



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

In Spanish (4SP1) Paper 03

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Overview

The speaking assessment consists of three tasks:

Task A - picture-based discussion.

Task B and Task C - two conversations on two different topic areas.

The exam is conducted in the centre and externally assessed by Pearson.

Total assessment time: between 8 and 10 minutes.

This exam is worth 25% of the International GCSE qualification.

The total maximum mark is 40.

Content overview

Candidates are assessed on their ability to convey their understanding of spoken Spanish through three speaking tasks. Candidates must be able to:

- describe the contents of a picture.
- describe possible past or future events related to the people in the picture.
- respond to questions about the picture and its related topic.
- take part in a spontaneous conversation on two further topics.

Assessment overview

- Task A (2-3 mins carries 12 marks) requires candidates to answer five questions about a picture.
- Tasks B and C (3-3.5 mins each, carries 28 marks in total over both tasks B and C) are conversations on two different topic areas, determined by the randomisation grid supplied by Pearson.

Please see pages 24-33 of the Pearson specification for International GCSE Spanish (first teaching 2017) for further details of this assessment, and for the mark grids used for assessment. The following are the topic areas for this specification:

Topic

Sub-topics

A. Home and abroad

1 Life in the town and rural life

2 Holidays, tourist information and directions

3 Services (e.g. bank, post office) *

4 Customs

5 Everyday life, traditions and communities

B. Education and employment

- 1 School life and routine
- 2 School rules and pressures
- 3 School trips, events and exchanges
- 4 Work, careers and volunteering
- 5 Future plans

C. Personal life and relationships

- 1 House and home
- 2 Daily routines and helping at home
- 3 Role models*
- 4 Relationships with family and friends
- 5 Childhood*

D. The world around us

- 1 Environmental issues
- 2 Weather and climate*
- 3 Travel and transport
- 4 The media
- 5 Information and communication technology

E. Social activities, fitness and health

- 1 Special occasions
- 2 Hobbies, interests, sports and exercise
- 3 Shopping and money matters
- 4 Accidents, injuries, common ailments and health issues*
- 5 Food and drink

*Sub-topics A3, C3, C5, D2 and E4 will not be assessed Paper 3 Speaking.

Task A

The candidate is required to choose a picture for Task A. This picture must contain the following elements:

- people
- objects
- interaction

The candidate can choose a photograph or an illustration. The picture can relate to any of the sub-topics of the IGCSE except sub-topics A3, C3, C5, D2 and E4. These sub-topics will not be assessed in the speaking exam.

Task A should last 2-3 minutes. Timing begins as the candidate begins to answer the first question.

Where Task A is too long:

- If the teacher/examiner is speaking at 3 minutes, the examiner stops assessing the conversation at that point.
- If the candidate is speaking at 3 minutes, the examiner stops assessing the conversation at the end of the sentence/the next sense break.

It is important that teachers/examiners observe the timings. On occasion this year candidates were not able to access the entire range of marks available as they did not have the opportunity to answer all five questions within the three minutes maximum time allowed for Task A.

Teachers/examiners are reminded that they may not practise Task A with their candidates using the picture to be used in the final test. They may practise using other pictures on the same topic, but they may not practise or rehearse using the picture the candidate has chosen to use in the exam. A lack of spontaneity in Task A may affect the mark awarded for Communication and content.

Most candidates this series chose a suitable picture. Where they did not, this had no automatic effect on the mark awarded for Task A but may have made it more difficult for the teacher/examiner to ask a question or questions of the required type. In all cases, examiners awarded marks positively for what they heard.

The candidate gives the teacher/examiner a copy of the picture in advance of the exam. The teacher/examiner must prepare five questions to ask each candidate about their chosen picture but must not share these questions with the candidate before the test.

The candidate must not take any notes into the exam but may bring in a copy of the picture they have chosen to use.

In Task A, the teacher/examiner asks five questions about the picture and the related sub-topic. The pattern of these five questions must follow the examples in the Sample Assessment Materials and the advice given in the specification.

Question type 1: A description of what you can see in the picture

Question type 2: Specific factual information about the picture

For example, select a person or persons in the picture and ask what they are doing.

Question type 3: Past or future hypothesis

This question must ask the candidate to imagine a possible past or potential future event relating to the picture. This is the opportunity to support the candidate in using additional tenses and time frames.

Question type 4: Opinion about the picture

This question elicits the candidate's opinions on the picture and the topic.

Question type 5: Evaluation

This question will move away from the content of the picture and exploit the wider topic area.

As an example, if the candidate chooses a picture of a family doing different activities on a beach (Topic A, sub-topic 2: Holidays, tourist information and directions) the five questions could be:

Question 1 Describe la foto.

Question 2 ¿Qué lleva la chica a la izquierda?

Question 3 ¿Qué hizo la familia antes de llegar a la playa?

Question 4 ¿Prefieres las vacaciones de sol y playa o en las montañas?

Question 5 ¿Porque son importantes las vacaciones?

Teachers/examiners may ask additional questions in Task A, and indeed it is good practice to do so to encourage the candidate to develop his or her answers. However, teachers/examiners are reminded that the only additional questions that may be asked (in Spanish) are:

- Why (not)?
- Anything else?
- Is that all?

There must be no other supplementary questions and teachers/examiners must not deviate from these prompts. Examiners accept any suitable translation of these prompts e.g.,

- ¿Por qué (no)?
- ¿Es todo?
- ¿Algo más?

Where a teacher/examiner asks an additional question in Task A which is not one of these, the candidate's response to that question is ignored when assessing the performance.

In a significant number of centres this year, Task A was not conducted correctly. While examiners apply the mark grids positively, incorrect conduct of the test may prevent the candidate accessing the entire range of marks available.

It is important to note that, as only one question of the five prescribed types requires the candidate to use a tense/time frame other than the present, the candidate does not have to use all three of past, present and future time frames in order to access the entire range of marks for Linguistic knowledge and accuracy in Task A. A candidate who uses, for example, only present and future time frames in Task A can access all four marks available for Linguistic knowledge and accuracy in this section of the test. Candidates must use at least two time frames successfully to access a mark of two or above for Linguistic knowledge and accuracy in Task A.

Task A	Candidate performance
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|------------|---|
| Question 1 | The approach to this question varied greatly. Some descriptions were quite brief while others were very thorough. |
| Question 2 | Much depended on what the teacher/examiner asked. Some asked very open questions, others were very specific and limited the scope of the answer. |
| Question 3 | Some candidates were ready to develop a detailed response while others gave shorter responses. Some teachers/examiners thought they had to elicit both past and future tenses from candidates and asked for both, either in one single question or in a follow-up question. |
| Question 4 | Almost all candidates could give an opinion, but sometimes this was not justified, which missed an opportunity to develop the response further. |
| Question 5 | Most teachers/examiners asked appropriate questions, moving out into the wider topic area. |

Task A: Tips for teachers/examiners

- Ensure that the candidate chooses a suitable picture for Task A.
- Prepare, in advance of the test, the five questions you will ask about the picture.
- Encourage the candidate, when necessary, to develop their answers (using only the allowed prompts: ¿Por qué (no)? ¿Es todo?, ¿Algo más?) so that Task A lasts between 2 and 3 minutes.
- Observe the timing by using a stopwatch or a timer.
- Ensure that the candidate has the opportunity to respond to all five questions within the three minutes allowed for this task.
- Do not let the candidate speak for too long in answer to question 1 if this means that the answers to questions 2-5 will be rushed or not covered in the specified time limit.
- Make sure that the candidate knows how to ask, in Spanish, for a question to be repeated.
- Do not correct a candidate's language during the test.

Tasks B and C

Tasks B and C are two conversations on two different topic areas. The topic areas to be used in Tasks B and C are determined by the grid provided by Pearson. Note that the following sub-topics will not be assessed in the speaking test: A3, C3, C5, D2 and E4 (see above for a list of topic areas).

Each conversation should last between 3 and 3.5 minutes. Timing begins as the candidate begins to answer the first question.

Where Task B or Task C is too long:

- If the teacher/examiner is speaking at 3.5 minutes, the examiner stops assessing the conversation at that point.
- If the candidate is speaking at 3.5 minutes, the examiner stops assessing the conversation at the end of the sentence or the next sense break.

Both Task B and Task C are timed separately, so a short Task B is not compensated by an overlong Task C, and vice versa.

In most cases this year, Tasks B and C were conducted correctly.

Some teachers/examiners did not encourage the candidate to produce spontaneous speech. If a candidate does not respond spontaneously to questions, they may not be able to access the full range of marks available for Interaction and spontaneity. Teachers/examiners should not use a list of pre-prepared questions but, instead, react to and build on what the candidate says. In this way a spontaneous conversation will develop.

Teachers/examiners must also be sure to listen to what the candidate says and make sure that questions follow on logically.

Tasks B and C: Candidate performance

The randomisation grid was adhered to in almost all cases, as were timings. The standard of candidate performance varied considerably. Some candidates could sustain a conversation at length with an excellent use of grammatical structures, vocabulary and interaction with individual thoughts whereas others struggled to put thoughts together in a coherent form.

There were some excellent discussions of the more challenging topics such as the environment as well as the more common school and family topics.

Some teachers/examiners did not offer much scope for tense usage in the questions they asked whereas others made sure this was covered from the start of the first conversation.

Tasks B and C: Tips for teachers/examiners

- Be sure, in advance of the exam, which conversation topics are to be discussed with each candidate (consult the randomisation grid provided by Pearson).
- Observe the timings – each conversation should last 3-3.5 minutes (use a stopwatch or timer).
- Make sure that the candidate knows how to ask, in Spanish, for a question to be repeated.
- Ask questions at an appropriate level for the candidate, but do not limit them; push each candidate to reach their potential.
- Ask questions which prompt the candidate to use past, present and future time frames in both Task B and Task C.
- Listen to what the candidate says and follow up with an appropriate question.
- Encourage spontaneous speech by the candidate.
- Encourage the candidate to develop their answers, to offer opinions and reasons for these opinions.
- Ask “open” questions (see below).
- Keep your interventions as short as possible so that the candidate does almost all the talking.
- Introduce Tasks B and C briefly in Spanish, so that the candidate knows which topic will be discussed e.g., “Ahora pasamos a hablar de las vacaciones”.
- Do not correct a candidate’s language during the test.

“Open” questions

In all three tasks, it is important to ask “open” questions, i.e., questions which cannot be answered using only one or two words (“closed” questions). “Open” questions encourage the candidate to answer using an extended phrase or sentence, which in turn leads to access to the entire range of marks available.

Example:

Closed question	¿Te gusta el deporte?
Open question	¿Por qué te gusta hacer deporte?
Closed question	¿Has visitado España?
Open question	Describe tus vacaciones del año pasado.

General advice - Preparing candidates for the IGCSE Spanish speaking exam.

Tips for teachers/examiners.

- Make sure candidates are confident using past, present and future time frames.
- Practise with candidates, developing answers using conjunctions, opinions and reasons.
- Ensure that candidates know that they will be expected to speak spontaneously.
- Share the mark grids with candidates, so that they are aware of what is being assessed.
- Make sure that candidates know how to ask, in Spanish, for a question to be repeated.
- Make sure that candidates know the questions words, so that their answer is relevant to the question.
- Make sure that candidates listen out for the time frame of the question, so that they answer appropriately.

Teachers/examiners should make sure they are familiar with the following documents (all available on the Pearson website):

- Specification: International GCSE Spanish (first teaching 2017)
- International GCSE Spanish: Getting Started Guide
- International GCSE Spanish: Oral Examination Training Guide

Administration

Most centres followed the guidance for the administration of these tests. On occasion, the requirements were not followed, and centres had to be contacted to provide documents and/or replacement recordings.

Recording tests

- Make sure that both the candidate and the teacher/examiner can be heard clearly; where only one microphone is used, make sure that this is placed closer to the candidate.
- Introduce the candidate name and number clearly at the beginning of the test.
- Do not stop or pause the recording at any time during the test.
- Tasks A, B and C should be conducted in that order.
- Check that the whole test has been recorded clearly before uploading.
- Check that all documentation (Candidate Cover Sheet, picture for Task A and the recording for each candidate) is available before uploading onto the LWT system.

