

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

International GCSE Spanish
(4SP0) Paper 2

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Unit 2: Reading and Writing in Spanish

General Comments

The Unit 2 Reading and Writing question paper produced candidate performances across the full mark range. Overall the questions were accessible to all candidates. However, where in Section B of the paper, questions set targeted grades C - A*, and where written responses given required candidates to write answers in Spanish based on what they had read, these proved to be an appropriate challenge and as a consequence, success was limited for some.

Section A

Part One

Question 1

Question 1 required candidates to identify specific leisure time activities by selecting the correct item from a list and matching this to an associated picture. This was well done. Lexical items that proved problematic to some were 1(ii) *patinaje*, 1(iii) *natación* and 1(iv) *equitación*. The latter two items were often confused.

Question 2

Question 2 was a cloze task. The majority of candidates were able to insert all the correct words suggested. However in (c) some candidates missed the link to *carretera* in the text and inserted *avión* instead of *coche*. In (d) the reference in the text to *no es caro* was frequently missed with candidates selecting *típica* rather than *barata* to describe the food.

Question 3

Question 3 required candidates to read six short statements in which some Spanish teenagers made comments about their family. They were asked to match each of these comments to a short and specific summary statement. Most candidates scored at least 2 of the 5 marks available for this question. Problems encountered were mainly with Fernando's statement matching *mi madre prefiere a mis hermanos* with (e) *mi madre es injusta*. The link between *soy hija única* (Claudia) and statement (b) *no tengo hermanos* was also frequently missed.

Section A

Part Two

Question 4

Question 4 was the first of the two writing tasks and was linked to the content of Question 3, Family. Candidates were asked to write a short paragraph (50 words) in answer to two short question prompts; the number of people in their family and how well they get on together. Marks for Question 4 were awarded both for Communication and Content (5 marks) and Knowledge and Application of Language (5 marks). Overall candidates were well-prepared for this task and responded well to questions on what was clearly, a familiar topic. Most wrote full and detailed paragraphs which covered the required content. Some candidates responded well to the first question but were less successful in providing information about their relationships with family members, adding information about free time activities, pets and household chores as alternatives. Most paragraphs submitted were well in excess of the 50 words maximum requested. Whilst no penalty was applied to over lengthy pieces, centres are reminded that such a practice can be self penalising and should be avoided. Overall examiners reported positively on the quality of the responses read.

Section B

Part One

Question 5

In this question candidates were required to read a number of statements related to a proposed international coast cleaning event and to match these with an appropriate heading from a given list of possible answers. The instructions for candidates had been missed from the question paper, however an example was given. Although candidates appear to have understood what was required due consideration was given to the possible effects of this oversight on candidate performance. Most candidates scored at least 1 of the 5 marks available for this question. Whilst relative success, non success followed no particular trend, the following key stumbling blocks to success were noted. C. *de todas las edades* linked to (iii) *jóvenes y viejos* and F. *rellena el formulario* linked to (iv) *escribir tus datos*.

Question 6

In this question candidates were required to answer a series of questions in Spanish based on an article about the importance of education. This question carries an additional 5 marks for Quality of Language. Centres should be aware of the following marking principles which were applied when awarding marks for Quality of Language. Since the focus in Question 6 is on communicating in Spanish: -

- a single word that answers the question is creditworthy (even if taken directly from text) but will **limit** Quality of Language marks
- where only discrete words (and more is expected) are used throughout, credit **maximum 1 mark** for Quality of Language.

- where candidates start to build (but do not complete) sentences, **maximum 3 marks** for Quality of Language.
- candidates can start accessing marks for Quality of Language if the response is correct, slightly inaccurate but bears some relevance to the question set or where a genuine attempt has been made to communicate the correct response in a candidates own words in Spanish.
- Comments relevant to each section of the question are noted below.

6a(i) This question was generally well answered. Problems encountered were where candidates simply got the answers out of synch providing information for questions posed relating to information given later in the text. For example, *mejor sueldo/futuro* which did not answer the question set.

6a(ii) generally well answered however some candidates failed to look beyond the word *porcentaje* in the question and simply provided 91% as the answer which clearly was not correct.

6b(i) Mistakes arose where candidates misunderstood *al hecho* in the text and then failing to read the question carefully, incorrectly provided *faltan empleos* as the answer.

6b(ii) A misunderstanding of the previous linked question proved to be problematic for some candidates. Answers to this question were frequently wrong with many resorting to guess work in their responses.

6 c,d and e were generally well answered, most candidates made up here for points lost earlier in the question as a whole.

Question 7

Most scripts submitted were of a suitable length. However it is important for centres to note that whilst candidates are not be penalised for exceeding the word count, more does not always mean better. There were some submissions where candidates had not written enough and consequently this limited their access to higher marks according to the mark scheme for this question.

Question 7(a)

This was by far the most popular of the three options. There were some excellent scripts and candidates generally covered the content well. There were some very precise answers in clear and accurate Spanish with a pleasing use of subordinate clauses at times. It was encouraging to note that some candidates, even within the limited number of words they were required to write, managed to extend beyond a minimum response with fuller details and the expression and justification of opinions. The description of the local area was generally well covered with weaker candidates often concentrating on local amenities and personal preferences whereas better candidates moved swiftly on to observations on the

advantages and disadvantages of living in their area from an outsider's point of view. The familiarity of the context of this question clearly encouraged candidates to produce some excellent responses.

Question 7(b)

This question was far less popular than either option 7a or 7b. There were some excellent responses and candidates generally coped well with the content required. Bullet point 4, *tus regalos favoritos*, presented some problems and was less successfully covered than the rest of the described content. Both past and future time frames were handled very well. Examiners commented favourably on the quality of language used.

Question 7(c)

In this essay option candidates generally responded well providing full and detailed answers to the required content. However, whilst there were extensive descriptions of the "holiday" aspect of the question, many candidates failed sufficiently to relate this to an "exchange visit" as suggested by the title of the essay *un intercambio*. This omission limited the marks awarded for content. A minority of candidates ignored the rubric completely and submitted random essays not related at all to the task set. Clearly these entries failed to score any marks.

Conclusion

Overall outcomes in the examination of this unit were pleasing. The majority of centres had prepared their candidates thoroughly so they had a good understanding of the requirements for success in this unit and responded well to its demands. Where there are any questions or concerns, centres are advised to refer the main GCSE Spanish webpage at www.edexcel.com. Additional details and support specific to Spanish are available in the International GCSE Spanish section, International GCSE from 2009. In particular, the teacher support section contains a wealth of useful information.

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