



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

1SP0 Paper 4F

Foundation tier: Writing in Spanish

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Report to centres 1SP0_4F 2025 summer series

Overview of the examination

The writing paper accounts for 25% of the overall GCSE and is divided into four parts:

Question 1: Picture-based task:

Candidates need to address two elements based on a given picture, give a description and an opinion. This section is worth a maximum of 12 marks, and the suggested word count is 20-30 words.

Question 2: choice of two:

Candidates must address four points, including a reference to the future. This section carries a maximum of 16 marks, and the suggested word count is 40-50 words.

Question 3: choice of two:

Candidates must address four points, including references to both the past and future. This section is worth a maximum of 20 marks, and the suggested word count is 80-90 words. This question is common to the Higher tier paper.

Question 4: Translation task:

Candidates must translate 5 sentences into Spanish and is worth a maximum of 12 marks. The sentences increase in difficulty from the first to the fifth. The final sentence requires candidates to translate a sentence in the past.

The suggested word counts are not strict limits; longer responses are considered for marking, but writing more doesn't guarantee more marks. Candidates are assessed on two aspects for the first three tasks, Communication & Content and Linguistic Knowledge & Accuracy. If candidates omit key details in Communication & Content, they cannot be awarded marks in the top mark band. Some candidates missed specific instructions or did not notice the need to use specific time frames.

Occasionally, some candidates wrote freely based on the task's introduction or provided unrelated information instead of addressing the bullet points. The level of linguistic knowledge and accuracy required increases with each question. Question 1 only needs the present tense and basic connected ideas (using words like 'y') for full marks. On the other hand, Question 3 demands a certain proficiency in using the past, present, and future time frames, extended sentences, and a variety of grammatical structures for full marks.

Observations from 1SP0_4F 2025

Question 1

Students were asked to describe a picture and express an opinion about school uniform. It is recommended that candidates read the question carefully to identify the two parts required (i.e., photo description AND opinion on school uniform). Some candidates just covered one of the two parts and consequently lost marks

unnecessarily. Some candidates used English words, which should be avoided. It is better to use known Spanish vocabulary than to insert unknown words in English. The task allows enough flexibility that candidates don't need to rely on specific vocabulary they don't know. Candidates often misuse Spanish verbs due to thinking in English. Phrases like 'es llevar' are common. They also need to take care when using of third-person forms, avoiding errors like 'tengo', 'voy' or 'llevamos' when describing others. It is important for candidates to know language for describing clothing, as photos will feature people. Weather expressions also need improvement. Misuse of weather expressions such as es sol are common. Preparing students to describe what people are wearing and the likely weather will greatly improve performance on this task.

Question 2

Question words still need to be learnt better beforehand. 'cómo' and 'cuándo' caused difficulties for some candidates. In Questions 2a and 2b, not all candidates appreciated the fact that the fourth bullet point required a future time frame, perhaps due to difficulty recognising the use of 'ir + infinitive'. Changing 'vas' to 'voy' was not manageable for many candidates. Furthermore, in terms of verb transfer, many candidates generally struggled to use the I form of the verb they wanted to use and resorted to using the language of the stimulus without manipulation. This created ambiguity.

Question 3

In Question 3a, 'cómo' and 'hiciste' were not well understood. Bullet points 1 and 2 were widely understood and the 2nd bullet point was the most successful and most candidates were able to give a simple opinion about electric cars. Bullet point 4 was widely misunderstood because candidates failed to notice that 'cómo' was the key pointer in the bullet point. Candidates often wrote about future travel in general and did not mention the mode of transport they would use in the future.

In Question 3b, 'hiciste' and 'para estar sano' were not well understood. As with question 3a, bullet points 1 and 2 were well understood and most candidates could give a simple opinion about fast food.

The strongest responses were clearly structured, with one paragraph per bullet point and focused, targeted answers. Successful candidates planned carefully, identified time frame requirements, and addressed each task directly. They added justifications, opinions, and extra details to strengthen their responses. Many made brief notes beside the bullet points in the rubric to guide their use of key structures. Most adhered to the word count, though a few wrote overly long paragraphs, which often led to more errors. Less successful responses relied on the repeated use of limited vocabulary.

Question 4

4a: 'cuidad' was a common error. This seemingly minor spelling error creates a word with a different meaning to the required word.

4b: 'bonito/a' was well known, but 'tiene'/'hay' and 'edificios' were not.

4c: The most common errors were 'me/mi preferio', 'visite'/vistar for 'visitar' and 'pero' for 'perro'.

4d: 'amigos' and 'domingo(s)' were more widely known than anything else. Very few candidates knew 'vamos de compras' or 'compramos'. 'tiendas' and 'centro comercial' were sometimes attempted to get around this problem, but the use these were unsuccessful as they did not transfer the same meaning as the original language.

4e: Candidates usually produced two of the following words, 'semana', 'pasada', 'fruta' and 'local'. Mercado was often not known.

Advice for candidates preparing for GCSE Foundation Spanish Writing

- Be familiar with all topic areas in the specification.
- Be able to produce coherent sentences using a variety of verbs in the present, past and future.
- Practise using as wide a range of verbs as possible to avoid repetition of the most common ones.
- Learn as wide a range of vocabulary as possible including adjectives which can help to develop responses.
- Be able to use a range of structures that can be used to give an opinion such as pienso que, creo que, opino que, en mi opinión ...
- Practise translating sentences from English into Spanish and ensuring that even single words are written if they are known.