



# Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level  
In Spanish (WSP01)  
Paper 01: Spoken Expression and Response

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## Introduction

The following report is a summary of comments and feedback from the examiners. This report should be read in conjunction with the "Marking Guidance for Oral Examiners" and the "Indicative Content" of the mark scheme. These materials can be found on the website in the Course Materials section. Please note that the indicative content in the mark scheme provides only suggested answers and is not prescriptive.

The candidate is rewarded for the ability to demonstrate understanding of a target language stimulus based on one of the General Topic Areas (GTA) of the Pearson IAL Spanish specification, and to discuss that same General Topic Area. Candidates need to demonstrate that they can engage in a discussion in Spanish that relates to a chosen GTA and allied subtopics. They will be expected to give relevant and appropriate information, convey opinions, interact, and respond to a range of questions. Further information about the preparation of candidates, the conduct and the administration of this test can be found in the "Administrative Support Guide – Conducting Oral Examinations" which is found under the "Forms and Administration" tab of the IAL Spanish page on the Pearson website, and the "Oral Training Guide" found under the "Teaching and Learning" tab of the same page.

Up to 40 marks are awarded positively as follows for this test:

- 10 marks for Quality of Language (5 marks for Accuracy of Language and 5 Marks for Range of Lexis)
- 16 marks for Spontaneity and Development
- 4 marks for Understanding of the prescribed stimulus card.
- 10 marks for Knowledge and Understanding of the General Topic Area

The test should last between 8 and 10 minutes in total (Sections A and B combined). This time should be divided equally between Sections A and B. However, if the student completes the answers to the questions in Section A in less than four minutes, the teacher/examiner should ensure that the discussion in Section B is extended, in order that the total test time is not less than eight minutes.

## Section A

**Section A** requires candidates to respond to four set questions on a stimulus related to one of the candidate's chosen General Topic Area (GTA). The GTAs are:

- Youth matters
- Lifestyle, health, and fitness
- Environment and travel
- Education and employment.

The candidate is asked four questions relating to the stimulus card. These questions are mandatory and may be repeated, but for the purpose of fair assessment across all centres, they **must not be re-phrased**. The first two questions relate specifically to information in the stimulus material, the second two relate to aspects of the subtopic, upon which the stimulus text is based.

For Question 1, it is expected that the candidate will manipulate the wording of the text in order to arrive at a complete answer to the question. This question targets information in the first paragraph of the stimulus text. There are three elements to the answer to Question 1 in the first paragraph which must be communicated by the candidate in his or her own words, for it to be considered a full answer.

For Question 2, it is expected that the candidate will find the answer in the second paragraph of the text. It will be necessary to manipulate the language found in the stimulus text to arrive at a complete answer. Personal opinions and information not contained in the text in answers to Questions 1 and 2 will not gain any credit.

For Questions 3 and 4 it is expected that the candidate will give answers which are full and detailed, drawing on the research that they undertook on the GTA, in preparation for the examination.

The candidate's understanding of this stimulus specific topic area is marked out of four. The four marks are not directly allocated as one mark per question. The statement in the mark grid, which best matches the entire performance of section A, will dictate the mark awarded.

#### **Examiners' feedback on Section A**

The most popular GTAs were "Youth matters" and "Lifestyle, health and fitness". A significantly lower number of students were tested on "Environment and travel" or "Education and employment".

All eight stimulus cards made similar demands of the students. Nearly all candidates were able to attempt the first two Section A questions, the ones based purely on the text, whereas the level of response to the second two Section A questions proved to be a good discriminator between performances.

Candidates must answer questions 1 and 2 precisely. Those who include information from the text which does not answer the question cannot be awarded full marks on Understanding (stimulus specific).

Candidates are advised to listen very carefully to the questions. They must provide relevant answers which respond precisely to the question they have been asked. They should aim to give at least three details, in their own words, for Question 1 and a detailed answer in their own words to Question 2 based on the information given in the text.

Teacher-Examiners are reminded that they must read the questions exactly as written on the cards. Additional questions and rephrasing are not allowed.

*¿Hasta qué punto?*, *¿Por qué (no)?* and *Explica tu respuesta* are frequently used in Questions 3 and 4. These question forms invite candidates to weigh up different aspects of an issue and to give opinions. Candidates who gave detailed and well-balanced responses and who considered various aspects of the question were awarded 3 or 4 marks for Understanding (stimulus card specific).

Even fluent candidates are often very nervous at the start of the test.  
Teacher examiners are advised to read the questions in Section A slowly and clearly to help candidates grasp the full implications of the question.

### **The stimulus cards**

#### **Youth matters: Cards 1A& 1B (El peso de la presión social)**

In cards 1A and 1B, most students were able to offer three pieces of information in response to Q1. Candidates are expected to answer in their own words, showing an ability to manipulate the language. There were 3 possible answers to Q2, but candidates were required to give only one.

Q3A was well answered by many candidates, who were able to outline the positive influence of peers on young people regarding study, homework, and social behaviour. Some of the better candidates went on to outline the negative effects too.

Responses to Q4A included the idea of young people wanting to imitate famous people as well as it being a way of forgetting about their own mundane lives. Better candidates outlined in detail how the lives of the rich and famous presented to us on social media are not always what they seem and how it can lead to anxiety and depression in young people who try to imitate them.

Q3B was generally well answered. Good responses included the positive aspects of belonging to a group such as social skills, identity and self-confidence as well as negative aspects such as anti- social behaviour, alcoholism, smoking and drug taking.

For Q4B good responses included the positive and negative effects of idolising celebrities such as the positive effect of sports people to inspire and motivate but also the negative effect of trying to have the perfect body image often leading to eating disorders in young people.

#### **Youth matters: Cards 2A&B (Ciudadanos digitales de primera clase)**

Overall, most candidates performed very well on both stimulus cards. They related well to the questions and had lots of opinions to share on the subtopic of technology.

Q1 and Q2 were generally answered well.

For Q3A good responses included the importance of technology in education, at work, for entertainment, and social relationships.

Candidates found Q4A a bit more challenging. Some of the best answers focused on the need to educate the older population in the use of IT, as the world has become more and more reliant on technology in areas such as banking, buying tickets and shopping.

Q3B attracted good responses that included the dangers of children spending too much time on their devices leading to addiction and certain health issues such as backache, eyes problems, and a sedentary lifestyle. Others focused on the inappropriate content and individuals that children may encounter online.

Q4B was answered well by most candidates who thought that technology has now become an integral part of our lives at school, at work and at home. The better candidates were able to also outline the negative effect of too great a dependency on technology leading to less face-to-face communication, more social isolation and children reading fewer books.

### **Lifestyle, health, and fitness Cards: 1A&B (Los lunes verdes)**

Candidates responded well to Q1 and Q2.

For Q3A several candidates misheard *desventajas* for *ventajas* and consequently could not be credited for that question. Good responses included the benefits of eating a balanced diet containing proteins and iron for a healthy life.

Q4A on the diet of the future proved to be a quite challenging question for some candidates. Good responses involved the idea of a more sustainable diet that substituted animal proteins for vegetable-based proteins and the consumption of less processed food. A vegetarian diet was deemed to be a future healthy option by many.

In Q3B candidates were able to outline in detail the benefits of a balanced diet and the main influences on the eating habits of young people. Good ideas included the influence of advertising on social media, the influence of friendship groups, the diet of the rich and famous as well as the upbringing received from parents.

Q4B proved to be more challenging. The best candidates outlined the benefits of reducing sugar, fats, red meat and fast food for improved health.

### **Lifestyle, health, and fitness Card 2A&B (Un proyecto urbano en Barcelona)**

Q1 was generally well answered, and many candidates managed to extract the 3 points required. With Q2, only the better candidates were able to deduce that Barcelona City Council's aim was to create environmentally friendly social spaces for today and for the future.

Q3A was answered well overall, and most candidates were able to outline the many advantages of living in the city.

For Q4A good responses included the idea of less crowded cities due to flexible working, technology, and the benefits for the environment due to less traffic in city centres. Some candidates focused on the possible changes in future transport with the introduction of the electric car and the wider use of cycling as a healthier and more environmentally way to travel around the city.

Q3B posed very few problems, and most candidates responded very well to this question on what an ideal city should be like.

There were also lots of good responses to Q4B. The better candidates were able to come up with very good arguments for and against rural living ranging from a healthier and less stressful way of life to the disadvantages of having less amenities, public transport, and work opportunities than in the city.

#### **Environment and travel: Card 1A&B (El turismo en México)**

Q1 and Q2 were generally well answered, but some candidates simply lifted from the text instead of putting their response into their own words.

Q3A attracted some very good answers on the disadvantages of mass tourism for a country, but answers to Q4A were not so good as some candidates found it quite challenging to come up with ideas on whether tourism was of benefit to rural areas. Better candidates highlighted the benefits to the local economy and saw tourism as a good way to repopulate abandoned villages. On the other hand, some argued that rural tourism would lead to the littering of the countryside and the destruction of natural habitats and plant life.

Q3B attracted some good responses, as the candidates who had chosen this topic were very well prepared and they were able to present some convincing opinions on the benefits of tourism.

There were some excellent responses to Q4B where candidates linked the environment to future travel and suggested that air travel may become less popular as tourists considered its detrimental effect on the environment. Instead, more people may choose to holiday at home using more sustainable means of transport such as the bicycle and the train. Some candidates linked future travel to global warming and suggested that the climate in traditional holiday destinations such as Spain, Italy or Greece may become too hot for tourists in the future.

#### **Environment and travel: Card 2A&B (El reciclaje de botellas en Ecuador):**

Q1 and Q2 were generally well answered.

Most of the candidate who chose this GTA had researched the topic very well and Q3A on the importance of recycling produced some excellent responses.

Q4A on what else we can do to protect the planet was equally well answered and many candidates showed a wealth of knowledge and understanding using specialised vocabulary.

Likewise, for Q3B and Q4B, candidates were very well prepared, and there were some excellent responses on the consequences of not recycling and on how local governments can encourage their citizens to be more eco-friendly.

### **Education and employment: Card 1A&B (Pasantías en Argentina)**

Candidates dealt well with Q1 and Q2 which posed no issues.

Q4A attracted good responses with candidates outlining the benefits of working abroad such as learning about other cultures, improving language and communication skills, and gaining independence and self-confidence.

Candidates responded equally well to Q3B on the reasons for taking a gap year.

Q4B on the effects of youth unemployment proved to be more challenging for some. Better candidates highlighted low self-esteem, depression and isolation as some of the main consequences. Others mentioned the lack of financial stability and independence.

### **Education and Employment:2A& B (Se buscan perfumistas en España)**

Candidates had little trouble finding the information to answer Q1 but some struggled to find the correct answer to Q2.

Q3A and Q4A were well answered by most candidates. There was a variety of interesting suggestions on possible in demand future professions in the fields of medicine, dentistry, science, education, and technology.

Candidates responded well to Q3B on the importance of IT skills in the workplace and to Q4B on vocational education as opposed to going to university.

### **Section B**

In Section B, the teacher/examiner develops a discussion about the General Topic Area chosen by the student. The topic of the stimulus card may be used as a starting point for this discussion, but the teacher/examiner should move to a more general discussion of the topic area and to discussion of at least one other subtopic within this General Topic Area. The candidates must attempt to show a clear understanding of the chosen topic and use the research they completed in advance of the examination, ideally citing sources they have used in their research.

Centres are reminded that in Section B the teacher /examiner must initiate a follow-up discussion on the same General Topic Area and its sub-topics as the one on the stimulus card. This summer a small number of teacher/examiners asked questions on a different GTA to the one on the card. On such occasions, the candidate's ability to access the full range of marks for "Knowledge and understanding (General topic area)" will be restricted.



Please see below a list of the GTAs and subtopics.

<b>Youth matters</b>	Family relationships and friendships Peer pressure and role models Music and Fashion Technology and communication
<b>Lifestyle, health and fitness</b>	Food and diet Sports and exercise Health issues Urban and rural life
<b>Environment and travel</b>	Tourism, travel and transport Natural disasters and weather Climate change and its impact Energy, pollution and recycling
<b>Education and employment</b>	Education systems and types of schooling Pupil/student life Volunteering and internships Jobs and unemployment

For the candidate to be able to access the full range of marks available, it is essential that Section B be a discussion, not merely a list of questions and answers. The teacher/examiner should pick up on what the candidate says, using this to inform further questions, and encourage the candidate to develop the points made where this is possible.

It is essential that teacher/examiners give students the opportunity to deal with questions suitable for AS level, i.e., to show that they have moved on from GCSE level. Where all or some of the Section B discussion centres around GCSE level questions and there is insufficient evidence of the level of challenge expected at AS level, the student may not be able to access the full range of marks for “Knowledge and understanding.”

#### **Examiners’ feedback on Section B**

#### **Choice of General Topic Area (GTA)**

The most popular combination of topic areas chosen by candidates was once again Youth matters combined with Lifestyle, health, and fitness. The topics of Environment and travel; and Education and employment have more specialised topic-specific vocabulary relating to them, and so candidates who did choose these topics tended to score well for Quality of Language (Range of Lexis) and generally demonstrated very good or excellent knowledge of their chosen General Topic Area. Good candidates were able to use sophisticated lexical items when talking about Youth matters and Lifestyle, health, and fitness, but less successful candidates tended to employ rather pedestrian vocabulary, often drawing on their IGCSE knowledge, offering anecdotal evidence, or talking about personal preferences. Centres should be aware that to

access the higher marks for “Knowledge and understanding” candidates need to offer facts and figures and/or other evidence of research into the chosen GTA; many offered no more than general knowledge.

### **Quality of Language**

The quality of language was high, both in accuracy and range. Although perfection is not necessary to score 5 in both QOL grids, candidates must use a wide range of structures and vocabulary to access the top mark bands of 5.

### **Spontaneity and Development**

In most centres, examiners had a good examining style. They put their candidates at ease and conducted natural-sounding conversations in Section B. In some centres, examiners heard “question and answer-type” conversations. In such tests, the teacher examiner asks many questions and does not respond to the candidate or interact naturally with them. In these cases, even fluent candidates would be less likely to reach the highest mark band for Spontaneity and Development because they do not have the opportunity to engage in discourse in Section B.

For more information about the requirements of the Spontaneity and Development mark-grid, please refer to the Mark Scheme and the “Marking Guidance for Oral Examiners.”

For candidates to achieve a mark of 9 or above in Spontaneity and Development in Section B, they must be given the opportunity to respond to questions that are conceptually and linguistically challenging. Some questions asked by examiners did not give the candidate the opportunity to develop their answers at AS level. Personal questions, for example: “¿Qué deportes haces?”, or “¿Qué tipo de música prefieres?” are more appropriate at GCSE level.

Development of responses in Section A is credited in the Spontaneity and Development grid.

### **Knowledge and Understanding (General Topic Area, Section B only)**

Some candidates demonstrated excellent knowledge and understanding of their chosen GTA, but the majority appeared to have not done any research on their chosen topic. Tests, where Section B is a general conversation with the candidate speaking about their own experience and general knowledge, will not meet the requirements for a mark of 7 or above in this grid. In the most successful performances, candidates were able to demonstrate an independent and well-informed perspective on the GTA and were able to support their points of view consistently with facts, information, and evidence.

### **Recording quality**

The quality of the recordings submitted this year was generally very good. It is the centre’s responsibility to submit the recordings in one of the formats accepted by Pearson; details of

the permitted formats can be found in the “Administrative Support Guide – Conducting Oral Examinations” which is found under the “Forms and Administration” tab of the IAL Spanish page on the Pearson website. It is also the responsibility of the centres to ensure that the recording quality is sufficiently loud and of decent quality.

### **Administrative matters**

Centres are reminded that the teacher-examiner must announce the centre, number, general topic area, and stimulus card number for each candidate at the beginning of each recording. A surprisingly high number of centres did not announce the GTA nor stimulus card number.

