

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback January 2011

GCSE

GCSE Spanish (5SP02)
Unit 2: Speaking in Spanish

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Unit 2: Speaking in Spanish (5SP02)

Examiner's Report for Centres

Under this new specification, candidates must take two oral assessments based on two different task types chosen from:

- 1) an open interaction - an unscripted role-play
- 2) a presentation or
- 3) a picture-based Discussion.

All the tests are marked internally and only one recorded task is submitted for external moderation by Edexcel (for those candidates identified by asterisk on the Optems A for each centre). For centres where there is more than one Teacher/Examiner it is essential that internal standardisation takes place before recordings are submitted.

The work of 140 candidates from 19 centres who entered for the new specification speaking examination in January was moderated. It is clear that candidates are better prepared to cope with the demands of the new examination and weaker candidates performed more confidently. As well as the intensive preparation, candidates were also encouraged by having the opportunity to take ownership of the tasks, choosing their own topic areas, task types and their own pictures or topics for presentation.

Several of the Teacher/Examiners observed good practice and listened carefully to their candidates, building on what they said. This created interesting and varied conversations, helping to gently challenge their candidates to reach their linguistic potential. Open rather than closed questions gave the candidates opportunity to produce detailed, imaginative responses and more complex questions and time frames helped the more able candidates to demonstrate their competence over a variety of tenses and structures.

Administration

While many centres provided the required documentation correctly, a number failed to do so. Centres are advised that, following feedback from Summer 2010 and to reduce the amount of form-filling for you, a new combined mark sheet/authentication form* (Candidate Mark Sheet for Unit 2: Speaking) for the speaking unit has been produced that differs to the one produced in the specification.

The Administrative Support Guide (Instructions for the Conduct of the Examination and Controlled Assessments) 2011 has details of what centres are required to send their moderator and the copies of the new forms to be used are held within the appendices. The Administrative Support Guide is available on our website at <http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09/mfl/spanish/Pages/default.aspx> under 'Exam Materials'.

Below is a checklist of materials to send to your moderator.

| | |
|---|---|
| For each candidate in the sample: | ✓ |
| Task/stimulus | |
| Form CA2 (Candidate Notes Form) | |
| *(Updated)* Candidate Mark Sheet for Unit 2: Speaking - signed by <u>both candidate and centre-assessor</u> . Any candidate unable to provide an authentication statement will receive zero credit for the component. | |
| Recording of task 2A ONLY. Please do not send any 2B recordings. | |
| For your centre: | ✓ |
| The OPTEMS middle copy (yellow) or printout of marks submitted on Edexcel Online for 2A ONLY. | |
| The work of the highest scoring candidate and lowest scoring candidate, <u>if not already included in the sample</u> . For any asterisked candidates which are absent or scored zero, replacement candidates must be supplied to meet the required number of candidates in the sample. | |
| A mixture of task types - (ie Open Interactions / Presentations / Picture Based Discussions) | |

OPTEMS:

The top copy (white) of the OPTEMS is sent to Edexcel to record the centre marks or printout of marks submitted on Edexcel Online.

The bottom copy (green) is retained by the centre.

*If you have already completed the previous forms for the speaking unit, it is still possible for you to submit these this summer only. The new forms should be used for all future controlled assessment submissions.

It was pleasing that to see that a greater number of centres are now submitting recordings on CDs, mp3 format or memory sticks. The quality of recording is often much better and clearer on these formats compared to audio cassettes.

Many centres chose to prepare tasks related to topics recommended by Edexcel; of the few examples of centre-devised options, school was the most popular theme. Travel and Tourism proved to be a popular topic followed by Sport and Leisure and Media and Culture. There were also some good examples of Open Interactions based on Business, Work and Employment. Most of these were based on job interviews or careers interviews.

Some centres expected all their candidates, regardless of ability, to attempt the same tasks and while the task set stretched the most able, the weaker candidates were disadvantaged by having to attempt tasks way beyond their ability. It is important to ensure that the tasks chosen are appropriate for the abilities of each individual candidate.

Most of the tests were accurately marked and the clarity of the assessment grids makes the assessment easy to follow. It was clear from the consistency of the marking

that a process of internal standardisation had been successfully carried out when two or more teachers had been involved with the assessments.

In a few cases, particularly in the presentation option, it became clear that the candidate had pre-learnt the first 3 minutes or so of the test and when interaction with the teacher began, the candidate struggled. It is also important that the candidates should not know in advance all the questions that are likely to be asked during the oral test. The ability to deal with unpredictability is specifically mentioned in the Content and Response assessment grid and the candidate will lose marks heavily if there is no unpredictability. It is therefore recommended that no more than 5 or 6 bullet points should be given to the candidate for his or her preparation.

Centres kept to the timings of 4-6 minutes for each assessment. In very few cases the oral tests only lasted for about 3 minutes and therefore the marks for Content and Response were reduced. The moderator will stop listening at the end of the sentence after 6 minutes has elapsed and therefore orals that last more than 6 minutes are unnecessary. Similarly, the candidate's introduction to the Presentation option should last for no more than 3 minutes - 1 minute is often quite adequate. The candidate's introduction to the picture-based discussion should last for no more than 1 minute. If the candidate shows signs of exceeding these time limits, it is important for the teacher to interrupt and begin the process of interaction.

The candidates in general were more comfortable with the new examination, had prepared well and showed much more confidence. The tests were conducted in an encouraging and sympathetic manner giving the candidates plenty of opportunity to demonstrate their linguistic competence over a wide range of vocabulary, tenses and structures.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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