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# Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2018

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced  
Subsidiary in Spanish (WSP02) Paper 1  
Understanding and Written Response

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## Introduction

WSP02 01 is a unit from the IAL Spanish specification.

It is assessed in a written examination available in January and June of each year. The assessment lasts 2 hours 30 minutes and is made up of 90 marks. It can contribute to either the International Advanced Subsidiary or the International Advanced Level qualification.

Assessment across Unit WSP02/01 relates to following General Topic Areas:

General Topic Area	Sub topics
Youth matters	Family relationships and friendships Peer pressure and role models Music and fashion Technology and communication
Lifestyle, health and fitness	Food and diet Sport and exercise Health issues Urban and rural life
Environment and travel	Tourism, travel and transport Natural disasters and weather Climate change and its impact Energy, pollution and recycling
Education and employment	Education systems and types of schooling Pupil/ student life Volunteering and internships Jobs and unemployment

The assessment for this unit has three sections that total 90 marks. The duration of this examination will be 2 hours and 30 minutes.

**Section A:** Listening (20 marks) Students will be required to listen to a range of authentic recorded Spanish-language material and to retrieve and convey information given in the recording by responding to a range of Spanish-language questions. Students will need to show understanding of both the general sense and specific details conveyed. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and short answers in Spanish.

**Section B:** Reading and Grammar (30 marks) Students will be required to read authentic Spanish-language printed materials and to retrieve and convey information by responding to a range of question types in Spanish. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and Spanish-language answers. Questions are linked to a range of reading comprehension exercises. Students will also need to understand and manipulate grammatical structures in Spanish by selecting the most appropriate word form to fit a gap, and by manipulating sentences that appear in a previous exercise from the section and reforming the sentence around a given word.

**Section C:** Essay (40 marks) Students will write a 240–280 word essay, in Spanish, in response to a short Spanish language stimulus and four related bullet points. The assessment rewards students for communicating relevant

information effectively as well as for the quality of the Spanish language produced.

## **Comments relating to individual questions from the January 2018 series:**

### **Section A: Listening**

#### **Q1. Multiple Choice**

Students were provided with four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question. (The correct response, and three distractors). Question 1 was taken from the sub topic of Music and fashion.

In this type of question students need to pay attention to the detail in the question.

#### **Q2. Multiple Choice**

Students were provided with four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question. (The correct response, and three distractors). Question 2 was taken from the sub topic of Tourism, travel and transport. Elements of this type of question require competence in identifying synonyms and antonyms.

#### **Q3. Summary completion**

Question 3 was a listening summary task on health issues. There was a mixture of word types in a pool of 8 and the correct response had to be inserted into sentences summarising the text.

Many students were successful in connecting the ideas of the text they heard and the summary they read in Q3. This shows a useful skill of retaining clusters of language which share the same meaning.

In general, for this question, it was evident from the exam papers that some students used a skilful process of identifying the possible correct responses, and then focusing their listening upon those possible responses, from which one was then eliminated.

#### **Q4. Short Answer Questions**

This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 4 was taken from the sub topic of Sport and Exercise and is the most challenging of the listening tasks, in length and linguistic capability. Although full sentence answers are not required, sometimes it was necessary to add a word to something drawn on from the recording in order to make the information fit the requirements of the question.

There were several instances in Q4 where students made grammatical errors whilst still securing the available marks. These responses are marked on the basis of communication, rather than accuracy of language.

4 (b) proved very challenging and a good discriminator at this level. Only a small number of candidates scored the one mark available for this question. Many candidates failed to infer the meaning: the challenge that women's rugby have in Spain is to retain the women players in the country (as the tendency is that once they reach a certain level these players go to France or England) Many candidates incorrectly gave answers such as: 'the

100.000 euros they have received for publicity / increasing the size of the league/ traditionally Spain has exported players.

## **Section B: Reading and Grammar**

### **Q5. Multiple Choice Questions**

Students were provided with four options: A, B, C, or D for each item within the question. (The correct response, and three distractors). Question 5 was taken from the sub topic of Urban and rural life.

### **Q6. Short Answer Questions**

This question required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 6 was taken from the sub topic of Energy, pollution and recycling.

Students are asked to express responses in their own words, as much as possible. Whereas most students offered concise responses, there were cases where responses comprised of large sections of language lifted from the text.

Most students were mindful to ensure that they were actually addressing the question.

Q6(b) Students were required to mention specifically two benefits for people using this service **not** two benefits for the company providing this service. Only answers that included reference to being free and easy earned the two available marks. Many candidates incorrectly said that the company made money by selling the oil.

Q6(c) Students who scored a mark here were those who mentioned the award the company won or indicated that the company had many clients/ had grown a lot in only three months/ in a short period. A common error here was simply saying that the company had 4.000 clients.

### **Q7. Short Answer Questions**

This was the most challenging of the comprehension questions, in length and complexity. This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Students were asked to express their response by using their own words as much as possible. There was no need to use unnecessarily ambitious structures. Long answers often contained irrelevant material and often did not directly answer the question. Question 7 was taken from the sub topic of Volunteering and internships.

Q7 (a) and (b) The majority of candidates scored the 2 marks available for these questions.

Q7 (c) Around 50% of the students scored 2 marks for this question. The main cause for the loss of 1 mark was: not saying that Sergio and Rubén believe that society will be better if everyone helps.

Q7(d) The correct answer here required reference to the importance of taking part. It was very pleasing to see that many students answered this question correctly.

Q7 (g) A common mistake in this question was simply saying that when two people are riding a tandem they move as one. The correct answer was: when the children were riding a tandem they talked about their fears/ insecurities.

### **Q8. Sentence Transformations**

Students were required to write out the correct form of each targeted word. Question 8 was taken from the sub topic of Volunteering and internships.

Q8(a) Many students correctly identified the subject of the verb as being *el voluntariado* and conjugated the verb appropriately, in either the conditional or future tense.

Q8(b) Most students correctly offered the present tense here.

Q8(c) Most students correctly used the gerund, here.

Q8(d) Many students answered correctly this question, which required the present or the imperfect tense.

Q8(e) Some students incorrectly answered this question with the present subjunctive.

Q8(f) The majority of students were confident that this word did not require any change. Students should always be aware of this possibility.

Q8(g) An irregular past participle was required here.

Q8(h) Many students did not answer this question correctly because it required the present subjunctive of an irregular verb.

Q8(i) For this item, many students did not gain a mark because the spelling of the word (*concluye/ concluyó or concluía*) was not correct. Some used an 'i' instead of a 'y' or vice versa.

Q8(j) Most students answered this question correctly.

### **Section C Writing Question 9**

This section requires students to write an essay in response to a short stimulus. The recommended length is 240–280 words, although this is only a guide and students should not be concerned by the exact length of their response. The bullet points allow students to offer opinions and to use a range of tenses. It was essential that students firmly fixed their response on these bullet points. If one point was missed out, the maximum content score was 16 marks. Question 9 was taken from the sub topic of Family relationships and friendships.

#### **Comments relating to the four bullet points:**

Bullet point 1 – This was well addressed by most students.

Bullet point 2 – This was answered well with some very insightful answers.

Bullet point 3 – To answer this point successfully the students needed to mention not only something that a friend did but also how this action affected them.

Bullet point 4 – On some occasions, this bullet point was answered very briefly.

#### **Q9 What students did well:**

- Most essays addressed all four bullet points
- Used one paragraph per bullet point for clarity
- Responses were typically of between 240 and 280 words
- Most students attempted to develop bullet points
- Many essays offered a wide range of complex structures and lexis
- Exemplification of bullet points, based upon personal experience, but directed the essay to its target audience- an adolescent cousin
- Structured the response to contain only relevant material.

#### **Q9 How students could improve upon performance:**

- Be sure to address all four bullet points
- Avoid digression from the required content
- Planning can help to ensure that ideas are well organised and developed. Consider making the essay plan early on during the exam, to avoid rushing this very significant part of the exam
- Always give several ideas for each bullet point. These may either be separate ideas, or one basic idea with development.

Examiners encountered a high number of essays where students had used a pleasing range of tenses and an impressive amount of appropriate vocabulary. The essays responded imaginatively to the bullet points and were, on the whole, very interesting to read. Many essays were well planned and each bullet point was addressed in its own paragraph. This is a useful technique, as it clearly shows both the student and the examiner that the points have been covered. Discursive expressions were used to good effect to provide coherence and clarity. There were lots of examples of appropriate use of tenses and time clauses. The best essays were those which adopted a style fit for the purpose of the piece, in this case an informal email to a younger relative. Some students spent time before writing to create a list of tenses and verb conjugations as an aide memoire and this often resulted in language that was varied and accurate.

## **General**

Based on their performance on this paper, students are offered the following advice:

- Ensure that handwriting is clearly legible
- Address all elements of each question, especially Q9
- Read the question again after you have answered it to check that your response directly answers it
- Consider alternative ways of wording your answer; clear and concise is best
- Where two pieces of information are required by the question, you should clearly demarcate the separate ideas / points that you are making
- Avoid the use of untargeted lifts from texts
- Base all comprehension responses upon evidence from the text/recording
- Use your own words, as much as possible
- Be aware of grammatical structures associated with this specification



