



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2012**

Spanish

46953

(Specification 4695)

Unit 3: Speaking

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

It was pleasing to see that this year it was clear that teachers had taken on board much of the advice that was given by AQA in light of last year's examination series. Overall, tasks were more suited to teaching groups, conduct of the tests improved and some of the marking issues had been addressed. The quality of students' work varied enormously and most had apparently tried to learn a script verbatim, sometimes successfully but often quite poorly, at least for some of the time. A wide variety of task types and of approaches by students and teachers was apparent and this report is intended to show what schools did and to give advice for further improvement.

Task setting

The number of bullet points within a task varied greatly, but there were generally between 4 and 7. As soon as there were more than this, there was a danger that those students who had a lot to say about each bullet point could find it hard to do so within the maximum 6 minutes. Alternatively they gave answers that were less well developed so that the mark for Communication was lower than it might otherwise have been. The entire Task Sheet must be in English – some schools' sheets were in Spanish.

Tasks need not be related to Contexts within the specification, but the majority of schools chose familiar topics such as Holidays, Home and Environment, Health and School and Future Plans. It is logical that teachers should want to do this, as they fit comfortably into a scheme of work. Some tasks, however, gave a different slant to a familiar topic area, for example 'My Life as a Celebrity', 'A Job Interview' or 'An Interview with a Homeless Person'. This worked well except when students tried to say things which were extremely difficult for them.

Other tasks were quite challenging and sometimes were done badly by the less able, such as 'My Favourite Film' or 'The Environment'. Perhaps the most ambitious title this year was 'Windmills'. Whatever the task, they worked well when students were able to exploit the assessment criteria to the best of their ability.

Tasks were most successful when they required students to produce language of which they were capable, and when they enabled students to develop their responses as well as they could. For mixed ability groups, this meant that there needed to be some differentiation in the task or in the questions asked within the bullet points. When the same questions were asked of all students, invariably some suffered because either they were not stretched enough or, far more commonly, they were asked to say things which were beyond the level of their Spanish, from the perspective of grammar and/or vocabulary knowledge.

It was often helpful for students when they were given subdivisions within some or all of the bullet points on the Task Sheet. For more able students, these subdivisions merely acted as an aide-memoire for the answers they were going to give, and they may have been asked just one question per bullet point. For those students who were unable to give long answers to questions, each subdivision became a different question and this meant that the conversation could flow far more successfully. It usually meant that the responses were developed less well and that the criteria for the 9-10 and 7-8 bands for Communication were not achieved, but the type of questioning was still in the interests of the students. Remember that, when subdivisions are used, they are not compulsory and also that it is easier to arrive at differentiation where the subdivisions change to suit the ability and interests of the student.

Students tried to memorise their answers to the different bullet points. When they tried to learn material that was too difficult for them, marks in all categories were adversely affected because pronunciation and intonation and/or grammatical accuracy meant that it became difficult at times to understand the intended message. It also caused students to hesitate more as they were trying to recall what to say, often unsuccessfully. This is the main reason why tasks should be differentiated.

It was extremely important that students gave at least two opinions. If they did not then the maximum mark for Communication was 2. In a similar way, two opinions had to be explained (justified) in order to score in the top band for Communication. It was therefore crucial that this was reflected in the bullet points.

Two or more tenses are needed for students to achieve a mark of 7 or more for Range & Accuracy and it is important that students who are expected to score higher than a grade C are given bullet points that elicit at least two tenses. In fact, good students can improve the complexity of their language by using more than two tenses and the bullet points can be devised accordingly. On the other hand, those students who are definitely incapable of achieving a grade B may do better if they are asked to use just the present tense or maybe just one or two instances of a simple preterite like *fui*. As soon as these students are asked to use several different tenses, the quality of what they say tends to deteriorate, usually with a resultant negative effect on communication and/or fluency.

When the aim of a bullet point is to elicit a particular tense, the wording should make this clear. 'Say something about your local environment' would be much more productive with good students if phrased as 'Say what you could do to improve your local environment and why.'

Tenses should not be included at the expense of variety of language. For example, students who were asked to talk about their present, past, future and ideal holidays, over 4 different bullet points, often repeated very similar language in different tenses. This fulfilled the tense aspect of the criteria, but the range of structures and vocabulary used was often limited.

The unpredictable question at the end of the test was frequently too difficult for the student. Even the most able students were sometimes unable to answer a particularly difficult unpredictable question. The best ones were those which prompted an answer that incorporated a simple present tense verb, at least in the first instance. If the student went on from there to develop the answer that was all well and good, but it was not a requirement for the unpredictable question.

Conduct of the tests

Most teachers conducted the tests well and were sympathetic to their students, guiding them through difficult moments and encouraging them where necessary. A few teachers interrupted students' responses or even corrected their Spanish and this is to be discouraged as it can be very off-putting for them.

The timing of each test should be between 4-6 minutes and moderators stopped marking at 6 minutes, after allowing students to complete the sentence which they were uttering on the 6-minute mark if this was applicable. If a test lasted for less than 4 minutes, the maximum mark for Communication was 9. Very good students often failed to gain marks because they went beyond 6 minutes and therefore did not accomplish all of the bullet points. On other occasions good students' tests were too short.

Some teachers had decided that all of their students were going to spend a minimum of 4 minutes on the task. When this happened with less able students, who had said all they wanted to say at around the 3-minute mark, asking further questions actually had a negative effect on the mark because they were being asked extra questions that they had not prepared. The answers to these questions tended to be inaccurate or lacking in any fluency.

The Task Planning Form (TPF)

It appeared that more students or teachers had decided not to use the TPF, possibly because they thought that they were more of a hindrance than a help. Few TPFs included visuals and so it was clear that schools had assimilated the new ruling.

Where the TPF was used, the main problem was the inclusion of conjugated verbs. Every time these verbs were used, the clause containing the verb was discounted for assessment purposes. Another issue was that the conjugated verb had been crossed out but it was still visible and in these cases the verb(s) had to be discounted. The impact of conjugated verbs on the TPF depended on the number of times the student used them. If it was a less common verb such as *acompañé*, the effect on the mark was nil or negligible. However, if the verbs were a combination of *hay*, *es*, *gusta* and *está*, the mark could easily be halved or worse. If students cross out conjugated verbs, it is advisable to give them another copy of the TPF on which they can write out the words again.

When the TPF was neat and ordered in such a way that it was clear when each of the words was needed, they were clearly advantageous for students. However, when they were untidy, with the words in a seemingly random order, they were of little or no use. Some students had realised that they could have good phrases which still were in keeping with the regulations, such as *después de llegar*, *mejor dicho*; *al fin y al cabo*; *nada que hacer*.

Some students wrote down infinitives in place of the required finite verb. Only able students could conjugate the verb in the middle of a conversation and many simply left the verb in its infinitive form.

Marking within schools

In the majority of cases the school's marks were accepted, which showed that teachers had by and large come to grips with the requirements of the assessment criteria. However, there was some deviation from the standard and this was generally, although not always, because students' tasks had been marked too generously. The following points highlight the key issues that arose.

- Where pronunciation and/or intonation were very poor, the marking did not reflect this in the mark for Communication. If language is incomprehensible, it cannot be rewarded in that category as well as in the category of Pronunciation & Intonation. Schools usually gave the correct mark for the latter, but were too generous for the former.
- When all students learned material that was very similar, their teacher in all probability knew the kind of thing that was being attempted by the student and, for that reason, it is recommended that students whose pronunciation is very poor be included in the internal moderation arrangements of the school, so that a second opinion is given.
- In the same way, very poor grammatical accuracy impinged on the Communication mark, which was not reflected in some schools' marks.
- As previously mentioned under 'Task Setting', students must give at least two opinions in order to score 3 or more marks for Communication and at least two opinions must be explained/justified for a mark of 9 or 10 for Communication. Sometimes this was not the case and the marks given were too high.
- It is extremely important that internal moderation takes place in those schools where more than one teacher has marked the tasks. In some schools this had clearly not happened. If one teacher's marks were out of tolerance, it meant that an adjustment of all students' marks in the school was possible.

- Many tasks lasting under 4 minutes were given 10 marks for Communication, which is not permissible. It is advisable for teachers to use a stopwatch when conducting the tests rather than relying on the timer on a digital recording device, because the timer on such a device will include the introduction for each student (centre number, candidate name and number etc.). Timing begins as soon as the teacher asks the first question that relates to the first bullet point.
- Some students were awarded full marks for Communication when one or more of the bullet points had not been covered. If bullet points are not covered for any reason, such as running out of time before the unpredictable question can be asked, the Communication mark is limited. For a full description of how this works, see the table in the published mark scheme.
- Sometimes impossible marks were given to students for one of these reasons:
 - the mark for one or more of the other categories was more than one **band** higher than the mark awarded for Communication (for example 6 6 3 5).
 - a mark of 0 was given for Communication and at least one mark was awarded for at least one of the other categories (for example 0 1 1 0).
 - a mark of 1 was given for Communication and a mark of 0 for at least one of the other categories (for example 1 0 1 2).
- The assessment criteria in the top band for Communication refer to the presentation of information 'with confidence'. Marks of 9 or 10 appeared regularly when there was a clear lack of confidence on the part of a student or students.
- There was often leniency in the Communication mark when answers were not developed sufficiently well. Usually this was because a mark had been given in the top band where at least one bullet point had a short answer. In order to score in the top band, there should be consistent development of responses rather than an enormous amount on some bullet points and very little on others. Where this happens, the performance is more likely to fit the 7-8 band criterion of being 'regularly developed'.
- It was noticeable that some very poor performances were marked too generously. In the 1-2 band for Communication the assessment criteria state that 'very few appropriate responses are developed'. This means that there must be some development, even if it is at a minimal level. For instance, in reply to the question *¿Adónde fuiste de vacaciones?*, the student says *España con mi familia*. At this level there is some development because the reply goes beyond the minimal. However, some students gave very short answers to all the questions that were asked with absolutely no development and at least one mark had been given for Communication where the mark should have been 0. In this scenario it meant that the school gave a total mark of at least 4 when the total should have been 0.
- The mark for Range & Accuracy has two strands which occasionally were not of equal worth. Many marks reflected this fact perfectly but others did not. The main problem was when students produced very simple, accurate language with barely any complexity and yet a mark was awarded in the top band.
- Marks of 7 or more were given for Range & Accuracy when only one tense had been used. A minimum of two tenses must be used successfully in order to score in the top two bands.
- Marks for Pronunciation & Intonation and for Interaction & Fluency tended to be accurate although occasionally very poor pronunciation was rewarded with too high a mark. Intonation could also be a problem when students had tried to learn material which they clearly did not fully understand.
- A lot of students insisted on repeating language that had appeared in the question, which gave no extra information. Where this occurred throughout a test it had an impact on what was actually communicated. Students should be encouraged to answer a question without this kind of repetition. For example, in reply to the question *¿Qué hay para los jóvenes en tu pueblo?*, it is better to begin by saying *Hay ...* rather than *Para los jóvenes en mi pueblo hay ...*

- In the above section on the Task Planning Form it can be seen that inclusion of conjugated verbs can affect a student's mark. Very often this had not been picked up by teachers.

Important Information

There will no longer be face-to-face teacher standardisation meetings in the Autumn Term. These will be replaced by teacher online standardisation, which will be available on AQA's website from September 2012. Teacher online standardisation is a web-based system available at any time and anywhere with an internet connection. It will have a selection of speaking tasks from the June series and teachers will be able to mark them and check their marks against the correct marks awarded and to read the accompanying commentaries and other supporting documentation. This means that all teachers of Spanish within a department will be able to mark the tasks, either together or independently, and to discuss those marks without having to take time out of school. To use the system teachers log on to e-AQA (Examinations Officers have access to e-AQA) and select 'teacher online standardisation' from the list of teacher services and choose 'Spanish'. For more information please see <http://web.aqa.org.uk/support/teacher-online-standardisation/index/php>.

General quality of work

The quality of the work varied enormously, but where it was good, it could be very impressive. This happened when students were sensible in scope and approach, spoke with confidence and developed answers really well, sounding interesting and interested. On these occasions the use of complex language was impressive, including such things as *lo bueno / malo, por lo general, me chifla, me encanta*; object pronouns correctly used with verbs; variety of tense; correct use of third persons; subordinate clauses introduced by *ya que, así que, aunque, mientras que*. Also there was a correctness of verbs and grammar in general.

While the above was not especially rare, there were still plenty of examples of problems with over-rehearsed speeches, students clearly unsure of what they were saying, a lot of poor verb endings and poor pronunciation. There were a number of instances of schools where every student had been rehearsed in the same way, using the same complex expressions which were successful for some but a disaster for the least able. This was more often than not due to the lack of differentiation of task for different abilities of student.

Certain topic areas lent themselves to the repetition of very simple linguistic structures and vocabulary, even by the most able students. The most common instance of this was 'family'. When asked *Háblame de tu familia*, it was very common for students to list every family member's name, age, hair and eye colour, size and character. For less able students this was fine, but for the more able it diluted the quality of their performance with regard to the range strand of Range & Accuracy of Language.

Many students began really well and then became less convincing as the task developed. This may have been because they had spent more time revising the earlier bullet points or that they merely became tired.

Persistent language problems

There were obviously very many different types of error made by students in their tasks and it would be impossible to mention them all. There follows a list of some of the more persistent mistakes, their impact on marks varying according to their frequency and to the overall calibre of a particular student. They are listed in order to help teachers focus on areas of language which may need to be addressed with some students.

- Incorrect gender of nouns.
- Incorrect adjectival agreement.

- The use of *gustar* in any form other than *me gusta*.
- Confusion between *me gusta* and *me gustaría*.
- Infinitives used in place of finite verbs.
- A failure to use an infinitive when required (*voy a juego*).
- Incorrect formation of the negative (*es no bueno*).
- Use of the preterite instead of the imperfect tense.
- *Es vale* to render 'It's OK' and many other instances of poor dictionary use.

These were the main problems with pronunciation:

- The *jota* sound, especially with cognates or near cognates (*geografía; general*).
- *Qu* pronounced as *kw*.
- *Ll* pronounced as *l*.
- Pronunciation of *ñ*.
- Poor stress, especially in confusion between present tense first person singular (*trabajo*) and third person singular preterite (*trabajó*). Also *gustaria* for *gustaría* was common.
- An aspirated *h*.
- *Cuidad* for *ciudad*.
- *Mi* for *me* and vice versa.
- *Fue* for *fui* and vice versa (this then becomes a serious grammatical error).
- General poor pronunciation and/or intonation because the delivery was too fast and unclear.

Administration

Most schools dealt admirably with the administration and sincere thanks go to them from their moderators. Usually marks were sent to the moderator by the deadline of May 7th. Unfortunately there were other schools who failed to comply with all of the administration regulations although, when that happened, the majority were able to solve the problem swiftly when contacted by their moderator. The most frequent issues are listed here:

- Posting work via a 'signed-for' service, such as recorded delivery. This can cause considerable problems for some moderators, many of whom are full-time teachers.
- Failure to send the unpredictable questions (of which there should be between 4-6), along with the Task Sheet.
- Failure to include the Centre Declaration Sheet.
- Incorrect totalling of marks on the Candidate Record Form (CRF).
- Incorrect transferral of marks from the CRF to the Centre Mark Forms (CMF).
- Marks for the unrecorded task entered on the CMF for the recorded task and vice versa.
- The marks on the CMF were illegible because they had not come through from the top copy. Please use a fine tipped biro if possible and press on hard when entering the mark on the top copy.
- Unsigned CRFs.
- Missing information on the CRF, especially candidate numbers.
- Insufficient labelling of CD covers and naming of file of the recording. Please see the *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations and Controlled Assessments* document in the Teacher Resource Bank on the AQA website.
- Very poor quality of some recordings. This was often, although not exclusively, with tests that had been recorded on cassette tape, for which 2013 is the last year when they may be used in all AQA specifications. If the recordings are unclear, students' marks may well suffer because the moderator is unable to distinguish verb endings, etc. Teachers are advised to check the quality of the recording immediately after each test.

- Tests were conducted in a noisy area which meant it was difficult to understand what was being said at times.
- Speaking tests sent to the examiner for writing and vice versa.

Terminology – a Glossary

Task Sheet	The sheet containing the main bullet points in English which form the task.
Main Bullet Points	The number of main bullet points which make up the task and which the student must address.
Unpredictable Question/Bullet Point	The last question asked by the teacher, which the student has not prepared in advance. Shown as ! on the Task Sheet.
Task Planning Form	Downloadable from the AQA website, this is the form that a student uses as a prompt during the task. It is not compulsory.
Centre Mark Form	There are 2 of these, one for the recorded task (SR) and another for the unrecorded task (SU). There are 3 copies, white, yellow and pink. Before May 7 in the year of entry, the marks for all students are entered on the form. The white copy goes to AQA and the other two go to the school's moderator, who will then select a sample.
Recorded Task	The recording of this task is sent to the moderator if the student is in the sample. Only one task is sent for moderation.
Unrecorded Task	This is the second task (which may in fact have been recorded) but only the marks for this task are sent to AQA and the moderator, not the recording.
Candidate Record Form	This form is available on the AQA website and must be filled in for all students. It includes the breakdown of marks for the recorded and unrecorded tasks.
Centre Declaration Sheet	This is also available on the AQA website and is a declaration by the school that the work is that of the students and has been carried out in line with the requirements of the specification.

Further advice for teachers

A lot of advice is contained in the information given above, but here are some additional things that we hope teachers will find helpful:

- Familiarise yourself with all the documentation, particularly the *Controlled Assessment Handbook* and the *Frequently Asked Questions* and exemplar tasks in the Teacher Resource Bank on the AQA website. This may give you ideas as to what to use for future tasks and how best to set them out. There are also examples of students' work with marks and commentaries.

- Advise B grade students and above to prepare about 4-4½ minutes of their own input. This means that they will have enough to achieve full marks for Communication and not so much that they exceed the 6 minutes maximum time.
- Encourage students to vary their language structures and vocabulary as much as possible. Opinions are the most obvious area to focus on - not everything has to be described as *interesante* or *aburrido* and there are other ways to say *me gusta*.
- Train students to give and justify opinions without necessarily being asked to do so. This can form the basis of different starter activities.
- Practise pronunciation as often as possible. It can be a good use of the FLA's time, if you are fortunate enough to have one.
- Some teachers seemed to have recommended to their students that they ask a question of their own. There is no need to do this and in fact it can prove disadvantageous when the teacher gives quite a long response to a question. The advice is to discourage students from asking you a question.
- Check the Task Planning Form very carefully well before the test, ensuring there are no more than 40 words and that there are no conjugated verbs.
- Do a short test recording before the first student's test to check recording levels and clarity.
- Position the microphone or digital recorder so that it picks up both voices clearly.
- Make sure that your own and the students' mobile phones are switched off (not just on silent) before the recording begins. Students should not have access to their mobile during the assessment in accordance with examination regulations.
- Use Spanish from the very start of the task, including any introduction such as *Ahora vamos a hablar sobre tu instituto*. This will help to put the student in the right frame of mind from the beginning.
- Tackle the bullet points in the order in which they appear on the Task Sheet.
- Be sensitive to the ability of the students - someone who struggles to describe their town is not going to be successful discussing the impact of global warming or the biggest threat to humanity.
- Check that each bullet point requires different information. For example avoid something like 'What are the problems in your school?' and then another bullet point 'What is the worst problem?'.
- Respond positively to what students say, even if it is not very good. It will encourage them for the rest of the test.
- Allow students to develop their answers as well as they are able, unless it is clear that they are going to go over 6 minutes, in which case it will be better to interrupt them.
- If an able student finishes in under 4 minutes, you are encouraged to ask further unpredictable questions in order to get to the minimum time. However, as soon as 4 minutes is reached, do not ask further questions because fluency will probably be affected.
- When marking your own tests it is advisable to use some sort of annotation so that you can achieve consistency in your own marking and that you can compare tests with other teachers in the department when you are standardising internally. We have included the annotation sheet used by moderators in the published mark scheme which can be accessed via the Secure Key Materials section of e-AQA. Examinations Officers have details of how to access e-AQA. It is also reproduced at the end of this Report.
- Every school has its own Controlled Assessment Adviser, who can give invaluable guidance about everything connected with controlled assessment. It is recommended that you ask for advice from them whenever you are unclear of anything or when you would like someone to check over a new task. If you do not know who your adviser is, you will get their details by emailing mfl@aqa.org.uk.

Guidance Notes for Moderators

The following guidance, provided to moderators during the moderating period, is reproduced below for information.

1 Task sheets

These may include bullet points alone or the bullet points with sub-divisions (these should be in English). Schools have been requested to provide a copy of the unpredictable bullet points used (in English or Spanish).

2 Task Planning Forms (TPF)

This has to be submitted if one is used. The CRF has a section which will say if a TPF has been used. There is no need to count the words on the TPF, but if it is obvious that more than 40 words are used, you should ignore when awarding a mark the parts of the student's response which use words noted on the TPF beyond the first 40.

Whole words only, in English or the target language, may be used. There must be no conjugated verbs but a past participle without a conjugated auxiliary verb and reflexive pronouns may be used. Students must not use phonetic transcriptions. Codes of any kind are not permitted eg blank lines, initial letters, different colours, arrows to indicate time frames. The only exception to this is that a bullet point or figures eg 1, 2, 3 may be used where the numbers refer directly to the bullet points.

You should ignore when awarding a mark the parts of the student's response which use codes or conjugated verbs in the target language from the TPF. No drawings, icons, photos or visuals of any kind may be used.

3 Timings

Timing begins as soon as the teacher asks the first question relating to the first bullet point. From that point, the task should last between 4 and 6 minutes. Ignore any preamble such as '*Hola, vamos a hablar de tu tiempo libre*'.

If the task lasts for less than 4 minutes (even 3' 59"), a student cannot get full marks for Communication. Some students may not say nearly enough to warrant that mark anyway, but there may be some very good students who finish just below the 4-minute mark. It would still be possible for this type of student to achieve a mark of 9 for Communication. There is no impact on the other assessment criteria.

If the task lasts for over 6 minutes, you must stop marking at 6 minutes. If, at that point, the student is speaking, allow him/her to complete that sentence and then stop marking. However, if a teacher is in the process of asking a question at 6 minutes, stop marking.

4 Coverage of main bullet points

In order to be able to score full marks for Communication, students must be able to give information on all main bullet points on the task sheet. If there are any sub-divisions within the main bullet points, these are **not** compulsory.

If one or more main bullet points are not covered by the student, for any reason*, this will affect the **maximum** mark available for Communication, as follows:

Total number of main bullet points in task	Number of main bullet points including ! <u>not</u> covered	Maximum mark for Communication
2-3 + !	1	7
2-3 + !	2	5
4 + !	1	8
4 + !	2	7
4 + !	3	5
5 or more + !	1	9
5 or more + !	2	8
5 or more + !	3	7
5 or more + !	4+	5

*The reasons for a main bullet point not being covered are:

- i) The teacher fails to ask anything about that main bullet point within the allotted 6 minutes.
- ii) The main bullet point is mentioned by the teacher, but the student cannot answer.
- iii) The student gives an answer, but it is unintelligible or not relevant to the main bullet point.

5 The unpredictable question/bullet point

In order to accomplish the unpredictable bullet point, the student must answer by using a verb. If that is not the case, then the bullet point is not covered and the table above must be used in order to arrive at a mark for Communication.

The clause used, however, need not be totally accurate provided it communicates the required message in the answer to the question. See the following examples:

- in reply to the question *¿Qué haces los sábados?* - *Me gusta voy al teatro* would be acceptable.
- if an infinitive is used in place of a finite verb this would be acceptable, as in reply to the question *¿Qué haces los sábados?* - *Los sábados salir con mis amigos*
- the correct person of the verb in the wrong tense would be acceptable, as in reply to the question *¿Qué hiciste la semana pasada?* – *La semana pasada voy al centro.*

Where a wrong person of the verb leads to ambiguity and the message is not communicated, the unpredictable bullet will **not** be achieved. For example in reply to the question, *¿Qué te gusta hacer en tu tiempo libre?* Te gusta ver la tele.

It is unlikely that the answer given in response to the unpredictable bullet point will be as well developed as the main bullet points. If a student has developed fully answers to the main bullet points and gives a short answer, including a verb (eg present participle, infinitive) to the unpredictable bullet point, he/she will still have access to full marks for Communication provided the response is complete.

If a teacher asks more than one unpredictable question, the first one that is asked is the one that should be considered when deciding whether it has been answered appropriately, using a verb. However, some teachers may have a two-part question for the same unpredictable bullet point, which is acceptable practice. For example, '*¿Te gusta ...? ¿Por qué (no)?*' or '*Prefieres x o y? ¿Por qué?*'. In this type of question you should give credit for the language produced in both parts. It may be that a teacher will go on to ask other unpredictable questions, probably to make the task last at least 4 minutes, and these should be taken into account when awarding an overall mark.

If the unpredictable questions are not provided by the centre, then the last question to be asked counts as the unpredictable question as long as it does not relate to the final main bullet point (in which case it is considered as a follow-up question).

If the unpredictable question is asked in the wrong place, this should still be credited.

Once the student gives an incorrect answer (either in Spanish, in English or in any language other than the one being tested) then no further rephrases are possible.

If the student gives a partially correct answer in Spanish then the teacher can ask more questions to elicit further information so that the bullet point is fully covered.

If a student says '*No entiendo*' or '*Repítele, por favor*' (or equivalents) then this counts as a request for clarification and the teacher is allowed to repeat or rephrase. This does not count as an answer. (If this were said by the student in English or in any language other than the one being tested, then it would be an incorrect answer and no more rephrasing would be allowed).

If the student says, either in Spanish, in English or in any language other than the one being tested, '*No sé*' / 'I don't know' (or equivalents) then this counts as an incorrect answer and no more rephrasing would be allowed.

If the student says nothing in response to a question then the teacher can repeat or rephrase until the student does respond (or until the 6 minutes are up).

If the teacher asks as the unpredictable question a question which has already been asked as one of the student's main bullet points then the student has not been asked an unpredictable bullet point and the table in Section 2 (coverage of bullet points) applies.

If, however, the unpredictable question is different from a main bullet point, but elicits some repeat of information that has already been given in answer to one of the main bullet points, then any additional information can be credited. For example, the main bullet is 'Tell me about your family'. In a long answer, the student says '*No me llevo bien con mi hermano*'. The unpredictable question is '*¿Generalmente te llevas bien con tu familia?*' and the student says '*Me llevo bien con mis padres (new info) pero no con mi hermano (repeat)*'. Although the unpredictable is connected to one of the main bullets, it is not the same question.

A student is not necessarily required to manipulate language in order to accomplish the unpredictable bullet point. For example, in response to the unpredictable question '*¿Hace calor en España?*' the responses '*Hace calor en España*' and '*Sí, hace calor en España*' would both be accepted as having accomplished the unpredictable bullet point.

6 The criteria for assessment

All of the criteria should be considered when deciding on a mark, but the following guidelines may prove particularly useful.

(a) Communication

Must the teacher ask extra questions for the student to gain the highest marks for Communication?

No. If the student develops fully his/her answers to each main bullet point there will be no need for extra questions to allow the student access to the highest marks for Communication.

Can students get a high mark even if there is little interaction with the teacher?

Yes. Interaction and fluency are a global concept. Students can have access to full marks with minimal teacher input as long as they have provided full and developed responses. This is still true even if there is little interaction with the teacher.

Does an opinion have to be a personal opinion or can it be someone else's other than the speaker's?

It can be a reported opinion.

Example:

What do you think is good about your school?

In my school you have to wear a uniform. There are many opinions about the school uniform and whether it is good or not. Some people think it's not good because it's uncomfortable.

If a student answers a main bullet point eliciting reference to future events by using a present tense verb, will he/she be penalised under Communication?

No, not if the response successfully communicates what the main bullet point required. However if aiming for a high mark for Range and Accuracy, the student must make sure he/she uses at least two different tenses over the task as a whole.

Must a student give some information relevant to the actual question the teacher asks in order for the bullet point to be accomplished?

Yes. If a student gives an answer that provides information in relation to another bullet in his/her task but does not contain information relevant to the question the teacher has actually asked (eg because the teacher and student get out of sequence), the bullet cannot count as being accomplished. The teacher may ask the bullet again to give the student the chance to offer relevant information.

Can the answer still be considered to give some relevant information even if the tense is wrong?

Yes.

Examples:

¿Qué hiciste el fin de semana pasado?

The following answers would be regarded as having some relevant information and would be acceptable:

Fútbol.

Juego al fútbol.

The following answer would be regarded as unacceptable on the basis that it was clearly not answering the question being asked: it is not only the tense formation that is wrong. There are other indications that the student is not answering the question being asked:

El fin de semana pasado voy a jugar al fútbol (using a future tense verb).

If the student gives exactly the same response to more than one bullet point and that answer gives relevant information in each case, will the response count as having accomplished the bullet in each case?

Yes.

Example:

Bullet 3 – What did you do last weekend?

Juego al fútbol.

Bullet 5 – What do you normally do at weekends?

Juego al fútbol.

Both bullets will be judged to have been accomplished.

If a student does not wait for the teacher to ask questions but simply delivers his/her answers to the bullets in the task, will the bullets be judged to have been accomplished?

Yes. However, in response to any question the teacher does actually ask, the student must give some relevant information – see above.

9-10 marks

- Students can speak with confidence and narrate events where appropriate. In order to do this, they will have to develop their answers well.
- They will have to offer ideas / opinions / points of view (minimum 2) and be able to explain them.

7-8 marks

- The answers will be regularly developed, even though some of them may not be. However, for the award of a mark in this band, most answers will show some development.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2).

5-6 marks

- There will still be evidence of an ability to develop some answers.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2).

3-4 marks

- Few responses are developed, but for some questions you can expect replies to go beyond the minimal, even if this is in the form of lists or very simple sentences.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2).

1-2 marks

- Very few appropriate responses are developed, but therefore there has to be evidence of development, however basic, in at least one reply.

0 marks

- No relevant information is communicated, but a student could still give some very minimal replies and still score zero if there was no development at all.

(b) Range and Accuracy of Language

- For performances with a large amount of complex language but lots of errors the following should be noted: the Accuracy strand in Range and Accuracy has a bearing on communication of intended messages. If communication is not taking place the marks awarded have to reflect this and a mark of 8 could not be awarded. If for, example, the Range strand warrants 10 marks and the Accuracy strand warrants 4 marks, then a maximum mark of 7 would be appropriate.
- The immediate future (eg *voy a ir*) counts as a tense in its own right and different from the future (*iré*). A present tense verb with a future time marker (eg *Esta noche voy al cine*) is still a present tense.
- The subjunctive is a mood and not a tense so the present subjunctive, for example, does not count as a separate tense from the present indicative.
- A construction using the present tense to refer to the past counts as the present tense. An example of this might be *Vivo en mi ciudad desde hace diez años* or *Acabo de terminar mis deberes*.

9-10 marks

- A variety of **tenses** must be used. This means two or more. The tenses could come from the same time frame (for example the preterite and the imperfect) but a greater range of tenses will add to the complexity of the language used and most students getting marks in this band will probably use three or more tenses, unless the nature of the task does not allow it.
- There will be complex structures, but remember that this is GCSE level and not higher. We will not necessarily be looking for subjunctive phrases or similar grammatical structures. Complexity will often be achieved by variety of expression, for instance *suelo ir* instead of *voy*, or *debería* instead of *me gustaría*.
- There needs to be a wide range of vocabulary. This means that students will not be too repetitive in the words they use.
- Errors usually appear in complex structures, or they may be minor errors, for instance of gender, which do not appear too often.

7-8 marks

- Two or more tenses must be used.
- Some complex structures will be used, but the note about what constitutes complexity for the 9-10 band will apply here.
- There must be a range of vocabulary, so students in this band will again be trying to avoid repetition of the more common words.
- Errors occur, but the message is clear, so that the type of mistake made will not prevent communication.

5-6 marks

- There is no need for students to use more than one tense to be awarded a mark in this band.
- Sentences are generally simple but occasionally more complex. There will be more repetition of simple constructions here, but sometimes a more unusual structure will be used.
- Errors are quite frequent, but the language used is **more accurate than inaccurate**. This should be apparent from the annotation used for marking.

3-4 marks

- The sentences are short and simple and probably there will be quite a lot of repetition of the more common verbs, such as *gustar*, *ser*, *haber (hay)*.
- The vocabulary is very limited, so there will probably be quite a lot of repetition of the same words.
- Errors are very frequent and it will be **more inaccurate than accurate**, or there will be relatively little said, so the lack of evidence means we cannot go into a higher band.

1-2 marks

- There are only isolated words of vocabulary with the occasional short phrase. It may well be that there is quite a lot of silence.
- Errors often impede communication, or there is very little evidence to enable us to form an opinion.

(c) Pronunciation and Intonation

5 marks

- Consistently good accent and intonation are required. 'Accent' means 'pronunciation'.

4 marks

- Generally good. It may be that problems arise mainly with the sounds that students traditionally find more difficult, such as the letter '*r*' and the *jota* sound.

3 marks

- Generally accurate, but there is some inconsistency. As well as the more common mispronunciations, there may be problems with vowel sounds and anglicised words.

2 marks

- What is said is understandable, although comprehension is sometimes delayed. In other words there will be occasions where we have to listen very carefully to what is being said in order to get the intended meaning.

1 mark

- What is said is barely understandable and comprehension is difficult. There may well be very little to go on, because not much is said by the student.

(d) Interaction and Fluency

5 marks

- The student responds readily, without significant pause before answering the questions.
- There is initiative, as the student is able to fully develop answers to the questions.
- The conversation is sustained at a reasonable speed, but clearly not at native speaker pace.

4 marks

- The student will again have to answer without hesitation.
- The replies will go beyond the minimum, although there will not be as much development as in the top band.
- There is some flow of language, even if from time to time there is some pausing for thought.

3 marks

- There are ready responses, where the student can answer reasonably promptly most of the time.
- There is little if any initiative, so the student may not develop answers to any great extent.
- There is an ability to sustain a conversation, so that any hesitation does not break up the interchange of information too much.

2 marks

- There is some reaction to the teacher's questions, but the student is sometimes hesitant. In practice, there will be more sections of the test where the student is thinking what to say or cannot answer.
- There is little natural flow.

1 mark

- There is little reaction to what the teacher asks and the student is so hesitant that the conversation becomes disjointed. There will in all probability be lots of silence during the task.

(e) Limiting marks

- You cannot go more than **one band** higher than the band in which the Communication mark was given when awarding marks in the other categories. For instance, if you award 5 for Communication, the highest mark you can award for Range and Accuracy is 8, and for Pronunciation and Intonation and Interaction and Fluency the maximum mark would be 4.
- It is possible to give marks in lower bands for Range and Accuracy, Pronunciation and Intonation and Interaction and Fluency than the band in which the mark for Communication was given.
- If you give one mark or more for Communication, you must give at least one mark in all other categories.
- If you give zero for Communication, you must give zero for everything else.

Please see overleaf a copy of the symbols sheet used by moderators when assessing work.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw or scaled marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion.

Centre Number				Candidate Name				Candidate Number			
1				6				Tenses (up to 4 uses of each, tick for each usage in right-hand column)			
2				7				Pres (subj)			
								Preterite			
								Imp (subj)			
								Perf (subj)			
3				8				Plup (subj)			
								Future			
								Imm future			
								Conditional			
4				9				Quisiera			
								Other			
5				!							

Annotation for moderator's marking table

Box numbers 1-9 on the moderator's marking table refer to the bullet points within a task. As the teacher may well ask more than one question per bullet point, move down an imaginary line to annotate each response. So there could sometimes be 6 or more rows of symbols within a box.

The annotation to be used is as follows:

✓	A piece of information using a verb
-	A piece of information without a verb
Op	An opinion with a verb
Op	An opinion without a verb
J	Justification of an opinion with a verb
J	Justification of an opinion without a verb
+	A more complex structure or unusual vocabulary item. It is impossible to do a list here but such things as <i>soler + inf</i> , <i>acabar de + inf</i> , correct use of subjunctive, as well as vocabulary that strikes you as not being 'run of the mill'.
A	A minor inaccuracy, eg. incorrect gender/adjectival agreement.
A	A more serious inaccuracy, usually a problem with a verb (wrong tense/person)
P	A minor mispronunciation, which doesn't hinder communication
P	A more serious mispronunciation which would make comprehension difficult/impossible
^	A hesitation
^^	A longer hesitation
R	Repetition of information already given by the student or an exact repetition of what the teacher has just asked (eg. <i>¿Prefieres el cine o la televisión?</i> – <i>El cine</i>)
X	No answer given
W	A wrong answer to the question
●	Sí/no alone
?	Unintelligible reply

The profile of the student's test should then allow for consistent marking according to the criteria for assessment.