text, however, lost mark by giving answers like 因为他们拍的漂亮的照片, which missed the key part 看到.

MANDARIN CHINESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0547/03
Speaking

Key messages

- 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 to adhere precisely to the script in the *Instructions for Teachers/Examiners* and not to rephrase any questions.
- 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.
- 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.
- Most Examiners understood the need to ask no more than two further questions of their own if timings were short on topic conversations.
- 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.

General comments

The format of the test was new this year. The Speaking test is intended to be a test of spontaneous communicative ability. 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 for the format of this new test 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. When asking extension questions, Examiners can only use

vocabulary provided in the printed question or vocabulary already used by the candidate. Examiners must not feed new vocabulary or ideas to the candidate.

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. 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 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. 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 and in an appropriate time frame where applicable, substantially accurate and not be ambiguous in terms of the message being communicated. If the meaning of the required message is made ambiguous through for example poor pronunciation of a key word or an incorrect time frame then a mark of 1 should be awarded.

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 high marks for Communication, candidates need to be able to offer consistently relevant information and to show that they can develop their ideas and opinions, adding relevant detail where necessary. The ability to justify and explain is also a feature of performance of the *Very good* mark band. 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, the tasks were generally answered well. Weaker candidates did not understand the meaning of the noun 礼物 *present* in **task 2**.

In Card 2, task 3, weaker candidates struggled with the question word 什么时候? *When?*

In task 4, some candidates found it hard to produce a past time frame here. 你上一次去饭馆吃了什么? *What did you eat the last time you went to a restaurant?*

In Card 3, task 1, some candidates did not understand 你多大了? *How old are you?*

In task 4, some candidates did not understand 体育活动 *sports activities*. **In task 5**, some candidates found it hard to answer the second part of the question 你想吃药还是打针? 为什么? *Do you want some medicine or an injection? Why?*

In Card 4, task 4, weaker candidates struggled with the question word 什么地方? *What place?*

In Card 5, task 3, 在北京的时候, 你会参观什么地方? *When you are in Beijing, what places will you visit?* Some candidates found it hard to understand the underlined words in the question and some did not answer in a future time frame. **In task 5**, 你觉得学中文什么最难? *What is the hardest part of studying Chinese?* weaker candidates were not always able to answer the second part and explain why they found a certain aspect of learning Chinese hard.

In Card 6, some candidates did not understand the key word 义工 *voluntary work*. It was referred to in English in the role-play scenario card they had received in their preparation. **In task 2**, weaker candidates struggled with the question word 什么时候? *when?* and the verb 开始 *start*. **In task 3**, some candidates answered with a past time frame making the reply ambiguous. 在老人院, 你想为老人做什么? *What do you want/will you do for the senior citizens at the home for the elderly?* **In task 4**, weaker candidates found it difficult to produce a past time frame 你以前在什么地方做过义工? *Where have you previously done voluntary work?*

In Card 7, questions were generally answered well. **In task 4**, weaker candidates did not understand 你家附近有什么地方? *What places are near your house?*

In Card 8, questions were generally answered well. **In task 4**, weaker candidates did not understand 你在西安住在什么地方? *Where are you staying in Xian?*

In Card 9, questions were generally answered well. **In task 3**, some candidates found it hard to answer 你喜欢听什么样的音乐? *What type of music do you like listening to?*

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 on 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 Leisure Time (空闲时间) The first two questions were generally answered well. In **Question 3**, only the strongest candidates understood the key word 野餐 *picnic*. The alternative question signaled to candidates that food and drink were involved so some could then answer. In **Question 4** weaker candidates did not understand 不同 *different* and some candidates found it hard to explain why different hobbies were important. In **Question 5**, weaker candidates struggled with the key word 家务 *housework*.

Topic 2 Food and Drink (食品和饮料) The first two questions were accessible to the majority of candidates and answered well. In **Question 3**, most candidates could explain whether eating meat was important or not. In **Question 4**, weaker candidates found it hard to understand 生活习惯 *lifestyle habits* and many candidates did not pick up that the question required a past time frame, 小时候 *when you were young*. Similarly, in **Question 5**, many candidates did not realise that this was a future time frame and there were some responses using a past time frame. Weaker candidates did not understand the meaning of 做饭 *to cook* or 自己 *yourself*.

Topic 3 Self, family and friends (自己, 家人和朋友) The first question was answered well by most candidates who could produce some description words for what their friend looked like. In **Question 2**, weaker candidates found it challenging to answer 你们是怎么认识的? *how did you meet?* However, many candidates were able to answer with *at school* or *playing sport*. **Question 3** was generally answered well, with weaker candidates feeling more confident with the alternative question. In **Question 5**, the key verb 住 *to live* was not always understood, as well as the phrase 如果有机会 *if you had the chance* and the need for a future time frame.

Topic 4 Shopping (购物) The first question was answered well by most candidates who confidently understood the question word 谁 *who*? In **Question 2**, weaker candidates found it hard to respond to the question 什么样的商店? *What type of shop?* **Question 3** was answered well by strong candidates but many candidates had to be asked the alternative question as they did not understand the main question particularly the word 经历 *experience* and 买菜 *buy food*. In **Question 4**, weaker candidates did not understand the word 购物 *shopping* but when asked the alternative question with the easier verb for shopping 买东西 *to buy things*, they could give reasons for the pros and cons of shopping on-line.

Topic 5 The international world (国际世界) The first question was accessible to the majority of candidates and answered well. In **Question 2**, weaker candidates found it hard to understand the word 气候 *climate*. In **Question 3**, many candidates did not understand the word 庆祝 *to celebrate* in the original question but were able to answer the alternative question when the verb 过 *to spend* was used. There were also some candidates who answered with a future time frame when a past time frame was required. In **Question 4** weaker candidates did not understand 参观名胜古迹 *visiting sites of interest* and also struggled with the alternative question 看有名的景点 *seeing famous sites*. In **Question 5**, the word 国外 *abroad* was not picked up by some candidates.

Topic 6 Education/work (学校 / 工作) The first question was answered well by most candidates. In **Question 2**, the word 设施 *facilities* was not always understood by candidates. In **Question 3**, the verb phrase 怎么过的? *how did you spend (yesterday at school)* proved difficult for weaker candidates but they could access the alternative questions. **Question 4** proved challenging for many candidates; the key words 假期 *holiday* and 打工 *to work* were not always understood.

Topic 7 Living environment (住的地方) The first question was accessible to the majority of candidates and answered well. In **Question 2**, the word 公共设施 *public facilities* was not always understood by candidates. In **Questions 4 and 5**, which focused on 环境问题 *environmental problems* and suggested solutions, candidates could have been better prepared for this topic.

MANDARIN CHINESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0547/41
Writing

Key messages

- Use Chinese characters throughout. In particular, avoid using any pinyin or English for **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 **Question 2** and the completion of task for **Question 3**
- Read the scenario carefully for **Question 3** and answer all the questions and pay attention to different time frames.
- If a task is 'Who participated the evening party?' and the candidate answers '*there were many people who participated the evening party*' (and nothing else), then they do not meet the criteria for the top band of task completion.
- Similarly, if a task is 'What is the benefit of doing volunteer work?' and the candidate answers '*there are many benefits of doing volunteer work*' (and nothing else), then they do not meet the criteria for the top band of task completion.

General comments

This is the first year that the new syllabus and mark scheme have taken place, **Question 1** was a totally new format to the candidates, and the mark scheme for **Questions 2** and **3** were quite different from previous years. 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 the format in **Question 1** has been changed, apart from gap 2 'what type of room you want to stay in' seemed a bit challenging, all other gaps were well managed with proper words from the core vocabulary list due to the topics were common and familiar to candidates.

The overall quality of work from candidates on **Questions 2** and **3** have not differed too much from previous years. 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. As above and to emphasise, since this is a writing exam, Chinese characters should be used as often as possible and both English 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 format and 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 for a summer camp. Most of the candidates were able to fill the gaps with ease. There were plenty good and easy answers for gap 2 'what type of room you want to stay in', e.g. 大房间、好看的房间、干净的房间、看海的房间, but it seemed a bit challenging for a handful of candidates who only wrote numbers or a noun, e.g. 二、三、朋友 instead of 双人房、三人房 or 跟朋友住一间.

For gap 1 想去的国家, majority of the candidates wrote countries without mistake, but a few added 人 after a country which could not qualify a mark.

Gaps 3 + 4 were very well answered with different activities, e.g. 游泳、打篮球、写中文.

For the gap 5 不吃什么, the majority were able to write an item of food, e.g. 肉、面包、炒面, but in a few occasions, drinks appeared in the answer, unfortunately marks could not be awarded.

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 similar phonetic sound. Centres could train their candidates to avoid the similar mistakes for future exams.

The mistakes listed below are in the brackets. 打篮球 (蓝)、写中文 (国)、看电影 (景)、辣 (辛)、肉 (内、两)、牛 (午) 肉、打网球 (丁冈求)、鸡肉 (鸟)、面包 (色)、包 (巴) 子、踢足 (是) 球, etc.

Candidates should be aware that writing in Pinyin or in English or mixing them up, e.g. piao 亮、网 qiu, have not been awarded marks so should be avoided.

Question 2

The question requires the candidates to write about their favourite park. 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. They were able to provide consistently relevant information and opinions.

Bullet point 1: the vast majority did well and answers like 这个公园离我家很远、不远、走路十分钟 were good enough to qualify a mark. Some candidates consistently provided opinions, e.g. 公园在我家附近所以方便极了; 虽然走路很累, 但是非常快在那里 which pushed the marks to the top band. But some candidates might feel 多远 was slightly different from the past questions and didn't understand 多 is a question word in here so they included it in their answers, e.g. 离我家不多远、很多远、二十远.

The majority could respond to bullet points 2 + 3 very well with extended information, e.g. 我一般骑自行车但是有时候走路去那里; 我更喜欢骑我的自行车因为好玩; 公园的风景很好, 有很多花, 所以我喜欢. However, some weak candidates only merely wrote 公园的风景好 or 公园有 hua, shu.

Many candidates wrote several interesting places in a park for bullet point 4, e.g. 足球场、网球场、咖啡厅. Some came up with impressive words, e.g. 金鱼池、长长的河、划船的地方. On the other end of the spectrum, 好玩的地方 posed a challenge for a few candidates, some mistaking it as 做什么 or 玩什么 and started to list a few of the activities, e.g. 打网球、走路.

Most of the candidates were familiar with the question word 什么时候 and wrote accurate answers for bullet point 5. However; a few candidates did not use future time frame which was showed in the question and used past time phrases, e.g. 上个星期、上个天, 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 future time frame and candidates should distinguish past time phrases and future time phrases and particles, also include them in their answers, e.g. 我想下个星期跟我的朋友再去这个公园.

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 have not really demonstrated their 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:

- **Good structures:** 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; 都很高兴; 又安静又开心; 又干净又漂亮; 离我家不那么远; 我一般骑自行车因为比我走路更快; 可能会带我的好兄弟跟我一起去; 对身体好
- **Good vocabulary:** 各种各样的花草树木、五颜六色的花、巨大的花园、干净漂亮的河、空气新鲜的森林
- **Opinions:** 公园在我家附近, 走路只要十分钟左右就到了, 所以非常方便;

On the contrast, some areas needed improving:

Grammar:

- **Wrong sentence order:** 我明天会去这个公园跟我朋友、这个公园离我家多远、一起打篮球在公园、两点下午、游泳在公园的河、我去了坐火车
- **Use of 是 with adjectives:** 公园是很大、因为是很好吃、坐火车是很快
- **Misuse of 也:** 公园里有一个咖啡馆, 也一个图书馆
- **Misuse of 了:** 公园是很好了、我和妈妈常常去了这个公园
- **Mixed tenses:** 我想去这个公园去年
- **Misuse of 给:** 我妈妈给我开车去公园

Characters and words:

- **Mixture of characters, Pinyin and English:** 公园有 hua, 我想 zuo yun dong 跟你, 公园里有人, field
- **Misspelled characters with the same phonetic sound character or similar shape:** 分种(钟)、朋有(友)、衣(以)后、下(放)学、公工(共)汽车、一个时间(小时)、艮(很)多、在河(里都)是全鱼、不(下)个星期、踢(跟)家(人)

Question 3

The styles of the questions did not change much this year and there are now two options for candidates to choose from: **(a)** to write a letter to a grandpa talking about a Chinese New Year party that you recently attended; **(b)** to write an article for a magazine, talking about your views of volunteering. The option **(a)** was more popular than **(b)**, less than 30 per cent of the candidates opted for **(b)** since the word for volunteering 做义工 only appeared this 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 Year party

Completion of the tasks

The majority 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 'where', task 4 'how' and task 2 'who' did not cause issues to complete the tasks. However, 晚会 appeared for the first time in the syllabus, so a few did not understand and thought it was just a party, therefore, it caused a few problems to complete task 5 'what people do to make the new year party better next year'.

哪些人 in bullet point 2 required candidates to write about more than one person since 些 was referred to multiple people rather than one, it was glad to see most of answers were elaborated upon. Besides, the majority of the candidates wrote a lot for bullet point 4 about food and offered many opinions which made the essays pleasant to read. Elaborating and expanding the answers is important to achieve good marks. Some good examples are listed below.

放了什么样的音乐 in bullet point 3 seemed well answered even 放音乐 perhaps was not as frequently seen as 听音乐, but 音乐 and 什么样的 offered many clues to candidates of what they need to write about. 好听的音乐、法国音乐、中国音乐、流行音乐 were popular, 中国歌曲、古典音乐 also appeared in the answers which were impressive.

As mentioned in the above, task 5 was not attempted successfully as other tasks. It might be due to the question style and modifier 更. Some candidates just purely wrote plans for next year which had nothing to do with this year's party, e.g. 明年的晚会学习很多做会更好.

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 many good examples for each task, e.g:

- 食物不但美味可口，而且很便宜。
- 参加晚会又好玩又有意思。
- 我们听了中国音乐因为在中国新年晚会，你应该听中国音乐。
- 虽然我的哥哥也想参加，但是他不能，因为太忙了。然而，我跟我的朋友玩得非常开心。
- 我没吃汉堡包因为我吃素。
- 他的房子比我爸爸的大，所以明年我打算去他家参加晚会。
- 如果明年的晚会有更多人参加，就会更好。
- 明年的晚会，我觉得穿红色的衣服会更好，黑色的连衣裙真的不好。在年（兽）看来，我不可怕。

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. Some candidates used comparisons when they gave opinions upon learning different languages, such as: 我觉得那里的食物比妈妈做的好吃。

There was also a wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the tasks, e.g. 有吃有喝、各种各样、又唱歌又跳舞、又大又美、独一无二、乐于助人、又干净又宽敞、帮我放松。

Some good examples were listed below:

- 即使我没听过这样的音乐，我也觉得非常好听。
- 晚会上不但放了中国的歌曲，而且也放了美国的歌曲。
- 然而，晚会上只放了流行歌曲，所以我的朋友不喜欢，但是这是我最爱。
- 为什么我会觉得担心？当然这是因为我不是一位中国人。这是一个新的经历。

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. Very 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 for improvement, e.g:

Characters: 女（好）音乐、中文哥（歌）、认是（识）、米反（饭）、午（牛）肉、大生（声）、放子（了）

Grammar:

- Missed past tense particle 了 in sentences: 我晚上有了乒乓球、食物做饭很了好吃
- Mixed up words: 英语的音乐、法语的音乐、英文的音乐
- Misused verbs: 明年的晚会我要有更玩、看中国音乐
- Wrong sentence order: 听音乐的好听
- Use of 是 with adjectives: 北京是很忙了、我的家是很远、都人是好、这个晚会是不好
- Misplace adverbial modifier and attribute: 都人很好、食物最好的、有人从法国和日本都来
- Misuse of 也: 很多米饭也面条
- Misuse adjective: 音乐很好看、很美丽、食物太忙
- Misuse 更: 我们会有更蛋糕, 听很更音乐
- Misuse comparison: 下次会这年多好、比晚会的音乐很好、我最喜欢汉语的音乐比法语的音乐

(b) Volunteering

Completion of the tasks

Surprisingly, this option was as popular as the other choice perhaps due to the true experience of 做义工 even though it was newly added to the syllabus. Candidates who chose this option had enough ideas to complete the tasks except bullet point 2 in which, the question word 多久 seemed not the same as that in the previous years. Task1 'with who', task 3 'advantage' and 4 'disadvantage' were handled very well for the whole cohort and last bullet point 'where' was also not unfamiliar to candidates even with future time frame.

For task 2 做了多久, candidates answered 不做了多久、我们做四久、我们做了很多久、我们做了多久, etc. which showed candidates did not understand the new questioning style so just merely copied the question and changed 你 to 我 and still kept the question word 多 in the answer.

For the task 5 你下次想去什么地方做义工, answers like 去中国地方做义工 showed the candidate trained to use the structures in the question and replace the question word with a noun. Similar cases happened for task 3 做义工有一个坏处

However, there were some very good examples below:

- 本地义卖商店做义工;
- 那里卖东西的钱都捐给穷人;
- 又有意思又好玩
- 又贵又不舒服
- 爱做义工, 因为喜欢帮助人

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.

Wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the tasks also have been seen, e.g. 工作经验、有挑战性、捐给穷人、独立. Some idioms and proverbs were really impressive, e.g.

- **Opinions:** 你不但可以帮助别人，而且可以让他们更开心，这样也会让你更开心；
- 跟朋友见面时间变少了；
- 除了跟朋友见面的时间以外，做作业的时间也变少了；
- 做义工可以增广自己的见闻、学习跟别人相处的方法；
- 又有用又可以交朋友
- 需要用很多时间去做准备工作，才能真正帮助到那些需要的人；
- 帮助一些住在农村的小孩去学校学习不同的知识，改善他们的生活环境

Accuracy

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

Characters: 老人园（院）；工做（作）、美术官（馆）、学交（校）、可一（以）、方更（便）、好元（玩）

Grammar:

- **Mixed tenses:** 我想和我的朋友再做了义工
- **Mixed Pinyin, English with character:** 很 lei、做义工是 impressive
- **Words order:** 我想去三个朋友、我们每天四小时做了义工
- **Anglicised structures:** 我姐姐想我做义工、我最不喜欢难、有不坏处、爱了义工很多
- **Including question word in answer:** 我们做了多久
- **Use of 是 with adjectives:** 是难、是好玩、是很贵
- **Use 和 to link two sentences or clauses:** 我去那里
- **Missing measure words:** 我们做了十七义工、三个天
- **Missing verb:** 我每天坐火车义工
- **Misuse of 也:** 义工是没有用也义工是不方便

MANDARIN CHINESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0547/42
Writing

Key messages

- Use Chinese characters throughout. In particular, avoid using any pinyin or English 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 and therefore marks awarded for **Question 3**
- Read the scenario carefully for **Question 3** and answer all the questions and pay attention to different time frames
- If a task is 'What is the benefit of learning a new language?' and the candidate answers '*there are many benefits of learning a new language*' (and nothing else), then they do not meet the criteria for the top band of task completion.

General comments

This is the first year that the new syllabus and mark scheme have taken place, **Question 1** was a totally new format to the candidates, and the mark scheme for **Questions 2** and **3** were quite different from previous years. It was pleasing to see that the majority of candidates performed well and 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.

The change in **Question 1** required candidates to recall vocabulary from a wider range of topics which proved to be more challenging than previous years on this question. As a result, candidates' scores on this question were more varied than before, achieving full marks was not easy.

The overall quality of work from candidates on **Questions 2** and **3** have not differed too much from previous years. 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. Whilst there was no need for candidates to count the number of characters written (after they have achieved the minimum required characters), 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 a 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. As above and to emphasise, since this is a writing exam, Chinese characters should be used as often as possible and both English and pinyin must 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 format and 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, in which they must describe the physical appearance of a friend, the clothes she/he wore, and where she/he was lost in an amusement park. Most of the candidates were able to write descriptive words/phrases about one's appearance and clothes, however, some candidates made mistakes about where the person was lost in an amusement park, simply using the word 游乐场 which already appeared on the rubrics and therefore it did not properly respond to the question. This question required candidates to write any appropriate places in an amusement park rather than an amusement park on its own. This has shown that some candidates did not fully understand the requirement of the question. Like in the previous years, any words copied from rubrics were not awarded marks.

In addition, words which cannot be considered as a place in the park, e.g. 市中心, 飞机场 or name of a country, e.g. 中国 were also not awarded marks.

For the 长什么样 question, straightforward descriptions of appearance, using words on the core vocabulary list were good enough to score marks, such as 高、矮、长得很高、长头发、长长的头发、大眼睛、大耳朵、大大的鼻子、小小的嘴巴、短发、蓝色的眼睛、瘦瘦的, 不太高, 又大又圆的脸, etc. Some able candidates even produced very detailed and vivid descriptions, e.g. 高挺的鼻子、乌黑的头发、明亮的眼睛、乌黑的长发、卷头发、没有头发、光头、水汪汪的大眼睛、皮肤黝黑、脸上有胎记、瓜子脸、五官立体、白皙皮肤 to impress examiners.

However, a handful candidates wrote time phrases instead of describing appearances, e.g. 五点、早上七点. This might be because they were confused by and misunderstood '点' from the rubric '写两点' in the brackets.

For the 穿什么衣服 question, the majority recognised 衣服 and could provide items of clothes in characters albeit due to some elements of pinyin in the key characters, unfortunately marks could not be awarded. Overall results were very encouraging. Clothing items on the core vocabulary list were often seen, e.g. 校服、衬衫、白衣服、裤子、黑裙子、红色的大衣、蓝色的衬衫、白色的裙子、红色的外套. More able candidates wrote 衣服上有中国两个字、小熊图案的衣服、动漫的衣服、条纹背心 which were great.

For the 在哪里不见的 question, 厕所、饭店、椅子旁边、卫生间外面、公园、游乐场的餐厅、门口、在游乐场的门口、游乐场的饭店、游乐场的左边、右边、在餐馆的前面、游乐场的厕所、卫生间、游乐园的花园、亭子、过山车区域、停车场 were all very impressive and deserved a mark.

Verbs were not needed for **Question 1** for this year.

However, some answers could not be counted as physical appearance, e.g. 戴眼镜、戴头巾, sadly lost marks.

In addition, there were several common mistakes when writing words/phrases about appearance, clothes and places. They were either adding or missing a radical or with a wrong radical or using a character with similar phonetic sound. The mistakes listed below are in the brackets. For example: 蓝色 (篮 – very common mistake)、头 (买)发 (法)、红 (工 or 乡)、白 (百, 日)色、裤子 (库)、红 (经)色、帽(毛)子、帽(冒)子、眼睛(晴)、长得(的)胖、门(们)口、厕(则)所、餐馆(官)、公园(圆)、书馆(宫)、操(澡)场, etc.

Candidates should be aware that written in Pinyin or in English or mixed them up, e.g. mao 子、有 niu 扣、xie 子、红色的 trousers have not been awarded marks so it should be avoided.

Question 2

The question requires the candidates to write about a school in a city centre. 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. They were able to provide consistently relevant information and opinions.

Bullet point 1: the vast majority did very well and answers like 这是一所中文学校、国际学校、小学、中学、大学 were fine. Some were very impressive with 一条龙、国际、设备齐全, etc. However, some candidates did not understand the bullet point and wrote about their school.

The majority could respond to bullet point 2 albeit many still got the word order wrong, e.g. 九点上午开始上课 Am before 9 o'clock or 学校开始上课八点. Good details were 那个学校早上七点开始上课, 比我的学校早. 星期一到星期四八点开始上课, 但是星期五八点半才开始.

Candidates were doing very well for bullet point 3 about teachers. Almost all had something to say about their teachers and also extended comments on teachers generated the most extra points. Most common answers such as 友好、乐于帮助学生、教书教得很生动、有爱心、常常回答学生的问题、很有趣. More advanced candidates used 耐心、善良、很友善、会教书、用心、亲切, etc. to show their opinions.

However, 旁边 in the bullet point 4 posed a challenge for quite a few candidates, some mistaken it as facilities or 里边 and started to list a few of the school facilities, e.g. 学校有操场和游泳池. There were also a number of candidates who did not understand 旁边, so listed some names of subjects instead, e.g. 学校的旁边有中文、英文和数学 or 学校有很多旁边.

This might show that the candidates did not recognise the word 旁边 which is in the core vocabulary list.

Centres should advise candidates to revise the core vocabulary list before the exam since the characters in the questions all come from it. On the other side of the spectrum, answers like 学校旁边有一个又大又美的公园, 放学以后学生们都喜欢去那里玩. 学校旁边有一家书店. 我非常喜欢去那里因为我喜欢五花八门的书 were also seen.

Most of the candidates were familiar with the questions word 谁 and wrote accurate answers for bullet point 5. However; a few candidates did not use future time frame which was showed in the question, e.g. 我和朋友一起去学校 thus, communication had not been clearly achieved.

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 have not really demonstrate their 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 many good examples for each task, e.g.

- 这是一所一条龙学校, 从幼儿园到大学都有。
- 这是一所双语学校, 老师们用英语和法语教课。
- 学校早上八点开门, 但是八点半开始上课。
- 这里的老师特别有耐心也很细心。
- 学校的老师非常受学生喜爱, 因为他们不但很聪明, 而且教书教得很好。
- 这学校的老师很有经验, 也很善解人意。
- 学校的旁边有很多花草树木。
- 学校旁边有一个公共汽车站, 非常方便。很多学生都坐公共汽车上学。
- 学校旁边有一个图书馆和游泳池, 所以放学后, 学生们很喜欢一起去看书、做作业或游泳。
- 因为学校在市中心, 所以旁边有很多商店。学生走路五分钟就可以到那里。
- 下次我会跟我的妹妹去参观这个学校, 因为她明年要上中学了。
- 下次我会和我的弟弟去这个学校, 因为我们的父母想让我们上这间学校。
- 下次我会和我的好朋友去这所学校, 因为学校离我们的家都很近。

- 什么学生都可以在这所学校上课。
- 学校旁边有一间很受欢迎的饭店。
- 学校的老师和蔼可亲，每天笑脸迎人。
- 学校的旁边有一个非常大的公园。那里有各种各样的花草树木。很多小鸟飞来飞去。
- 学校里的老师都很善良，把同学们都当作自己的亲生孩子。
- 那里的老师非常友好，他们会尽力的（地）帮助每一位学生考取好成绩。
- 学生络绎不绝。
- 学校旁边有一家书店，很多学生放学后都会去那个书店看新刊漫画。

By contrast, some areas needed improvement:

Grammar:

- **Wrong sentence order:** 学校开始七点早上、我会去这个学校跟我朋友、老师在那个学校、一起打篮球在公园、两点下午
- **Use of 是 with adjectives:** 学校的老师是严格、因为她是友好
- **Use 和 to link two sentences or clauses:** 学校早上八点上课和下午四点放学、她很好和她做饭很好吃
- **Missing measure words:** 学校有八十老师
- **Use of adverb 也:** 这里的老师很友好也我很喜欢他们、也很多人
- **Miss use of location:** 公园旁边在我的学校
- **Use of verbs:** 毕业大学、教到很好
- **Use of 了:** 学校的老师是很好了、哥哥觉得他学校的老师都常常好了
- **Mistaken noun phrase for a sentence:** 我最喜欢的汉语老师、学校的老师最好人的、现在我的中文（是）很好的、老师都很爱心、耐心

Characters and words:

- **Mixture of characters, Pinyin and English:** suo 以，国 ji, xing 期，improve 我们的新语言、这 jian 学校旁边有一 jian 快 can 店
- **Misspelled characters with the same phonetic sound character or similar shape:** 坐（做）朋友、老师不马（骂）人、方（放）学、由（早）起、question word 吗 was written as 马、美（每）天、母（每）天、海（每）天、没（每）天、一（应）该、可一（以）、岁（虽）然、学上（生）、上每（海）、开台（始）、分中（钟）、每大（天）、草（操）场、子（instead of 了）、哪（那）里、工（功）课、文（问）题、图书馆（馆）、公园（园）

Question 3

The styles of the questions did not change much this year and there were only two options for candidates to choose from: **(a)** to write an email to a pen-pal talking about a new language that they recently learned; **(b)** to write an article for a magazine, talking about pollution in their local region/area. The option **3(a)** was very popular and proved an easier topic to relate to than **3(b)** which was answered by only a small number of candidates. The candidates who chose **3(b)** normally showed very good language proficiency in content, range and accuracy. The majority could respond to all the bullet points with a good level of detail and link ideas effectively with appropriate connectives.

(a) Language

Completion of the tasks

Most candidates have shown very good knowledge about opening and ending formats of a letter/email. The majority did not only cover the required information, but 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 should give detailed information, opinions/reactions and explanations to reach the top band. For example, bullet point 4 was 'what is the benefit of learning a new language', if the candidate answered 学习新语言有很多好处 and nothing else, it did not meet the criteria for the top band of task completion. Similar cases for bullet point 1 and 5 我学会了很多新语言, 明年我打算学很多新语言 which did not count as completing the tasks.

Most candidates managed to complete all tasks albeit not all with the required level of detail. A few did not understand the word 语言 and came up with something completely irrelevant such as 画画、踢足球, etc activities. 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 2 and 3, why and how questions were well attempted with success. Candidates could use the words and structures in the syllabus and provided many interesting opinions and explanations, e.g. 我之所以学中文，是因为我觉得中文很重要。日语又好听又好看。我喜欢看日本动漫。我和家人喜欢去日本旅游。我是在学校学中文的。

On the other spectrum, candidates sometimes failed to notice the need for the past tense in the first bullet point, and the future tense in the final bullet point. Teachers could encourage candidates to look for past time frame particle 了、过 or phrases indicating past time frame, 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.

In **Question 3** a large number of candidates wrote very long and elaborate introductions and endings to their letters and emails. It would be recommended to keep the 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 would 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 counts significantly less than recommended length, the capping system would be applied.

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

- 我花了五个月学会了英语。
- 我学会法语是因为我想要能够在未来到法国旅游，并可以跟当地居民沟通。
- 为了学法语，我请了一位家教给我补习。
- 我是在补习班学英文的，也会自己在家上网自学。
- 学新的语言除了让你跟更多人流利地沟通以外，还会让你学到不同国家的文化。
- 学外语可以让我们学到外国文化，也可以增长我们的知识。可以跟人交流，可以去各种各样的地方。
- 学习新的语言有五花八门的好处，比如……
- 明年我不但打算提高我的英语水平，而且还想学日语。
- 我打算去日本上大学。
- 我的中学生活还一帆风顺。学语言也可以让我们了解更多不同的文化，让我们开阔眼界。
- 除此以外，学习新的语言也会让你有更多的工作机会。
- 法语是一个富有浪漫气息的语言，一言一语都如同那鲜红的玫瑰，向人们表达着爱意。
- 我认为学习新语言不但能增加个人的知识，也能开阔视野。

Range

It was very pleasing to see some extended, well-linked sentences frequently appeared in the 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…; 使，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 used comparisons when they gave opinions upon learning different languages, such as: 我觉得学日语比学英语容易。

There was also a wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the tasks, e.g. 数不胜数、一举两得、补习中心、增广见闻、文化和习俗、过程很困难、继续学法语、培养耐心、了解文化、跟朋友沟通、交新朋友、各种各样、井底之蛙、五彩缤纷。

Some good examples are below:

- 虽然学韩语很困难，但是我不打算放弃。
- 我学韩语的方法是天天阅读韩语小说和观看些韩语知识性影片。
- 我一个星期去法语班两次。刚开始我觉得法语很难学，也有放弃的念头，不过我还是坚持下来了。
- 是妈妈鼓励我学，我才下定决心，有动力和信心把这门语言学好。
- 妈妈帮我报了一所法语补习中心，以便我学好和提问困扰我的法语问题。
- 我是从网上看见一个帖子介绍了一个汉语补习中心。
- 学习新语言的好处数不胜数。我们不但能增广见闻，又能提高口语能力，真是一举多得。
- 让我更加了解日本的文化 and 习俗。
- 在那里交了一群同样热爱日本文化的朋友。
- 我学会了这门语言是因为我想了解我的韩国偶像在说什么。
- 我学习汉语因为妈妈说汉语很重要，我离不开汉语。
- 即便学习过程很困难，我相信我一定可以做到。
- 我用很多方法学中文，比如听写，看中文书等等。
- 学习马来文有几个好处：比如填补空闲时间，此外增加知识，也能加强我的沟通能力。
- 法语会非常有用，也会提供更多的工作机会。
- 我会学日语是因为我非常喜欢看日本动漫和听日语歌。我报名参加了一个月的日语补习班。在那里老师教了我很多日语的用法。除此之外我和那里的同学都是用日语聊天的。学习新语言带给我很多好处。我可以和不同国家的人交谈，以后我也更容易找到工作。
- 我是在网上的一个老师教导下爱上了这个语言。
- 我认为学习新语言会让我思维更加灵活，以及让我交到更多朋友。
- 我觉得如果我努力的话，学习这门语言就没有可以难倒我的地方。学习新语言可以让我交到更多朋友，我可以很轻松地与他们交流。

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 to be improved. Here were some frequent mistakes:

Characters:

中交（文）、老师（师）、文华，花（化）、作(做)工作、功(工)作、可以跟朋友说说（missed the object 汉语）

Grammar:

- Missed past tense particle 了 in sentences: 我上星期学会中文、学子中文、学习新语言会了（could）有新朋友
- Mixed tenses: 我想学会了法语、明年我打算学了英文语言
- Missed 要/会 in sentences: 明年我学日语新语言
- Wrong sentence order: 我去一个大学在香港学中文、去一个英语的学校在美国学英语、但是将来我想做一个画家在日本、我想工作美术老师
- Use of 是 with adjectives: 中文是很有意思、我是很开心、我觉得日本是很有趣、学会一门新语言是不容易
- Use of measure word: 一个年学中文时不是很长、我学习了中文三个年在学校
- Mix up of 网上 with 上网: 我学日语很多从上网、我是在上网和我妈妈教我这门语言
- Use of adverbs with 的: 认真的学、尽我所能的
- Misplace adverbial modifier and attribute: 我的姐姐又电脑课在她的学校、在法国说话跟法国人（English word order）、我住在新加坡还有(also)新加坡人说英语（English influence, especially among teenagers）、会又说又我可以交朋友、我是马来西亚

(b) Pollution

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 环境污染 is newly added in the syllabus. To broaden candidates' choices, centres should advise candidates to study all vocabulary on the core vocabulary list including the newly added ones.

For task 2, 这些污染的情况怎么样, candidate answered 这些污染的情况好玩, 好看, 很有趣和方便. Although the language is grammatically correct, the answers need to be negative rather than positive, given that it talks about pollution. Centres could encourage students to learn some negative expressions and adjectives.

The same situation for the task 5 学校打算怎么教育学生不污染环境, answers like 学校打算大大的, 很漂亮, 和多少书桌教育学生不污染环境 showed the candidate trained to use the structures in the question but adding adjectives and modifiers in the wrong places made the sentence difficult to understand.

There was a case where a candidate wrote 文化污染 which was very different from the topic on the exam. Centres should remind some able candidates to read the questions carefully.

However, there are some very good examples below:

- 人们扔了很多垃圾, 河里又脏又臭, 里面的鱼儿都死光了。
- 学校应该教育学生垃圾分类和保护环境的重要性。
- 我曾经就到海边捡垃圾, 但是不管怎么捡, 垃圾都一样的多。
- 我家后面的湖也惨中垃圾的毒手。近年来的湖泊越发脏乱, 到处都是垃圾及瓶子。
- 学校应该举办讲座, 提醒学生们关于环境污染的严重性。
- 声音污染导致一些人睡不着而睡眠不足。水污染导致水源不干净, 有些人喝了不干净的水而肚子疼。
- 空气污染不仅危害了人类的健康, 同时也破坏了地球的干净。
- 家附近有空气污染和水源污染的问题, 而这些问题越来越严重。
- 我认为学校可以为环境保护出一份力。除了摆放回收箱, 学校也打算举办净滩活动, 无肉日和关于环保的讲座。这些活动都可以提高学生对环保的意识。
- 种树是保护环境最重要的办法之一。
- 学校应该提供素食餐厅。
- 通过跟兰兰一起, 我学到了怎么保护环境, 她对我有正面的影响。

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、终于、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., 导致、严重、例子、减少、呼吁、烦恼、也不例外、河水发臭、制作海报. Some idioms and proverbs were really impressive, e.g., 爱护环境, 人人有责、近朱者赤, 近墨者黑。

Accuracy

Most candidates who chose **3(b)** did well in grammar and structures.

Some examples of good sentences:

- 他们一天不知道排了多少二氧化碳。除此之外他们还把污水排到河里, 导致短时间内河里的鱼都死光了。
- 这些污染的情况导致人们患上疾病。如呼吸困难、咳嗽等等, 而且环境也被破坏了。
- 为了抵抗这些污染, 我和几个朋友每个星期日都会去河边拾垃圾。
- 我家附近受到严重的水源和空气污染。
- 我们家附近的一条小河已经充满垃圾和塑料瓶。
- 我跟邻居们做了大扫除, 清理周围的垃圾。
- 学校也举办活动来教育学生们不污染环境。

- 学校打算教学生多坐公共汽车，减少空气污染。
- 这些污染情况给人类带来了坏处。

Some examples of areas to improve:

- **Mixed tenses:** 我打算了跟朋友去打扫环境
- **Words order:** 我做过对环境有好处的事情几样
- **Use of verbs:** 拿垃圾、爸爸妈妈想我学做、让同学们含有环保的习惯、为了怀有一个好环境
- **Characters:** 垃圾洞（桶）、应刻（该）、流（留）下来打扫（卫生）、没（每）一次
- **Use of 是 with adjectives:** 这些污染的情况是很多和很好我的朋友很喜欢去那里
- **Use 和 to link two sentences or clauses:** 我去海边捡过垃圾和很好我的朋友很喜欢去那里
- **Misused 把 structure:** 把纸和包在地上和路上丢起来和把马路洗

MANDARIN CHINESE (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0547/43
Writing

Key messages

- 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 **Question 2** and the completion of task for **Question 3**.
- Read the scenario carefully for **Question 3** and answer all the questions and pay attention to different time frames.
- Similarly, if a task is 'What is the disadvantage of using social media website?' and the candidate answers 'there are many disadvantages of using social media website (and nothing else)', then they do not meet the criteria for the top band of task completion.

General comments

This is the first year that the new syllabus and mark scheme have taken place, **Question 1** was a totally new format to the candidates, and the mark scheme for **Questions 2** and **3** were quite different from previous years. There were a number of impressive performances from centres. Some candidates used complex structures and difficult or unusual characters, which demonstrated their linguistic ability was improving.

Even the format in **Question 1** has been changed, all gaps were well managed with proper words from the core vocabulary list due to the topics were common and familiar to candidates.

The overall quality of work from candidates on **Questions 2** and **3** have not differed too much from previous years. 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 exam, Chinese characters should be used as often as possible and both English 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 format and long openings and ending greeting is not essential which could take up candidates' examination time and the space for recommended word counts.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Candidates were asked to fill in a form for visiting an international school. Most of the candidates were able to fill the gaps with ease since the topic areas, e.g. school subjects, hobbies which have been tested on were very familiar to candidates.

For gap 1 国籍, a majority of the candidates wrote countries without mistake, but a few added 人 after a country which could be tolerated for a mark.

Gap 2 + 3 were very accessible and candidates did really well with success, e.g. 科学、汉语、中文、英文.

Gap 4 + 5 were also very well answered with different activities, e.g. 游泳、打篮球、小提琴.

Accuracy of characters generally were 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 similar phonetic sound. Centres could train their students to avoid the similar mistakes for future exams.

The mistakes listed below are in the brackets. 玩手机(毛)、打网球(冈)、看电影(景)、地理(埋), etc.

It was very pleasing to see that the cases of writing in Pinyin or in English or mixing characters with them were hardly seen this year.

Question 2

The question requires the candidates to write about their favourite city. 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. They were able to provide consistently relevant information and opinions.

Most of the candidates were familiar with the questions word 在哪儿 in bullet point 1, 怎么样 in bullet point 3, 有什么好看的地方 in bullet point 4 and 做什么 in bullet point 5 which often appeared in previous years, therefore, the vast majority did very well and answers like 东京的冬天有暴雨、上海有一个国家花园, 又漂亮又大.

The majority could respond to bullet point 2 with some numbers, e.g. 十几万人口, but some might be confused with 口人 which was tolerated.

For bullet point 5, there were two words 将来 and 想 reminding candidates it should be answered in future time frame and vast majorities did really well. They also included reasons in their answers, e.g. 我想在上海工作, 做一个老师因为我喜欢小朋友.

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 have not really demonstrate their 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 of good examples for each task, e.g.

- 有上百万人都住在北京
- 非常美丽因为太阳很大
- 那是一个非常热闹的城市，同时它也是中国的首都
- 我将来想去上海的学校看一看上海的环境
- 每天早上都会有升旗，十分壮观

On the contrast, there were some areas that required improvement:

Grammar:

- Use of 是 with adjectives: 游泳池是很大、是可口
- Misuse of 还: 没有多人，还没有不多人
- Anglicised structures: 参观朋友、做爬山、公园有真好的看、最很大

Characters and words:

- Mixture of characters and Pinyin: 是 ao ke lan
- Misspelled characters with the same phonetic sound character or similar shape: 长年（常）、一（医）生、天气如（好）、名生（胜）古迹、参馆（观）、会（公）园、冈（风）、上每（海）、有（又）好看有（又）美、今长（经常）、觉的（得）、天气情/请（晴）

Question 3

The styles of the questions did not change much this year and there were only two options for candidates to choose from: **(a)** to write a letter to a pen-pal talking about an environment activity you recently participated in; **(b)** to write an article for a magazine, talking about your views of social media website. Over 80 per cent of the candidates opted for **(a)**, perhaps due to familiarizing with the topic 环境. The majority could respond to all the bullet points with a good level of detail and link ideas effectively with appropriate connectives.

(a) Environment

Completion of the tasks

The majority 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 'where', task 2 'what' and task 5 'who' did not cause issues to complete the tasks. However, task 4 怎么做 appeared for the first time in the exam, so a few did not understand, therefore, could not complete the task.

The sentence structure 为这个活动 in bullet point 2 seemed a bit challenging to some candidates. Although 为什么 was not hard in bullet point 3, but the whole sentence was quite long and some candidates were not familiar with 或者, sadly they just copied the whole question and added 因为 afterwards.

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 3(a)**. 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 环境 and wrote an essay about extra curriculum activities followed the questions in the tasks.

The other area candidates needed to pay attention to was the length of the essay. If the words count was significantly less than the recommended length, the capping system was applied.

There were many good examples for each task, e.g.

- 这个活动是在上海举行的，这是因为想让很多人来。
- 我让小孩子比赛捡垃圾，谁捡最多会得到一个礼物
- 会让很多人知道为什么让他们的环境干净很重要
- 学到了很多关于环境的东西

Range

It was very pleasing to see some extended, well-linked sentences frequently appeared in the 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.

There was also a wide range of vocabulary evident that was appropriate to the tasks, e.g.

- 我觉得中学生可以更加爱我们的环境会对我们的环境更好。
- 大人们要向我们学怎么爱我们的环境
- 多走路上学，少坐汽车
- 可以少用水，洗澡时间缩小到五分钟
- 人们也可以把没有用的塑料回收，多用一到两次
- 我们需要捡一个垃圾桶的垃圾才能回家

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: 环境（境）、动场（物）、包 hu（保护）、拎（邻）居、拉级同（垃圾桶）、无了（聊）、应该（该）

Grammar:

- Missed past tense particle 了 in sentences: 我很高兴了、不喜欢了写环境杂志
- Misused nouns: 更少的时候看电视
- Wrong sentence order: 跟不但我的家人、去美国跟你一起

(b) Social media websites

Completion of the tasks

About 20 per cent of the candidates opted this option and they had good idea to complete the tasks. Question words in task 1 'do what', task 2 'how long did you spend', task 4 'what disadvantage' and task 5 'what activities' were handled very well. Bullet point 3 'why social media websites are popular' was asking opinions and it was also not unfamiliar to candidates.

Good examples include:

- 导致人们不善于在现实生活中交流;
- 社交网站很流行的原因是因为它十分方便，可以在任何时间和地点去和朋友沟通，同时可以交更多朋友;
- 人们使用社交网站聊天时会感到更自信

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.

There was a broad range of vocabulary appropriate to the tasks, e.g:

- 跟朋友见面时间变少了;
- 我有时也会在社交网站上发布我的生活日常, 来展示自己;
- 我觉得我比很多学生花的时间少, 可是还是太久了
- 社交网站很流行因为什么都可以找得到

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 to improve:

Characters: 电脑 (missing radical)、生 (身) 体、风影 (景)

Grammar:

- Mixed Pinyin, English with character: 做我的 zuo ye、太 xin ku 和累
- Anglicised structures: 用多时间、你杀社交网站的用
- Use of 是 with adjectives: 是难、是好玩、是很贵
- Missing measure words: 我花了三个天
- Misuse of verb: 不要玩运动