



GCSE **Chinese (Mandarin)**

8673/LH Paper 1 Listening Higher Tier

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

It is gratifying to see the progress students have made in their Mandarin Chinese studies. The Listening exam effectively differentiated between lower and higher-attaining students. Many students understood much of the spoken material and successfully answered the comprehension questions.

Positive aspects of this year's paper include:

- many students gained marks across most questions, regardless of type
- few students left non-verbal questions unanswered
- students were well-prepared for the variety of questions.

However, some issues persist, particularly with verbal questions requiring answers in English. These often highlight differences in ability, but students' answers can sometimes be vague or unclear. Basic vocabulary (eg numbers, time, age, family members) and topic-specific terms were sometimes not known, hindering students' ability to answer correctly.

Teachers should continue to remind students of the following tips.

- Listen to the entire utterance before writing your answer.
- Pay close attention to emboldened words.
- Identify questions with multiple parts.
- Write down option letters carefully and neatly.
- Ensure answers are within the appropriate numbered lines or sections.
- Avoid providing unnecessary additional information.
- Clearly cross out answers you do not want marked.
- Answer all questions and avoid leaving any blank.

Question 1

The paper opened with an accessible question designed to ease students into the exam and build their confidence. This question was answered very well, with nearly 80% of students achieving all three marks. Almost all students correctly identified option D (music) as a correct answer.

Questions 2-3

These questions are now a well-established feature of this specification, testing both an understanding of different time frames and the ability to extract details from listening comprehension passages. In question 2, students demonstrated strong familiarity with the time frame expressions 上个月, 这个月, and 下个月, enabling them to provide the relevant activities. However, the less familiar term 比赛 proved challenging. Some students attempted to answer with "pizza", possibly due to its similar sound, which unfortunately did not qualify as a correct response. Question 3 saw more than half of students scoring at least one mark, indicating a solid grasp of the tested vocabulary 动物园 and 美术馆.

Questions 4-8

There was a varied response to this set of questions. Question 5 proved to be the most straightforward, where students successfully connected the concept of 中国 and 最大 to "China setting a world record". However, questions 7 and 8 posed the most difficulty. Many students were misled by distractor options mentioning Taiwan and Italy, choosing "tourism in Taiwan" for option F and "Italian food" for option B.

instead of the correct answers "new television series" and "valuable artwork" respectively. These questions assess students' ability to understand the entire message, identifying 台湾演员会说说他的新电视剧 and 最贵的一张画在意大利.

Question 9

This question was particularly well received, featuring an interesting crime drama scenario. In this specification, it is not permitted to test single lexical items in isolation, so there is always a distractor or a negative present. Despite the extended text, the vocabulary used was rather straightforward.

In 09.1, the examiners had anticipated that most students would disregard the distractor 坐八点的公共汽车 and pick up the correct information 九点到达办公室, but in fact only 68% of students answered correctly. 09.2 was answered more successfully, with 72% giving the correct response. However, while 去 is a very familiar verb, 来 is less well-known. Teachers might want to take note of this and teach this pair of verbs more thoroughly. The medium demand multiple choice question 09.3 was answered very well, with 93% of students choosing the correct option.

Question 10

This question is a continuation of question 9 and maintains a similar style and demand, but with better outcomes. The majority of students scored multiple marks.

In 10.1, although most students understood the past negative experiential phrase 没有打过电话, the numbers in 星期四 and 一天 caused some confusion. Some students incorrectly answered with "4", "one" or "one thousand" (possibly mistaking 一天 for 一千). 10.2 was answered very well, with 92% of students correctly identifying 咖啡厅. However, 10.3, while answered correctly by 85% of students, did not perform as well as 09.3. It appears that some students were unfamiliar with 服务员, a term for waiter mainly used in the northern regions of China.

Question 11

Students handled this question adeptly, with almost all gaining one or two marks on both parts. They were familiar with daily activities such as 起床 and 聊天, and most students confidently recognised the negative sentence structure 对...没有兴趣. Despite the length of the sentence, they successfully identified 英国历史 and 参观博物馆 as the two items within the negative structure.

Questions 12-13

The overlap section was notably more accessible at this tier compared with the foundation tier. In question 12, 82% of students correctly identified 青菜 as the answer.

In question 13, responses to 不吃肉 were even more successful. However, some students mistakenly answered, "not to eat meat", which was not the precise answer as the question explicitly included "the pupils plan **not** to" with "**not**" highlighted. After careful consideration, the examiners awarded marks to these answers. Nevertheless, teachers should consistently remind students to carefully read questions, as clarity in answers is crucial for receiving credit. For example, in this question, the correct completion of the sentence should have been "eat meat".

Question 14

This question was of medium demand and proved to be quite accessible overall. While it contained little challenging vocabulary, the length of the speech posed some difficulties. Students performed exceptionally well in the first two questions, with 99% selecting the correct option for 14.1 and 97% for 14.2. However, in the latter two questions there was a slight decline in performance, with 79% correctly answering 14.3 and 87% 14.4.

In 14.3, the sequence of actions 先... 然后... was tested, and some students struggled to identify which element was the first action, 上课, and which was the subsequent action, 去图书馆看书, resulting in incorrect options being chosen.

Teachers should provide exercises to train their students in handling lengthy speeches with four-part answers, ensuring they can swiftly correlate each part of the speech with its corresponding question. Despite these challenges, nearly 80% of students scored a mark for each part of the question. The examiners were pleased to observe this encouragingly high success rate overall.

Questions 15-17

This overlap question was well handled at the higher tier, with a significant proportion of students scoring well in all three questions. The distractor 五岁 in question 15 posed little challenge to the higher tier students.

In question 16, most students confidently identified 哥哥 as the best football player rather than the distractor 我和妹妹. However, a few students incorrectly claimed that all three were the best players, missing the question's singular focus on "the best player".

Question 17, however, saw lower performance compared to others in this section due to 女孩子 being unfamiliar. While "female" was accepted as a correct answer, guesses such as "children" or "his family" were not accepted. Answers referring to "a girl" were also rejected, as 女孩子们 clearly indicated a plural concept, and therefore "a girl" did not gain the mark.

Questions 18-19

This section effectively differentiated between levels of demand, particularly targeting higher proficiency levels.

Question 18.1 was classified as high demand. As anticipated, only those working at the highest level were able to identify the phrase 工作申请信 and provide the correct verbal answer. In 18.2, which was also high demand, performance was slightly better than in 18.1, although fewer than half of students correctly understood 一个半小时. The most common incorrect answer was "half an hour". Given the high demand nature of these questions, the outcomes were as expected. Surprisingly, 18.3, classified as a medium demand question, performed better than anticipated, with 94% of students scoring the mark.

Question 19 continued the high demand trend from Question 18, with only 58% correctly identifying the question, "Can I write tomorrow", for 19.1. In 19.2, it became evident that the word 不舒服 was unfamiliar to some students. While its accurate meaning in the given context is "unwell", the examiners also accepted "uncomfortable" as a broad interpretation. Overall, Question 19 performed as expected for its level of demand.

Questions 20-21

These overlap questions saw higher tier students outperforming their foundation tier counterparts, as expected, yet overall success rates were lower than anticipated given their low demand. Question 20 highlighted a gap in understanding regarding 京剧, serving as a cautionary note for teachers. While Chinese New Year and other festivals are well covered in schools, cultural content like 京剧 and 书法 might be underrepresented in GCSE Chinese courses.

Question 21 also yielded surprising results, with only 52% of students scoring both marks and an additional 27% scoring one mark, leaving a notable minority without any mark. The first mark required an appropriate translation of 在英国上学, and it was disappointing to observe that many higher tier students struggled to render this into acceptable English. Some responses reflected guesswork, with vague answers such as "English student" not achieving the mark.

The second mark also showed mixed performance. While many students correctly identified the question about the speaker's origin or home/family, some failed to understand 香港 and its pinyin "Xianggang" was not accepted as a correct answer. At Key Stage 4, students are expected to provide answers in standard English, which includes understanding and using proper place names.

Success in these questions hinges on a detailed grasp of vocabulary listed in the specification, as well as items commonly taught in Key Stage 3.

Questions 22-23

Although students are typically well trained in how to approach P, N and P+N type questions, this section of questions tested complex language in order to meet a higher level of demand. Furthermore, by requiring only two possible answers instead of the usual format of three or four questions using all three opinion options, it was more challenging for students to choose from the three possible options. The outcomes were broadly as expected, with three-quarters of students scoring in question 22 and 80% scoring in question 23.

Questions 24-25

This section performed as expected, with both questions designed to meet the highest level of demand. Complex language was tested in an extended passage, requiring precise answers. Question 24 proved more challenging for some students, as indicated by their incorrect responses and by a significant number of students failing to provide a response, suggesting unfamiliarity with the words 经验 and 工资. 64% scored at least one mark, but only a quarter scored both.

Question 25 exhibited similar performance patterns. As is often the case, students sometimes focus on isolated keywords rather than the entire context. Upon hearing 早饭 and 健身房, various related answers were provided with some guesswork, but with limited success, such as "goes to the gym". Quite a few students mistook 卖早餐 for "buys breakfast", indicating a need for careful attention to Chinese pronunciation tones and overall attention to detail.

Questions 26-27

These final overlap questions were answered successfully by almost all students at the higher tier. Unlike at the foundation tier, both questions enjoyed a high success rate, with students at this level demonstrating strong familiarity with vocabulary related to weather.

However, while 77% of students in question 26 and 79% in question 27 scored both marks, these results suggest that there is still room for improvement in listening skills, particularly with short spoken passages containing basic words. Teachers often focus on character recognition, but it may be beneficial to place additional emphasis on familiarising students with the sound of these words.

Overall, this year's listening performance showed significant improvement compared to last year, reflecting the hard work of both students and their teachers. Congratulations to all involved for their excellent efforts and achievements.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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