



GCE AS EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**SPANISH (EDUQAS)
AS**

SUMMER 2017

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?!=en>

Online Results Analysis

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

Component	Page
Component 1	1
Component 2	3
Component 3	6

**EDUQAS
GCE AS SPANISH**

Summer 2017

COMPONENT 1: SPEAKING

Despite the fact that this was the first year for this examination, candidates generally responded refreshingly well to the new format. Moving away from personal, general conversation has offered candidates enriching opportunities to develop critical skills based on culture specific topics.

Candidate mean score was evenly distributed between card sets A and B; achieving around 7 marks in each AO3 and AO4; and around 4 marks in each AO1 and AO2 on average.

Visiting-examiner conducted Tests

On the whole these tests sounded less rehearsed than the teacher-conducted option. Candidates generally performed well given that this was a new type of test where marks were awarded for responding to a written text (AO2) and AO4 (knowledge of Hispanic culture and society) was reintroduced. It is on these two areas that I would advise teachers to concentrate in the classroom in order to elicit the best performance from their candidates.

Many candidates did not realise that the written text was there for a purpose and did not make full use of the preparation time to think of their response to the statement (AO2). With regard to AO4 candidates attempted to personalise what they had to say about culture and tried too often to divert the conversation towards what happens in Britain. Any references to British customs and culture should be kept to a minimum and always focus on their relevance to Hispanic customs and traditions. Concentrating on Britain will not in itself gain AO4 marks under the new specification.

Candidates coped well with having to ask the examiner a question and some went on to ask a relevant follow-up question or developed a relevant discussion with the examiner. With regard to the level of grammar and idiom, I would advise candidates to concentrate on getting the basic points correct: they should make sure that they use *ser* and *estar* correctly, learn the correct gender of common words (e.g. *el trabajo, el problema, las mujeres*) and ensure that their agreements are sound (adjectives agreeing with nouns, verbs agreeing with subjects, and a logical sequence of tenses). There were some clumsy misconceptions e.g. *el reinado del Franco* for *el régimen de Franco*.

As for pronunciation, the usual suspects made an appearance: ‘sosaiedad’ for *sociedad*. ‘aideea’ for *idea*. Few candidates had problems with the pronunciation of the “h” and final “o”. In some cases the pronunciation of the soft “r” sounded rather like a very strong “r”.

Centre-conducted tests

Some teachers did not give their name on the recording, and a few ran over the time stipulated. However, most respected the time limits. There were some frequent examples of bad practice:

- (i) Some teachers allowed candidates to launch into a monologue which impacted on the AO1 marks. This was more marked than in the case of visiting examiners. The test is a conversation, not an exposé. Additionally, some teachers paraphrased the question on the card causing confusion to some candidates. Sometimes teachers did not paraphrase the examiner's question (on examiner's card) when needed, preventing candidates' full understanding of this question.
- (ii) Almost all teachers allowed candidates to personalise their references to Hispanic culture and traditions or actively guided the test towards personalisation. This was very notable where music was the sub-theme. Some candidates were allowed to talk about Rihanna or Adele with no reference whatsoever to their popularity or not in the Hispanic world. Talking about a candidate's personal preferences with no reference to the tastes of young Hispanics automatically impacts on the AO4 mark.
- (iii) Some candidates showed good cultural knowledge (AO4) but this was not always used critically. Some candidates were too dependent on pre-learnt knowledge and there was little interaction. They did not always answer the questions on the cards.
- (iv) See comments above regarding AO2.
- (v) The exam is not about how well the teacher speaks Spanish or about the teacher being awarded AO4 marks. It is self-evident that the teacher cannot gain AO4 marks for the candidate but s/he can steer the candidate towards gaining AO4 marks. Some teachers spent too long answering the candidate's question(s) thus shortening the time available to the candidate. Some teachers gave personal information about themselves which is not required and is inappropriate in the exam.

References made above in the visiting-examiner conducted tests to language and pronunciation are relevant to the teacher conducted tests also.

**EDUQAS
GCE AS SPANISH**

Summer 2017

COMPONENT 2: LISTENING, READING AND TRANSLATION

SECTION A - Listening

Question 1

This listening task on Spanish customs was done rather well by many candidates. Most got at least half marks and a number of them were awarded between 4 and 6. Candidates should be aware that they cannot rely solely on grammatical clues to pair the clauses. There was also some evidence that weaker candidates were relying on guesswork.

Question 2 (A)

This will have been a familiar task for any candidates who might have practised with the SN2 legacy specification. Candidates should be advised to keep their answers brief; the advice here is “keep the answer short and straightforward”. If candidates find themselves writing beyond the dotted line, they are probably writing too much information, which may be contradictory or confusing. Candidates who kept their answers straightforward scored highly; candidates who wrote lengthy answers at times self-penalised through poor grammar which obscured communication.

In (c) there was often confusion between *cada vez* and *cada tiempo* when they wanted to say *cada vez es diferente*. In (e) candidates needed to get the idea of *difícil* but some tried to say something along the lines of *es más importante*. In (f) they needed the idea of *a veces* in order to correct *siempre* but quite a few missed it out and ended up saying that all lullabies are scary.

Question 2 (B)

This proved very accessible to candidates and was well done. However, there was evidence that many candidates could not copy even a simple word. Sometimes poor spelling hindered communication. Candidates need to be encouraged to read the whole paragraph as well as listening to the extract rather than just focusing on what might fit into the gaps.

Question 3(A)

This proved to be a challenging task for a number of candidates. They need to spend more time thinking about the questions. For example, in the answers to *¿Que ventaja geográfica favorece el crecimiento en España?*, the words used by candidates in their answers simply did not make sense.

Question (d) was a discriminator among candidates and it appeared that many did not understand the word *establecimientos*; they failed to see the implication of the question and so very few got the idea of *hoteles y restaurantes*. There were many strange references to *hoteles*: *otelero, utelero, utilero*.

Question 3(B)

This also proved to be a very challenging task. Candidates did not seem to grasp the idea that their answers needed to be short and direct. Too many resorted to trying to write down what the recording said with very mixed results. While quite a few understood the idea of *muchas posibilidades de trabajo* in the first bullet point, in the second bullet point hardly any were able to infer that the *Máster en Turismo* taught students **cómo dirigir actividades turísticas** and **cómo tener una carrera internacional**.

Many students seemed not to recognize *habilidades* and omitted the 'h' and nor were they able to get the sense of *comercializar destinos turísticos*. What was wrong with an answer like *vender vacaciones a la gente*?

There was also evidence of poor Spanish in many answers which compromised communication. Tasks 3(A) and 3(B) are new tasks and clearly need practice. Teachers are advised to use this exam as well as the digital resources as a means of doing this.

SECTION B - Reading

Question 4(A)

Candidates coped well with this accessible literary text and the exercise was done well. This is an easy task to replicate as part of classroom teaching.

Question 4(B)

Many candidates found the searching for synonyms in the text from *Nada* difficult even though the text was relatively short and the synonyms were in chronological order. Synonyms (b) and (d) were particularly problematic as candidates were required to understand a short phrase. Students need to be encouraged to work on identifying word classes when dealing with written texts. This can be practised regularly when studying any of the themes and sub-themes during the year.

Question 5

This gap-filling task on the *Tomatina* was particularly well done. A few lost marks by copying the wrong word, especially in (1), (6) and (8). Candidates should be encouraged to read the whole text rather than just focusing on the gaps and hoping for the best. They cannot rely on grammatical clues although in (7) the common prepositional error (*consistir en / depender de*), misled some candidates because of English interference.

Question 6 (A)

Candidates found this task difficult. Here again, only short answers were required. Most difficulties were caused by (b), with some candidates reading all sorts of aspects into Picasso's iconic painting. Candidates are also advised to make sure they learn the meaning of the different interrogatives as this will help them choose the correct sort of response. Reading the questions carefully is the key. For example, in (d) the question clearly asks: *¿Qué animal está sufriendo en la pintura?* (singular) yet many candidates chose to write *el toro, el caballo y el pájaro*. In (e) only the best candidates were able to infer that the famous painting symbolises the horror and tragedy of modern wars.

Question 6(B)

This was well done. A few candidates lost marks by carelessness, either not looking at the text or not using their common sense with regard to meaning. For example, many chose the option referring to Franco, Hitler or the might of the Luftwaffe.

Question 7

Many candidates coped well with the translation into English. However, some common errors were as follows: not knowing the meaning of *ya no está reservado*, translating the definite article which is not needed in English 'the cultural tourism', writing 'economical resources' and the expression *para dar a conocer* was virtually unknown. Very few candidates used a capital letter in English for Hispanic or Spanish-speaking.

Question 8

The mark scheme ensured that all candidates were able to access some marks. There were, however, widespread errors with the following

- (i) In text 1, a surprising number could not manage a suitable translation for 'surveys'. Hardly any made the correct verb/subject agreement between *el 90%* and *cree que* although, to be fair, this error is often seen in Spanish newspaper articles. Very few put the article before 90%. Adjectival agreements were poor and need attention in the classroom.
- (ii) In text 2, many used the gerund instead of the infinitive (English interference) and hardly any could render the idea of 'to rely on'. Some made up words like *reliar en*. There was a general tendency to put a preposition at the end of a sentence.
- (iii) In text 3, the use of the gerund was again prevalent, and many failed to make the verb plural putting *es muy importante* and a lot used *a ellos* instead of *para ellos*. Where they did use the plural verb *son*, adjectival agreement was virtually non-existent. However, it was pleasing to see a significant number knew the expression *tener éxito*.
- (iv) In text 4, the phrase *it is not surprising that* caused a lot of problems and does not appear to be a widely known expression. The variations on *sorpresa* and *sorprendente* were alarming (*sorpresa* was written for them in Question 4 (B) (c)). However, the better candidates knew how to use the subjunctives *tengan* and the more difficult *valoren* which was good to see. Candidates need to ensure that they translate all words including the idea of 'rather' which could have simply been *bastante*. Many left it out and could not deal with the expression 'positive self-image'. There was a good deal of confusion between *cualidades* and *calidades* as well as widespread misspelling of *responsable*.

In general, the exam was fair and a good test of candidates' knowledge of Spanish. It was accessible to the majority but also tested the strongest candidates.

General observations from examiners were that handwriting is extremely poor among too many candidates causing genuine legibility issues at times, adjectival agreement is almost non-existent and candidates have real problems with the use of the definite articles. It is recommended that this should be addressed in the classroom. To end on a positive note, many candidates showed a wide range of skills and an impressive understanding of both written and spoken Spanish.

**EDUQAS
GCE AS SPANISH**

Summer 2017

COMPONENT 3: CRITICAL RESPONSE IN WRITING

The majority of candidates produced a good quality essay in this first Eduqas AS examination series. There was a pleasing range of films or literary works chosen, the most popular being *El laberinto del fauno*.

The marking criteria focuses on two assessment objectives; language use (AO3) and critical knowledge of the film/literary work (AO4).

Candidate mean performance for the paper was 12.1 and 12.5 marks in AO3 and AO4 respectively, indicating a high level of attainment for a brand new examination.

AO3

Many candidates showed evidence of the language skills expected at AS Level, with mostly accurate and at times sophisticated language structures, proving significant progress beyond GCSE standards. There were however some difficulties in the use of articles (particularly before a title e.g. *el capitán Vidal*, *el doctor Brown*), *ser* and *estar*, and *por* and *para*. Some candidates could have used the present historic to avoid inaccuracies using the preterite when discussing an action. The use of the subjunctive after verbs of influence was also problematic. Many candidates used idiom and cohesive devices successfully although some could not quite steer away from the literal English equivalent e.g. *En la otra mano*, *al final del día*, etc. Sound application of agreement and successful verb ending choices contributed to enhanced marks awarded for language quality in many essays.

AO4

With regard to content, the most successful candidates managed to contextualise their critical response effectively and provided sufficient evidence to support their views. The best essays contained a wide range of pertinent ideas and a competent evaluation of the issue in question. On the other hand, simplistic personal appreciations (e.g. *si yo fuera Adela me escaparía de la casa*) and emotional value judgements (e.g. *María es solo una egoísta y una ambiciosa estúpida*) detracted from a convincing performance, showing lack of awareness and poor understanding of the narrative of the chosen question.

Candidates need to be taught to be concise. Overly long essays tended to be self-penalising as they lost focus and relevance to the essay questions whilst also taking unnecessary language risks and making mistakes, resulting in lower marks being awarded for AO3.

On the whole, most candidates made a good impression, showing a refreshing enthusiasm for the chosen film/text and producing a competent essay boosting their confidence, powers of critical response and essay writing skills.

However candidates should **not**:

- Ignore answering the question as set
- write over-long essays, especially those which encompass everything they know about the film or book
- engage in story-telling or digression, include irrelevant and superfluous information in relation to the question set.
- use language structures they are not confident with, thus obscuring meaning.

Candidates are **advised** to:

- write a careful plan in Spanish in the exam before writing the essay
- keep the plan relevant to the question set
- include relevant and meaningful information and examples
- discard extraneous and irrelevant material.



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk