

CCEA GCSE Spanish
Summer Series 2017

Chief Examiner's Report and Principal Moderator's Report

Spanish

Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in Spanish for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at www.ccea.org.uk.

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GCSE SPANISH

Principal Moderator's Report

Assessment Unit 1 Speaking

Controlled Assessment

This year there was an increase in candidature in this component by almost 12%, which incorporated new centres. The candidates were, as usual, very well prepared by their teachers and many fine performances were heard by the moderators.

Generally the tasks chosen were relevant and accessible to most of the candidates but some tasks were more challenging, for example, technology and they tended to have more limited answers. This topic worked best when it was incorporated in a wider framework where the candidates could offer opinions and reasons in more familiar topics areas.

The vast majority of centres again adhered to the 4-6 minute time limit but centres should read the TAC6 report carefully to see if their centre exceeded this as it can really disadvantage candidates.

As a reminder, the 'unexpected question(s)' should be naturally incorporated into the body of the conversation/discussion and should not be bolted on at the end of the test. This practice differs from other awarding bodies and should be adhered to for the CCEA speaking test.

Finally, teachers have worked tirelessly with their candidates on this unit and the hard work paid off. This is a very successful unit within GCSE Spanish.

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit 2 Writing

The work produced by this year's candidates was of a high standard. Teachers deserve great credit for the thorough preparation given to candidates.

In many centres the excellent standard produced was characterised by the following:

- The task given was accessible to the candidate.
- The task was varied and had a clear structure.
- Candidates set out their response in such a way that it corresponded clearly with the bullet points specified in the task.
- Each aspect of the task was well developed.

As in previous years, the most popular and accessible tasks were those relating to holidays, family life, local environment and school life. Other tasks included the environment, health or the world of work. In the case of health and the environment, the more complex vocabulary required often proved to be challenging for some candidates and the responses given were more varied in standard.

Many candidates wrote with a very high level of Spanish both in relation to quantity and quality. Their work not only contained a wide variety of vocabulary but also many complex grammatical structures. In general, there were very few answers of poor quality.

The reasons why candidates may not be awarded high marks include some of the following:

- Candidates did not develop their bullet points as fully as they should. Sometimes a good paragraph was followed by a paragraph of just two or three lines. The overall answer should be balanced in order to maximise the overall mark.
- Candidates did not submit a response to one or more bullet points resulting in a lower overall mark.
- In some cases, the overall response was not logically divided up into paragraphs which corresponded with the bullet points of the task. This meant that the answer was confused. In a few cases, paragraphs were written which did not correspond to the task at all.
- In a number of cases, the language the candidate attempted to produce was beyond the level of their ability. Often words were misspelt or omitted resulting in sentences which were unclear e.g. “Si piduiera mi pueblo constria más parques”.
- Some tasks were too complex for the candidate or the bullet points were too detailed and therefore the candidate did not fully convey all the required information.
- Sometimes bullet points overlap e.g. “What you would change in your town/What your ideal town would be like”. This lead to repetitiveness and therefore a lower mark for Communication.
- It is preferable that tasks do not include bullet points such as “Introduction” or “Conclusion” as these did not facilitate further development when compared to other parts of the task.

A number of candidates did not write the title or bullet points of their task on the front cover of the booklet. Centres should ensure that candidates do this in order to facilitate the marking of their tasks.

Assessment Unit 3 Listening

Foundation Tier

This year’s paper was well received as the vast majority of candidates scored well throughout the paper particularly in the last four questions which are the common questions with the Higher paper.

- Q1–3** The first three questions deal with basic vocabulary and were done well by all.
- Q4** Most candidates did not translate tortilla into English.
- Q5–6** These two questions were very accessible to almost all candidates.
- Q7** This question was based mainly on prepositions, which are often not well known, but the question was done well by some candidates.
- Q8** The topic of holidays is usually well known but for many candidates billetes, crema de sol and maleta were not well known.
- Q9** This question was done well by most candidates.
- Q10** Most candidates scored at least two marks. Many candidates did not know granjero/ tierra in the final part.
- Q11** This was a more challenging common question with very few candidates knowing puerto, estrecho and conducir.
- Q12** This was a successful question with many candidates scoring two out of a maximum of four marks however most candidates found peces que venían de todo el mundo quite challenging.

Q13 This was done very well by most candidates except many candidates did not know *graciosa*.

Higher Tier

This year's paper was equally well received with candidates performing slightly better here overall which is testament to the hard work of teachers in getting candidates to acquire and retain vocabulary.

- Q1–4** The common questions in both tiers are usually very well done by candidates sitting Higher tier and this year was no exception, however only some candidates recognised *puerto*, *estrecho* and *conducir* in Question 2.
- Q5** This question was done well by most candidates with the most challenging being (c), recognising *agujero en la capa de ozono* and *ecológico* as environmental terms.
- Q6** This question was done very well by most candidates but a few did not recognise the near-cognates *separarse* and *conectarse*.
- Q7** This was the most successful question with almost all candidates scoring full marks.
- Q8** This was one of the more challenging questions but most candidates scored two out of four marks. Very few candidates understood *quitar la oscuridad* or *el aburrimiento*.
- Q9** Surprisingly the vast majority of candidates did not recognise the three digit number 365. Only a few candidates understood *abrir el apetito*, but many had a good try which is exactly what teachers are training their candidates to do.

Assessment Unit 4 Reading

Foundation Tier

A higher number of candidates did the examination at Foundation level this year. In general, candidates found this examination accessible and few scored under 20 out of 40.

- Q1–2** These proved to be fairly straightforward although a few candidates put “Sunday” for “sábado”. In Question 2, “plátanos” was not always well known.
- Q3–4** In Question 3, “cocineros” was well known but “camareros” proved more difficult. In Question 4 the word “vaqueros” caused problems with many writing “scarf”, “hat” or “trainers”.
- Q5** This proved to be more challenging and many candidates were unsure of prepositions such as “enfrente de” and “detrás de”.
- Q6** This was very successfully answered.
- Q7** Although most candidates did reasonably well in this question, many found it difficult to spell the word “orchestra” with some versions being too far from the correct English spelling to be acceptable. In Question 7(b) many wrote “concerts” instead of focusing on the word “entradas” which was required for the answer.
- Q8** In Question 8(a) some candidates were unable to make the link between “numerosa” and “grande”. Similarly, in Part (b) reference to “la quinta planta” was often wrongly connected to “quince” rather than “cinco”.
- Q9** Most candidates correctly picked options (e) and (f) but took “la playa más larga” to mean “the cleanest beach”.
- Q10** These were the questions which were common to both Foundation and Higher tier
-13 Reading papers.

The marks for Question 10 on the topic of family relationships, were generally high.

Question 11 proved more challenging. In particular, many candidates were unfamiliar with “a las tres de la madrugada” and “lugar de nacimiento”.

In Question 12 both the text and possible answers required careful reading. Comparatives can often cause problems in reading comprehensions and in this question many candidates chose “menos sano” instead of “más sano” in relation to sport. Few candidates were also unable to connect “trabajar en equipo” with “trabajar con otros”.

Most candidates scored 1 or 2 out of 4 in the final question but very few achieved full marks. The use of the preterite “cumplí los 17 años” was confused with “Carlos va a tener 17 años”. Reference to Carlos’ grades being “peores” was often taken to mean “higher” rather than “worse”.

Higher Tier

Similar to the Foundation level examination, a higher number of entrants did the Higher level paper.

Q1–4 These were the questions common to both Foundation and Higher tiers. As such, most candidates at this level found them straightforward and a significant number of candidates scored between 13 and 16 marks out of 16.

In Question 2(d) the phrase “lugar de nacimiento” caused difficulty.

Although most candidates did well in Question 3, some were confused by the words “pelearse” and “discutir” in Question 3(d).

Many candidates achieved full marks in Question 4 but some opted incorrectly for Part (a), not able to recognize the use of the preterite in the first sentence “Cumplí los 17 años en marzo”.

Q5–6 In general, these questions were well done with a large number of candidates scoring 3 or 4 out of 4 although in Question 5(c) some candidates interpreted “olvido” as “lost”.

In Question 6(c) some candidates incorrectly chose “Carlos” as the answer instead of “Carlos’ wife”.

Q7 This question proved to be a little more challenging for candidates. Often gap-fill questions require not only a knowledge of vocabulary but also an awareness of grammar in order to choose the correct option. As a result, the word “ropa” was incorrectly placed after “llovía” which was perhaps being confused with the verb “llevar”. Sometimes “gastó” was chosen in preference to “costó” and “parecido” instead of “diferente”.

Q8–9 The last two questions required answers to be written in English. Although many of the answers given implied a good general understanding of the stimulus material, candidates’ answers often lacked the accuracy and precision necessary to score marks.

In Question 8(a) there were many correct answers but often “marcharse” was interpreted as “to march” or “protest”. The other parts of the question were generally well answered although “borrachos” was not well known and gave rise to a very large number of incorrect versions e.g. “disrespectful”, “rude”, “violent”.

Question 9 proved to be the most challenging one for candidates. In Question 9(a), “escaso” was frequently taken to mean “high” rather than “low” or “scarce”.

In Question 9(b), a surprisingly large number gave an incorrect version of “doscientos diez” while some wrote “thousands”, not able to focus on the number of specifically rural teachers.

In Question 9(c) answers often were imprecise with candidates writing “too much traffic” or “bad roads”. Candidates are advised that in order to gain marks at this level, answers must be more exact e.g. “the roads are narrow”.

In Question 9(e) “organizar juegos” was well known although “niveles” was unfamiliar to many and there were a great number of incorrect alternatives given e.g. “languages”, “nationalities”, “ages”. An encouraging number of candidates gave a correct translation of “traería” but curiously did not know “mis hijos” with some taking it to mean “pupils” or even “husband”.

Contact details

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