

SPANISH (Foreign Language)

Paper 0530/01

Listening

General comments

The overall performance of the candidates was good, with many showing excellent levels of attainment in both specific and general comprehension tasks. Rubrics were generally understood and followed. As usual, most candidates chose to attempt all three sections of the test and, of course, **from June 2007 all candidates will be required to attempt all three sections.**

Comments on specific questions

Primera Parte

Ejercicio 1 Preguntas 1-8

In general, this exercise was correctly answered. Following the directions on the map in **Question 2** caused some candidates problems. In **Question 5**, some candidates missed both clues in the recording, eg *baile* and *flamenco*.

Ejercicio 2 Preguntas 9-14

Most candidates understood the passage well and were able to score full marks on this exercise. In **Question 9** it was clear that weaker candidates were not confident with numbers. In **Question 10** *fuegos artificiales* was not always recognised (some candidates chose the puppet show) and in **Question 12** some opted for *equitación* instead of *baloncesto*.

Segunda Parte

Ejercicio 1 Preguntas 15-22

This True/False exercise based on an interview with a young environmentalist resulted in some strong performances. **Question 18** was most frequently incorrect, with some candidates understanding *los otros días de la semana* as *los fines de semana*.

Ejercicio 2 Preguntas 23-28

Candidates coped well with the new-style exercise. **Questions 23, 24, and 25** were usually correctly answered, with **Question 26** proving the most challenging question in the first part of the exercise.

In **Question 27** the two elements to identify were that it was very hot and Pedro had no water left. In **Question 28** there were three options to choose from, with any two gaining the marks. Better candidates were able to say that the countries were very different, it was difficult to choose one and/or in each one there was something Pedro liked.

Tercera Parte

Ejercicio 1 Preguntas 29-36

The interview with a Latin-american signer was understood by most and even very weak candidates could answer some of the multi-choice questions. Candidates found **Questions 32 and 34** the most challenging and **Questions 35 and 36** the most straightforward.

Ejercicio 2 Preguntas 37-41

There were some excellent performances on this final exercise which consisted of an interview with a doctor about an illness that can affect those returning to work from their annual holiday. **Question 37** proved the most straightforward, with the majority of candidates able to state that 35% of people suffer from the syndrome. In **Question 38** most candidates could identify two symptoms from a choice of being tired during the day, not being able to sleep at night, loss of appetite and lack of concentration. **Question 39** proved more challenging. Examiners were looking for two ways in which our daily routine changes while we are on holiday. Possible answers were not having to comply with a work time-table, having the freedom to do what one wants at any time and getting up later. **Questions 40** and **41(a)** were generally well-answered, but **Question 41(b)** proved a good discriminator, focusing as it did on attitudes and reasons. Only better candidates were able to explain that it is easier to return to work when one knows one can have another holiday relatively soon.

SPANISH (Foreign Language)

Paper 0530/2
Reading and Directed Writing

General comments

This year's paper was very well tackled by the large majority of candidates. In general, Centres are to be congratulated on doing an excellent job in preparing their candidates so thoroughly for this paper; nearly all of them tackled the exercises purposefully, really entering into the spirit of the questions and producing some first-rate pieces of directed writing.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1-5

Questions 2 and 4 were nearly always answered correctly. Most errors occurred in **Question 5** where a number of candidates opted for D instead of C, possibly because they recognised *platos*, but had never come across *fregar*.

Exercise 2 Questions 6-10

Well done on the whole. Full marks were common. **Questions 7, 9**, and to a certain extent **10** proved the more difficult for weaker candidates.

Exercise 3 Questions 11-15

This was also quite well done. Errors varied considerably, though most were committed in **Question 12** (where candidates were expected to match *Informática* and *un programa de ordenador*) and **Question 14** (where they were expected to match *Perfumería* and *jabón*).

Exercise 4 Question 16

There were three marks for communicating the items in the pictures and some of the best answers were beautifully concise, e.g. *Me voy a la piscina en autobús y volveré a las once*.

In addition, there were up to two marks available for appropriateness of language. To score both marks, candidates had to have two verbs in appropriate tenses; a few minor errors were tolerated. Where there was some appropriate vocabulary but the verbs were generally incorrect, one mark was awarded. The weakest candidates scored 0 because there was practically no appropriate vocabulary to reward.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 17-25

This exercise was done extremely well with large numbers of candidate scoring full marks. Where errors occurred it was mainly in answer to **Questions 18, 22 and 23**.

Exercise 2 Question 26

The directed writing task was also done very well indeed by most. Where candidates lost marks for communication it was often because they did not fulfil all the tasks, particularly the two in **(d)** (*¿Cuál es la fiesta que te gusta más? y ¿por qué?*), but a large majority were able to score full marks for accuracy. It is clear that Centres prepare their candidates very well indeed for exercises such as this one that involve continuous writing.

Five of the ten communication marks were for stating the special days that the candidate celebrates with his/her family, for describing how they are celebrated, for some description of the meals or the food consumed, for declaring their favourite special day, and for explaining why it is their favourite. The other five communication marks could have been gained by writing details relevant to one or other of the tasks above. It was vital to fulfil all the tasks, otherwise full marks could not be scored since the number of marks for extra relevant details was a maximum of five. Lists (e.g. of various foods) could only score up to three marks for communication (one mark for lists of 1-3 items, two marks for lists of 4 items and three marks for lists of 5 or more items).

Accuracy ticks were awarded as in Paper 4, and 20 or more ticks sufficed to gain the maximum five marks available; this target was attained by a large majority of candidates.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 27-32

This exercise was very well done this year. **Question 31** proved the most difficult, with a number of candidates either selecting VERDADERO or else ticking correctly but giving an illogical correction such as *los programas durarán hasta las 12.00 del mediodía*. Examiners were looking for something along the lines of *habrá emisiones a lo largo del día/habrá tres emisiones de cuatro horas/habrá otras emisiones más tarde*. Sadly a very small number of candidates ignored the request to correct the wrong statements and just ticked the boxes, thereby depriving themselves of four marks.

Exercise 2 Questions 33-39

This passage about young people's attitudes to school was generally well understood and candidates were on the whole well able to alter the verb endings so as to report their answers correctly. None of the questions stood out as being easier or more demanding than the others.

SPANISH (Foreign Language)

Paper 0530/03
Speaking

General comments

To be read in conjunction with the Teacher's Notes Booklet for Paper 3.

Recording of candidates

Nearly all Centres sent the correct sample size for moderation. The aim should be to cover the full range of ability in evidence at a Centre in the recorded sample, so that the Moderator can check accurately the standard of assessment. The quality of recordings was generally good. Centres are responsible for ensuring that candidates and Examiners are clearly audible. It is recommended that the recording equipment is tested in *in situ* before the actual test. The candidate should be seated closer to the microphone than the Examiner. The cassettes should be clearly labelled with the Centre name and number. Candidates should not identify themselves on tape – they should be identified by the Examiner – and Centres should indicate the end of the recording by stating 'end of sample'. Examiners are reminded that once a test has started the cassette should run without interruption and should not be stopped between the various sections of the test.

Administration

The working mark sheets were completed as required. Centres are reminded that it is their responsibility to check additions carefully in order to avoid arithmetical errors before final submission. The transcription of marks onto the MS1 form (Internal Assessment Mark Sheet) should also be checked.

Comments on specific questions

Materials for the Speaking test should be opened four working days before the Centre's assessment starts and should be studied thoroughly. This allows Examiners to familiarise themselves with their roles. Careful preparation is vital where the Examiner has to initiate a dialogue or if there is confusion over the Role play card chosen. The best Examiners adhered very closely to their role as presented in the Teacher's Notes Booklet, not attempting to over-elaborate; and if one part of a response was omitted they asked for the information required again. Candidates cannot be awarded marks for tasks they have not completed.

Role plays A

Role play card 1, 2, 3

These tasks were communicated well by the majority of candidates.

Role play card 4, 5, 6

Candidates coped well with the specified tasks. Vocabulary items proved difficult for some candidates as did asking an appropriate question in Task 5.

Role play card 7, 8, 9

This Role play situation was generally well attempted.

Role plays B

The B Role plays proved more demanding, as intended, requiring more careful reading of the rubric. Candidates responded well to the open-ended nature of the tasks.

Role play card 1, 4, 7

Candidates entered the role convincingly and communicated the required information well. In **Task 3** some candidates omitted the second element. Examiners are reminded that if there are two elements to a task and only one is completed, then a maximum of one mark only may be awarded.

Role play card 2, 5, 8

The vast majority of candidates managed to communicate all the information required despite difficulties with the correct use of tense in **Tasks 2** and **5**. In **Task 3** some candidates struggled with adjectival agreements.

Role play card 3, 6, 9

Most candidates carried out the specified tasks well. Some candidates attempted to provide too much information in **Tasks 2, 3** and **4**, which in some cases led to linguistic inaccuracies, particularly in tense usage. Other candidates were unsure of vocabulary items.

Topic (prepared) conversation

There was a pleasing variety of topics chosen. The best performances were from candidates with a real interest in the topic chosen. Candidates should be discouraged from choosing topics which are too ambitious for this level or where there is insufficient scope in terms of language and discussion. A poor choice of topic can lead to under performance. It is also important to match the level of questioning to the candidate's ability and lead the candidate into using a variety of time frames, e.g. by asking questions which will elicit past and future tenses. Candidates should be given the opportunity to develop their responses. Examiners should allow candidates to speak for approximately one to two minutes before asking specific questions.

General (unprepared) conversation

Candidates were given the opportunity to converse on a number of topics and many candidates clearly enjoyed the ensuing conversations. Examiners should make a clear distinction between the Topic and General conversation sections, although the discussion of the topic will have paved the way for the unprepared conversation. Examiners should avoid asking a series of closed questions, e.g. questions requiring yes/no answers, as the onus is in on the candidate to show that s/he can converse adequately on topics of a more general nature using as wide a range of structures and vocabulary as possible. As in the Topic conversation, candidates should be given the opportunity to use past and future time frames.

Assessment

Overall, the application of the marking criteria was consistent and in line with the agreed standard. Candidates were assessed fairly by the vast majority of Centres. Examiners are reminded that in the Role play section, three marks can be awarded for a one-word answer where it is correct and appropriate to the task. Minor errors are tolerated, however minor errors do not include errors of tense/verb endings. There was a tendency by some Examiners to be slightly generous in their assessment of the Topic and General conversations on Scale (b) (linguistic content) and slightly harsh on the Impression mark. All assessment should follow the general principles as outlined in the Teachers Notes and marks should be awarded accordingly.

SPANISH (Foreign Language)

Paper 0530/04
Continuous Writing

General comments

The standard attained by the majority of candidates was as high as in recent years. Most candidates understood the requirements of each question and scored well on relevant communication. There were few rubric errors. The total marks achieved (out of a maximum of 50) covered the full mark range.

In this examination, candidates are expected to produce two pieces of extended writing in which they have the opportunity to demonstrate their linguistic competence in terms of complexity, accuracy and range of structures, vocabulary and idiom. The tasks within each question are structured to this end. A system of positive marking is used and rewards both accuracy and ambition. Each exercise is marked out of 25, of which five marks are awarded for relevant communication, fifteen for accuracy of language and five for general impression. No credit is given for anything beyond the 140th word since the rubric stipulates 110-140 words. As is usual, about one third of candidates wrote too much. The first stage in marking for Examiners is to count up to the 140th word and cross out the remainder. Any tasks carried out after the 140th word are not awarded marks for relevant communication and nor do they contribute to the mark awarded for accuracy. Candidates should be advised to write 140 words or just under in each of the two questions. Candidates should do a preliminary word count and keep a running total to avoid losing marks unnecessarily.

Marking for communication

Candidates should be reminded of the importance of reading the question carefully and ensuring that they cover all the required elements in their answer. If they omit one or more of the tasks they will forfeit communication marks.

Marking for accuracy of language

Candidates should be familiar with the type of register required in letter writing whether formal or informal. In both **Question 1(a)** and **(b)** some candidates used inappropriate opening and closing phrases.

Common errors included the following:

In **Question 1(a)**, inappropriate use of register, incorrect use of impersonal verbs such as *gustar* and *encantar*, agreement of adjectives, difficulties with expressing future meaning, failure to accent interrogative words like *dónde* and *cuántos*.

In **Question 1(b)**, incorrect use of perfect tense instead of preterite, incorrect use of impersonal verbs such as *gustar* and *encantar*, confusion between *bien* and *bueno*, agreement of adjectives, difficulties in formulating an invitation.

In **Question 2**, incorrect use of tense, failure to accent certain verbs, e.g. *había*, *llegó*, *pasé*, difficulties with common verbs, e.g. *comer*, *jugar*, use of *ser/estar*, use of *gustar* in the preterite tense.

As in the past, special attention was paid to verbs. Strong candidates varied tenses and knew how to use them appropriately while weak candidates lapsed into the present. With those of middling ability a common defect was the incorrect use of the perfect or the imperfect when only the preterite was appropriate. Candidates writing lists of items, e.g. clothes, food, drinks, places visited, gave themselves less opportunity to score as highly as those careful to include adjectives and verbs. It was common to omit vital accents on verb endings.

All verbs score for accuracy, but only if used correctly and accented if necessary. Credit was also given to interrogatives (which must be accented), to negatives, to prepositions, to adverbs except for the common *muy*, to conjunctions except for the very common *y* and *pero*, to adjectives correctly positioned and agreeing,

to pronouns other than subject pronouns and reflexives, to pronouns correctly joined onto a verb. In all these cases a tick is awarded when a unit is correct. Four ticks are worth one mark up to a maximum of fifteen marks.

Marking for general impression

Up to five marks are awarded for each answer for the quality of language used: use of idiom, vocabulary, structures and appropriate tenses. In order to score the full five marks, the writing had to display the features mentioned and read fluently like good Spanish.