



GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**GCE (NEW)
SPANISH
AS/Advanced**

SUMMER 2017

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Unit	Page
Unit 1: Speaking	1
Unit 2: Listening reading, translation & critical response in writing	3

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UNIT 1: SPEAKING

This was the first year of the new Wales AS specification. Candidates were asked to choose two stimulus cards; one from Set A and the other from Set B.

Set A:

Candidates were offered a choice of two cards and were able to see both cards before choosing. Cards from Set A contained, as a stimulus, two opposing standpoints of an argument. Set A cards were based on the theme of Understanding the Spanish-speaking world and candidates were allowed to choose the sub-theme; either regional culture and heritage in Spain, Spanish speaking countries and communities, or literature, art, film and music in the Spanish speaking world.

Set B:

Candidates were asked to choose one card (unseen) from Set B from a total of six. The cards from Set B contained a short text and three questions to be prepared by the candidate. Set B cards were based on the theme of 'Being a young person in Spanish-speaking society'.

There was a period of fifteen minutes to prepare the two cards (A and B). Candidates were advised to make brief notes on a separate piece of paper (NOT on the cards) during the preparation period for the stimulus cards. The notes were handed to the examiner at the end of the test. The notes were to be used as a memory aid only and should not have constituted whole sentences or a continuous text or script.

The majority of candidates chose the sub-theme of Regional culture and heritage in Spain, Spanish speaking countries and communities for Set A. Opinion A was chosen more often than opinion B but this was not always so. Many candidates had been very well prepared for this task and were perfectly able to challenge the examiner's point of view and come back at him/her with ideas of their own. The best candidates were able to support their views or contradict the examiner by providing detailed responses which were well supported by evidence and specific examples thereby demonstrating very good knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Spanish culture and society as set out in the mark scheme under AO4. The better candidates were aware of the AO4 requirement and volunteered information about various aspects of Spanish culture and society. Some candidates answered in very general terms, providing few examples to support their argument and were not able to respond to the opposite point of view put forward by the examiner. Some candidates agreed with the examiner's views without offering a counter argument. Weaker candidates found the skill of arguing a specific point of view very demanding and had to be reminded of the importance of talking about Spain/a Spanish-speaking country. Examiners asked candidates to refer to Spain in cases where there was little reference made.

When preparing candidates for this task it would be helpful if they were to look briefly at the opposing point of view in order to have some idea of what type of comments to expect as this task requires candidates, not only to put forward their point of view, but to challenge what the examiner says. Good candidates were able to disagree by saying "Pues, no estoy de acuerdo contigo/con usted". Practice in disagreeing with another point of view and discussion tasks would be good preparation for this.

For Set B, candidates were asked 3 questions based on a short text. The task and discussion was expected to last 7-9 minutes. Candidates were expected to refer to the text in order to show understanding of the written stimulus AO2, but this was not always the case. Again, the best candidates did make reference to the text and were able to provide detailed responses to the 3 questions asked with relevant examples and evidence. Weaker candidates tended to give very general responses, repeating the same answer several times and not showing the understanding or the evidence in order to prove their knowledge or understanding of the culture and society of Spain or Spanish speaking countries or communities. In preparing future candidates, it would be advisable to get them to not only make reference to the text, but to provide further evidence or examples of their own. The WJEC wishes to thank centres for accommodating visiting examiners and providing suitable accommodation for the conduct of the orals. The mandatory use of invigilators this year was also welcomed.

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**UNIT 2: LISTENING, READING, TRANSLATION AND CRITICAL RESPONSE IN
WRITING**

Question 1 (Listening comprehension)

There was some confusion amongst candidates with regards to the meaning of *hace+* time. (*Hace años que son conocidos*) A good number of candidates therefore answered the first question incorrectly.

7. Some candidates opted for (c) “Facebook tiene miles de miembros” instead of the correct answer (b) “la Amistad es difícil de definir”; (c) may well be the answer “in real life” but it does not say this in the text.

Question 2 (Listening Comprehension)

Students should be aware that corrections need to be concise and that it is not always necessary to write complete sentences. If the answer is false there must be an intelligible correction to gain the mark.

Question 3 (Reading Comprehension)

This was reasonably well done, although some candidates opted for any answer that made sense, rather than reading the text carefully and answering within this context. Candidates are also reminded that answers in Spanish must be copied accurately to gain marks.

Question 4 (Reading Comprehension: gap fill)

Ignorance of noun genders sometimes led to mistakes such as using “*mes*” in gap 1. Candidates need to read the complete text when they have filled in the gaps to ensure it makes sense.

Question 5 (Translation into English/Welsh)

Candidates are reminded to pay particular attention to the tense of the verb. For example “*se han construido*” has to be rendered as a perfect tense in English also, i.e. “have been built”. “*No se quemarán*” must be translated into the future tense, i.e. “they will not be burnt”.

Vocabulary which posed problems included *estación del año* (sometimes translated as station or part of the year); the translation of ‘*lo*’ followed by an adjective (‘*todo lo negativo*’); and ‘*así*’.

Candidates must look over the translation when finished and ensure that it reads as natural English or Welsh. If it sounds stilted or odd in any way, adjustments must be made so that it reads normally.

Question 6 Critical response in writing

1. Joshua Marston: *Maria llena eres de gracia*

The majority of candidates opted for question (a) and there were some very good answers produced.

The candidates who opted for (b) should have limited their response to Maria's family and not the concept of family in general.

Grammatical errors included the misspelling of Colombia (Columbia) and difficulties with the verb morir and the noun la muerte, and the use of gustar ("Maria no gusta su trabajo en la fábrica").

2. Pedro Almodóvar: *Volver*

The majority of candidates again went for (a). Again there were some very good answers, but a few candidates did not even mention los fantasmas, even though they are pointed out in the suggestions section. Morir, la muerte again was a source of problems with hybrid versions of the two ("Irene muerta su esposo"). Grammatical errors include the misspelling of the director's name, escena for escena, es demostrar, (demuestra que) es dice que (se dice que) and la fantasma. A few candidates said that there were other important themes in the film and proceeded to write about them too. Very few candidates chose (b). However, there was a tendency to tell the story rather than comment on the role and importance of Sole's character.

3. Achero Mañas: *El Bola*

There were some interesting and well written answers on both (a) and (b). With weaker candidates there was again a tendency to tell the story of the film rather than examine the theme of friendship or trace the development of Pablo's character. Similar grammatical errors to those above occurred.

4. Walter Salles: *Diarios de motocicleta*

There were fewer candidates answering on this film, but once again there were some imaginative and well written answers. In addition to grammatical errors already mentioned there was also the misspelling of Leprosos.

Overall advice for this section would include the following points:

1. There is no need to give a list of actors, director etc. in the introduction.
2. Before starting to write the essay, make a plan and stick to it.
3. Don't misquote or worse, make up your own quotes.
4. Do not over-pad the essay with phrases such as "en mi opinión, quisiera añadir".
5. With reference to AO4, candidates are rewarded here by demonstrating their knowledge of the film. There is no need to make reference to a Spanish speaking country.



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