

# GCSE **CHINESE (MANDARIN)**

8673/RH Paper 2 Reading Higher Tier  
Report on the Examination

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8673/RH  
June 2023

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Version: 1.0

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## General comments

*Changes were made to the 2023 papers to reflect the removal of the regulatory requirement to test vocabulary outside of the published vocabulary list.*

The higher tier paper tests a range of skills in a variety of authentic contexts and layouts, targeting grades 4-9. It was encouraging to see a slight increase in the number of students taking Mandarin Chinese after the unprecedented challenges and disruption to teaching and learning during the previous years. This year's paper proved to be accessible to all students and it was clear that a majority of students were appropriately prepared for a wide range of topics across the paper. The mean mark on this paper was just below 46, which is slightly higher than the last series in 2022.

Students are familiar both with the requirement of the different question types and with lengthy texts, and, as a result, the vast majority of students were able to attempt all questions and most responded to the questions with some detail. In the face of all the challenges created by the loss of teaching and learning time, teachers have demonstrated their professionalism in preparing their students for the papers.

Unfortunately, handwriting continues to be an occasional issue for examiners and students should be reminded of the need to write their answers, and any changes that have been made, as clearly as possible. Examiners noted that a few students gave unclear answers to multiple choice questions on the paper.

## Question 1

This medium-demand selection question proved to be a successful opening to the paper, with over 88% of students gaining at least three marks for the question. Around 50% of students were able to rule out the distractors A and F successfully and hence gained all four marks.

## Question 2

This overlap question, aimed at the lower grades on this tier, was very well responded to by the majority of students, with an impressive 90% success rate in 02.1 and 02.6. Over 70% of students gained the marks for 02.2, 02.3, 02.4 and 02.7. In 02.5, 67.5% of students were able to understand the expression 一个人 and provide the correct answer.

## Question 3

Although this was designed to be a medium-high demand question and the topic of charity work appeared challenging, it was answered extremely well, with between 85% and 97% achieving the correct answers on each item. Questions 03.1 and 03.5 were slightly less successfully answered than the other questions due to uncertainty about the use of 给.

## Question 4

This question targeted more able students and required written answers in English. It was heartening to note that nearly half of students gained both marks in 04.1. A common error in 04.1

was when students gave vague answers, such as “go to seaside” or “stay on the grass”, which were both rejected due to a lack of precision and clarity. Similarly, 85% of students scored at least one mark in 04.2, but others produced answers like “going shopping”, which were rejected as too imprecise. 04.3 enjoyed a success rate of over 70%, but it was surprising to see how many students appeared to be unfamiliar with 夏天.

### Question 5

Although still challenging, it was pleasing that this high demand question was very well answered, with over 95% of students responding correctly to 05.3. The other sections of this question also had encouraging success rates, ranging from 62% in 05.4 to over 83% in 05.1.

### Question 6

This high-demand written answer question was, in parts, very well answered. Nearly 70% of answers to 06.1 were correct. In 06.2, however, many students gave imprecise answers such as “people spend too much money,” rather than the correct response of “a waste of money”. The conditional adverbial clause structure 如果 proved challenging in 06.3, with many responding by guessing with “More than 80% of people feel that they don’t use mobile phones to surf the web as they think it is boring.”

### Question 7

This question provided a surprisingly mixed bag of responses, exposing gaps in many students’ vocabulary. In 07.1, more than 80% of students understood 一边工作, 一边做运动, but not 想穿什么就穿什么, and some gave the answer “you can do what you want”, which was not rewarded. Unfortunately again, not being able to identify higher level vocabulary and grammar such as the comparative form 更长, 在起床前 and 影响了自己的休息, prevented the majority of students scoring both marks in 07.2.

### Question 8

This was the second overlap question, so was low demand for this tier. As expected, most students responded successfully, with the vast majority of students answering 08.2 correctly. 08.3 was slightly less successfully answered, with just under 60% responding correctly. 最后一排 and 蓝紫色 were understood by around 70% of students.

### Question 9

This was another overlap question, requiring answers in English. On the whole, this question was answered well by most students. 09.1 elicited over 90% correct responses, with 09.2 performing at a similar level. The vocabulary 空气, 干净, 在一起 and 热闹 used in the text proved to be very accessible, enabling 87% of students to achieve at least one mark and over 65% of students to gain two marks in 09.3.

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### Question 10

This was a question type that was relatively new, but of low demand. It required students to read and re-read the texts about each restaurant, scanning and then cross checking to find the most suitable restaurant for each person. This section of questions within the topic of ‘eating out’ was answered successfully by the majority of students. Over 93% answered 10.1 correctly. In 10.2, over 73% successfully identified that 家庭 and 每次只能为两位客人服务 indicated that the customer likes to eat in a small restaurant. 10.3 was surprisingly well answered, with nearly 90% of students being able to recognise 京剧. 79% of students were able to gain the mark in 10.4 because they correctly inferred the information from 全天二十四小时开门. Furthermore, 73% of students concluded that the fact that restaurant B is only two kilometers away from the Great Wall would allow the customer to visit a nearby tourist site after the meal.

### Question 11

This section was a mixed-response question with lengthy texts.

Question 11.1 was almost the best-answered question on the paper – 对面有一家英国超市 was understood by 98.6% of students. 11.2, on the other hand, proved to be the most challenging question in this section and more than half of students were unable to draw the correct conclusion from 离学校非常近,市中心附近,交通很方便 that the location was convenient. A success rate of over 90% was achieved in 11.3 and 11.6 because of the straightforward vocabulary 科目都很难 and 做义工. Pleasingly, 85% of students gained the mark for 11.4. However, 11.5 proved to be less successful, with 58% scoring the mark, probably because the vocabulary used in the text, 附近的运动中心 and 右边的运动中心, were unfamiliar to some students.

### Question 12

The translation task on the Higher tier paper contains not only phrases but also sentence patterns targeting all grades from 4-9 and always differentiates well. It was pleasing to report the very successful performance in the translation question for this series, with a mean mark of 6.7 out of 9. Over 53% of students gained 8 or 9 marks demonstrating that they had been well-trained in translation skills. Overall, this was a definite improvement on previous years.

In the first sentence, 电子邮件 proved challenging for some students and, after careful thought, “electronic mail” was accepted.

我想和你见面 – some students failed to gain a mark for writing “Do you want to go with me?” rather than “I would like to meet you.”

我们可以去最有名的饭馆吃饭 was perhaps the most demanding section of the translation and as such was not translated well. The superlative expression 最有名 was not widely recognised, although it did succeed in differentiating students very well.

下午 was omitted by some students when translating 下午参观美术馆.

Students should be reminded of the need for precision in this task in order to achieve the marks. Every word must be reflected in the translation and students must ensure that they keep 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.