



Examiner's Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2025

Pearson Edexcel International A Level

In Spanish (WSP01)

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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".

Generally, the stimulus cards worked well and there were very few issues with accessibility. 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). **Some** centres had not trained their candidates to find 3 ideas in response to Q1 as some gave only one idea. This excluded candidates from being able to access the top mark of 4 for Section A.

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 (Los músicos virtuales):**

Q1: Some candidates did not include the idea of musical artists finding a new audience. Q2 posed no issues.

Q3A was well answered by most candidates, who were able to outline the positive effect of technology on music. Many outlined how the development of music apps made music more accessible to all with the better candidates highlighting the fact that technology has helped musical artists promote their songs globally at a much lower cost than in the past.

There were many good responses to Q4A with most arguing that young people could not live without music as it has become a part of their daily lives.

Q3B was generally well answered. Good responses included the accessibility, variety and economic benefits of using apps to listen to music.

In response to Q4B, most candidates thought that going to a live concert was a good thing to do as it supported the artist as well as providing an emotional and unforgettable experience for the concert

goer. On the negative side, some argued that live concert tickets were very expensive and that attending concerts also involved travel costs.

### **Youth matters: Cards 2A&B (Independizarse: un reto para los jóvenes españoles):**

These were by far the two most popular cards. Overall, most candidates performed well as they related well to the questions and had lots of opinions to share on the subtopic.

Q1 was generally well answered. However, some of the weaker candidates managed to convey only one idea. For Q2 candidates were required to communicate the idea that young Spaniards want their independence but are unable to achieve it due to the current economic climate in Spain.

Q3A had many very good responses including the lack of privacy and lack of freedom for young people still living with their parents as well as having to follow parental house rules.

Q4A posed few issues. Some of the best answers focused on the importance of having a regular income, being able to manage finances and having the ability to cook and undertake household chores.

Good responses to Q3B included being able to save money, having company and the advantage of not having to do housework.

Q4B on how parents can help their children to become independent allowed the better candidates to consider the importance of developing a sense of responsibility in children by giving them household chores from an early age as well as instilling self-discipline and a good work ethic.

### **Lifestyle, health, and fitness Cards: 1A&B (Los efectos del calor extremo sobre la salud) :**

Q1. Few candidates included the idea of a rise in body temperature due to hot weather as one of the three ideas required.

Q2. Caused no issues.

Q3A. Some candidates found this question challenging. The best responses included the idea of how the climate affects what we eat and drink as well as what crops we can produce. Better candidates outlined how a warmer climate caused people to drink more water and eat a lighter diet while those who lived in a colder climate ate a diet higher in fat.

For Q4A candidates had a variety of ideas including taking more exercise, listening to music, sleeping well and spending time with friends and family.

For Q3B good responses included lack of exercise due to a sedentary lifestyle, poor diet such as fast food and too much time spent in front of a screen.

In response to Q4B most candidates agreed that life today is more stressful than in the past due to the use of social media, our fast pace of life as well as pressure at school and at work.

### **Lifestyle, health, and fitness Card 2A&B (Los beneficios de hacer ejercicio):**

Cards 2A/2B were more popular than cards 1A/1B.

Q1. The idea that exercise improves Daniela's quality of life was included by only the very best candidates. Most candidates did not communicate this idea.

Q2. Was answered correctly by most candidates.

Q3A. Most agreed that young people are less healthy today than in the past due to a more sedentary lifestyle, an unhealthier diet consisting of more processed food than in the past and more time spent on technology.

Q4A. There were many good responses that included the importance of communication, team spirit, discipline and self-esteem. The better candidates were able to outline how the skills learnt whilst playing a team sport can be important life skills that will transfer into the work of work and our future daily lives.

For Q4B most candidates outlined the excitement and adrenalin rush that extreme sports provide as well as improving self-confidence.

### **Environment and travel: Card 1A&B (El transporte público en América Latina)**

This was the least popular of the subtopics, but those who did it, generally performed very well.

1 and Q2 posed few issues and candidates responded well to these questions.

Q3A. Some good responses to this question that included the benefits to the environment, the cost to the commuter and less congestion in city centres.

For Q4A many candidates focussed on more environmentally friendly future transport such as electric vehicles, the bicycle and the development of alternatives to aviation fuel.

Most candidates responded well to Q3B and were able to outline the disadvantages of public transport such as restricted timetables, having to queue, lack of independence as well the discomfort and poor quality of public vehicles.

For Q4B ideas such as the use of electric vehicles, the development of alternative fuels and more comfortable and efficient public transport were all considered.

**Environment and travel: Card 2A&B (España: líder en las energías renovables):**

This was the least popular of the subtopics, but those who did it, generally performed very well.

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 disadvantages of renewable energies produced some excellent responses demonstrating excellent knowledge and understanding.

Q4A on which renewable energy will be most used in the future also led to some excellent responses allowing candidates to show that they had done their research on this topic.

Q3B on the effects of fossil fuels on the planet produced some very good responses as once again candidates had done a lot of research and were able to demonstrate an excellent knowledge and understanding of this sub-topic.

For Q4B there were some interesting ideas on how local governments could save energy in the local community. These ranged from installing more solar panels on buildings to having street lighting powered by renewable energies. Some candidates also talked about the use of an eco-friendlier system of public transport.

**Education and employment: Card 1A&B (Escribir a mano: una necesidad educativa):**

Q1. Some candidates did not mention the idea of how writing skills can enhance reading skills.

Q2. This question was successfully answered by most candidates.

For Q3A there was a variety of ideas on the benefits of technology in education such as providing useful information, enhancing and consolidating learning as well as promoting independent learning and research.

Q4A was well answered as candidates were able to draw on their own personal experience as to what makes a good student. Ideas presented included good organisation, motivation, good concentration in lessons and the determination to succeed.

Most candidates responded well to Q3B and presented convincing arguments on the disadvantages of technology in the classroom such as it being a distraction, causing issues with eyesight, as well as the possibility of students copying assignments from the Internet. Some candidates also raised the concern of less one to one interaction with the teacher and with other students.

Q4B attracted a range of responses with candidates identifying a good teacher as someone who inspires and motivates students, has a passion for their subject and who can impart information in a clear, creative and entertaining way. Empathy and kindness were also highlighted as important qualities of a good teacher.

### **Education and Employment:2A& B (El desempleo juvenil en España)**

Candidates had little trouble finding the information to correctly answer Q1 and Q2.

Q3A. Good responses included the importance of relevant qualifications, experience in the workplace, travel and working abroad as well as an excellent CV and the ability to present oneself positively at an interview.

Candidates responded well to Q4A with most identifying the rise in the popularity of working from home due to advances in technology. Hybrid working was seen as a positive with some candidates identifying flexible hours and the ability to balance family, leisure time and working life.

In response to Q3B there was a range of ideas including going to university, taking a vocational course, working abroad, volunteering or doing an apprenticeship.

For Q4B most candidates believed that working from home would continue to grow as it offered a healthy work life balance and fitted in well with family life. It was also seen as less stressful than commuting to the office every day. However, some candidates were concerned that working from home did have disadvantages such as isolation and the lack of face-to-face communication with colleagues in the workplace.

## **Section B**

In Section B, the teacher/examiner develops a discussion about the General Topic Area chosen by the student. The subtopic 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 series 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.

### **Youth matters**

Family relationships and friendships  
Peer pressure and role models  
Music and Fashion  
Technology and communication

### **Lifestyle, health and fitness**

Food and diet  
Sport and exercise  
Health issues  
Urban and rural life

### **Environment and travel**

Tourism, travel and transport  
Natural disasters and weather  
Climate change and its impact  
Energy, pollution and recycling

### **Education and employment**

Education systems and types of schooling

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 IGCSE level. Where all or some of the Section B discussion centres around IGCSE 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 topic areas chosen by candidates were once again Youth matters and 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, teacher/ 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 IGCSE level.

## **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.

