



**GCSE**  
**Chinese (Mandarin)**

8673/RH Paper 3 Reading Higher Tier

Report on the Examination

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## General comments

The higher paper tests a range of skills in a variety of authentic contexts and layouts targeting grades 4-9. Students working at the higher grades will be expected to be able to deduce meaning from complex language and draw inferences in context from a range of texts that are more challenging than at foundation tier. Where appropriate, students will be asked to identify key points and specific details. The question wording is not designed to be unnecessarily challenging so as to be a barrier to student comprehension, and questions are set to be appropriate for the targeted level of demand. Sections A and B start and finish with a more accessible question, but students should be aware that there is a series of peaks and troughs throughout each section so if they are having difficulties with a particular question, they should go onto the next question which may be more accessible and keep going to the end of the paper.

It was pleasing to see such high numbers of students taking this exam and demonstrating a level of performance that indicates recovery from the impact of the pandemic. Students are becoming more familiar with the requirements of the different question types, including literary texts, and as a result there were very few cases of students leaving questions unanswered. This demonstrates clearly that exam technique has improved. It was also pleasing to see that the translation was completed very well.

In this report, senior examiners will summarise the performance of students in this series in a way that is as helpful as possible to teachers preparing future cohorts.

## Section A

### Question 1

Students performed extremely well on this question, with a success rate of over 99% for 01.3 and 94% for 01.4. Students were clearly comfortable with the topic of 'Technology.' In Question 01.1, there was a range of answers from students due to their understanding of communication in modern times. 'Talking,' 'texting,' 'communicating,' and 'messaging' were all accepted as correct answers. A small number of pupils answered 'surfing online,' which was marked as incorrect; the main action in the text was 聊天, not 上网. In Question 01.2, two correct answers were accepted: 'convenient' and 'the phone is small.'

### Question 2

It seems that students were not intimidated by the literary texts and treated them as any other text, which was encouraging. This story was based on an adapted literary text. It was a question with 'F/T/NT' (False/True/Not in Text) options. Student performance on this question shows that most students are now familiar with the question style. They performed especially well on 02.2 and 02.3, with success rates of 94% for and 95% respectively. Questions 02.4 and 02.7 proved to be a bit more challenging, with a success rate of 66% and 70% respectively. The words '凉快' and '半天' were not familiar to most students, and some students marked their answers as 'NT.' Examiners also gave credit for the answer 'NM' (not mentioned), in consideration of the fact that 'NM' can be used in the Listening paper on similar questions.

### Question 3

This was another question which was answered very successfully by the majority of students. It clearly showed that students were comfortable with the topic ‘My school,’ especially in 03.2, where the success rate was 98%. In 03.4, some students were not familiar with the negative expression 不少 or with the distractor 不给, leading to them choosing the wrong answer.

### Question 4

This question tested students mainly on the topics of Food and Numbers. Although students were confident in these two topics, there were longer phrases for pupils to recognize and students were required to use their understanding of the text to make inferences. In addition to this, students needed to spot specific details. The question represented a very good challenge for capable students and the multiple-choice questions elicited good responses from students. Quite a high percentage of students answered questions 04.1 to 04.5 correctly, with a success rate ranging from 69% to 86%.

### Question 5

Fill-in-the-gap questions present a level of challenge for students who struggle with grammar. However, most students performed very well this year, with nearly 45% achieving full marks. Almost 60% of students gained at least 3 marks out of 4. In Questions 05.2 and 05.3, a small number of students could not distinguish between 参加 and 参观, and the question differentiated well. Sadly, more than 10% of students did not gain any marks on this question. This suggested that teachers could place more emphasis on grammar learning or practice with this type of question in their future teaching.

### Question 6

This was another open-response question, aimed at the highest grades. It was very encouraging to see that a significant percentage of students answered 06.1 with ‘relatives’ and 06.3 with ‘fireworks’ correctly, indicating that most students were well-prepared for this topic area. For 06.1, credit was given for responses such as ‘go to visit relatives’ or ‘visit/go to see family’, but responses like ‘go to see grandparents’ or ‘go to relatives in the west/east/north’ were not credited due to the incorrect additional information contained in the answers. For 06.2, responses like ‘to find a work/job’ were not credited.

### Question 7

The students' responses to this task were more successful than in previous years, with a high success rate of over 55% for both questions. For 07.1, the majority of students correctly understood ‘hot in the summer’ and ‘safe.’ However, some students mistakenly interpreted 安全 (safe) as ‘quiet’ (安静). For 07.2, 55% of students responded precisely, as the mark scheme required. However, some students provided very short answers like ‘friendly’ or ‘eat Chinese food in the city,’ missing necessary details such as ‘people’ or ‘city centre’ and such answers were not credited. Additionally, incorrect adjectives, for example ‘kind’, were not accepted.

### Question 8

This was the second overlapping literacy question, and students achieved pleasingly high scores overall. Performance was especially high in 08.1 with an 87% success rate and in 08.3 with 84%. For Question 08.1, students had to demonstrate their ability to understand a time phrase combined with a noun modifier 的, specifically 前一天的下午. Nearly 13% of students were unable to respond correctly. Similarly, in 08.4, the character “等” seemed challenging for some students. Nevertheless, 76% of students gained marks on this.

### Question 9

Although filling in the detailed information in the boxes was considered challenging, more than 60% of students gained full marks, and under 11% of students received fewer than 2 marks. Overall, the question was suitable for the level being tested. Unfortunately, a small group of students placed their answers in the wrong boxes and did not receive the marks they perhaps deserved.

### Question 10

This was another successful question, with nearly 50% of students receiving full marks and most students gaining at least 3 out of 4 marks. However, some students chose A or B instead of D or E, indicating they were not familiar with the vocabulary 准备 (prepare), 学期 (semester), 课外活动 (extracurricular activities) and 生活 (life).

### Question 11

Apart from 11.2, students performed very well on this question. The question also differentiated very well. Question 11.1 demonstrated a high success rate, with over 95% of students answering correctly. 11.2 gave some challenge to many students with a success rate of nearly 50%. This question required understanding two long clauses linked with 先 (first) and 然后 (then) as well as two directional phrases. It was an effective question for assessing high-ability students.

### Section B – Question 12

The last question required students to translate a short passage from Mandarin to English. Overall, most students performed well on this task, with over 40% of students scoring 7 marks or above. This indicates that students have been well trained in translation. Particularly for the first two sentences, most students translated them perfectly. With 14% of students gaining full marks and the most common scores being 7 or 8 out of 9 marks, only 5% of students failed to score on this task.

It is also very pleasing to see how many students attempted the translation, which comes at the end of a very long paper. From marking the scripts, it is clear that students broke the text into small chunks to attempt each part.

In the text, 玩得很高兴 was often mistranslated. Credit was given for answers such as ‘played happily’ or ‘had a good/great time,’ but not for ‘I was very happy’ or ‘It was fun.’ These latter translations lacked precision. Students should be reminded of the need for precision in this task. Every word must be accurately reflected in the translation, and students must ensure that they adhere closely to the original text.

## **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.