

GCSE SPANISH

Unit 4 Writing
Report on the Examination

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General Comments

It is pleasing to report that, once again this year, the standard achieved by students was generally good.

Content

At the top end of the ability range there was some impressive work with students making detailed comments on topics such as environmental issues, teenage problems and films they had seen. Even less able students were able to express and explain simple opinions on such topics as school, work experience and holidays with relative clarity.

Range of Language

More able students used an impressive range of structure and vocabulary and it was pleasing to note that the majority were able to show some ability to form several tenses and to construct complex sentences using, at the very least, simple conjunctions such as *porque*. Though the use of the subjunctive is by no means a requirement, more students than in previous years showed an ability to use a range of subjunctive constructions.

Accuracy

Many seemed to have taken on board previous comments about the fact that inaccurate work can have an effect not only on the Accuracy mark but also on marks for Content and Range of Language. There was some evidence to suggest that teachers had put a greater emphasis on accurate working. All but the less able students were able to use 2 or 3 tenses with some degree of accuracy.

Once again this year, students who worked from a well devised task, had a sound grammatical knowledge and made good use of the Task Planning Form almost invariably scored highly. Those who tried to set down from memory something learnt from a pre-prepared piece more often than not failed to score well. The frequent problem was that they wrote half-remembered sentences that often contained wrong verb endings or they missed out key items of vocabulary and what they wrote often failed to communicate.

Advice to Teachers

Devising your task

Titles chosen and bullet points provided are crucial to all students' success.

Differentiation

It is quite usual to see the same task sheet presented to all students, even when the ability of the students in the cohort often varies enormously. Sometimes, more able students take simple bullet points and write about them fully, using impressive vocabulary and structures. All too often, however, students who are capable of impressive writing resort to listing or simple structures in their responses as a result of the undemanding bullet points. Equally, over-demanding bullet points for less able students often lead them to try to learn responses that they do not really understand, leading them into unclear and inaccurate writing. Some ways of overcoming these problems are illustrated below under the headings of some common titles.

- **School** – ‘describe your school’ and ‘say what subjects you study, giving opinions’ are suitable bullet points for less able students. They tend to lead to responses like: *en mi colegio hay* (+ facilities) and *estudio* (+ subject/s) – *no / me gusta porque es interesante / aburrido*; if these sorts of structures are the limit of the student’s ability, these straightforward stimuli are effective. However, students aiming at higher grades might

benefit from more stretching bullet points. For example, these two bullet points might be replaced for more able students with: ‘say what the best and worst features of your school are and why you feel that way’ and ‘what makes you enjoy some subjects more than others’

- **Holidays** – the tendency is for students to be presented with bullet points which elicit where they usually go on holiday, where they went last year, where they will go in the future and where they would go if they had lots of money. Less able students quite often struggle with the range of tenses needed (especially in the last task) and resort to the repetition of similar activities in attempts at different time frames. More able students often overcome these problems and write full and effective responses but one very effective title used successfully by some able students this year was, **The Desert Island**. Students wrote imaginative responses that did not hang on pre-learnt phrases: they described how they came to be there; what they were doing to survive; how they were getting on with others on the island; what they had done to try to be rescued; what plans they had after being safely returned home.
- **Me and My Family** – This is a title with which more able students regularly struggle to demonstrate the quality of their Spanish. Even for less able students, such a piece often becomes repetitive with name, age, physical and character description being provided for the student and several family members. For students aiming to demonstrate higher level skills suggested content could include: if you feel family life is important or not and your reasons; if you think your relationship with your family/parents has changed since you were a child and why. While **My Life as a Celebrity** sometimes gives greater scope for more able students, some responses resort to no more than descriptions and daily routine activities with little reference to the celebrity in question.
- **Healthy Lifestyle** – This title typically involves eating habits and exercise regimes in the past, present and future. Again, it may be suitable for less able students, as long as they do not resort to the same vocabulary and structures in attempts at three time frames. More stimulating bullet points for more able students might involve: problems/pressures that affect lifestyle and how the student copes with them; issues concerning smoking / alcohol / drugs and how the student deals with offers to become involved with these; a school campaign to promote a healthy lifestyle (in any tense).
- **My Home and Local Area** – an ideal task for less able students to describe their house and local area and what they like / dislike about them. More able students, however, often employ similarly straightforward vocabulary and structures to provide long descriptions of their house and various rooms with their contents and then lists of places in their town / local area. One way to provide greater challenge here is to bring in environmental issues, a topic with which less able students often struggle. Or, another title on a similar theme that proved successful for more able students this year was, **Finding a Home Abroad**. Students wrote to a Spanish TV programme asking for help to find a property for their family to buy in Spain. They wrote about why they wanted to leave their home town / country; what features they wanted in their new home/area; why Spain / a particular area of Spain was their chosen destination; details of a visit to Spain that encouraged the move.

Other aspects of task setting that have been mentioned before but are worth re-emphasising are:

- **Please note that titles (wherever they appear) and accompanying bullet points must be in English.**

- **Please ensure that the title is the same one wherever it is written.** The title appears in three places: the Task Sheet; the Candidate Record Form; the student response sheet. It is important that the title, written in English, is consistent on all three of these documents.
- **A general title** (Holidays, School and Future Plans, My home and Local Area, My Lifestyle, My Free Time) **is likely to be most successful** since the piece of writing will be assessed according to its relevance to that title. It is also crucial that schools **provide bullet points which are relevant to the title chosen**; some students were penalised because they responded to bullet points provided but which were irrelevant to the title. For example, in a piece entitled ‘The Environment’, a first bullet point of ‘introduce yourself’, often leading to long descriptions of the student and his family, is clearly not relevant to the title. Since the Content criteria for 13-15 marks require the piece to be ‘fully relevant’, a mark in the top band will not be achieved in such a case.
- Another issue regarding relevance is **the question of balance**. It is fine for a piece entitled ‘My Ideal School’ to have a short paragraph describing the student’s present school, particularly when it is linked in some way to the title. However, when this topic takes up the majority of the response, the student will be penalised for irrelevance. A more general title of ‘Education’ would, of course, overcome this problem.
- **Titles including more than one topic:** some schools have chosen a wide-ranging title, for example, ‘Work Experience, Free Time, Fashion and Money’. While this provides the student with plenty of ideas to write about, it should be noted that students who do not address all elements of a title will lose Content marks. Such titles can also lead to rather disjointed pieces in which it is difficult to discern a ‘well-organised structure’, a requirement for the top band of 13-15.
- When devising tasks, **refer to the assessment criteria** so that the bullet points you include set out to elicit these requirements. Further illustration of this point is included on page 13 of the specification under *Devising Tasks*.
- Provide a logical sequence of events in the bullet points and encourage students to follow that sequence; this should bring a **well organised structure** to the response.
- Ensure that students are aware that bullet points are merely prompts for comments they can make and develop; they are not questions to be answered. **What students write must make sense without reference to the bullet points.** *Sí, y me gusta mucho porque era muy simpático* was an example from this year’s work. Clearly this makes little sense – unless one is aware of the bullet point.

Further examples of suitable, differentiated tasks have recently been published on the AQA website (Example answers - <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/spanish/gcse/spanish-4695/past-papers-and-mark-schemes>). If you devise your own tasks, please take advantage of the excellent service offered by the Controlled Assessment Advisers. Your school will have been provided with the e-mail address of a specific adviser; this can be sought at mfl@aqa.org.uk if you are not aware of your contact.

Preparing your students

- **Dictionaries** – Since students are entitled to a bi-lingual dictionary when writing up their controlled assessment, experience shows that many would benefit from the teaching of dictionary skills. They need to take care with the spelling of the English word they are seeking to translate and they would do well to check the word they have found in the Spanish-English section of the dictionary to ensure it is appropriate.
- **Task Planning Forms** – students are entitled to write up to 40 words and to refer to their planning form while writing up their task. These were clearly of benefit to most students who used them, though one recurring problem involved verbs. **Since the infinitive of a verb is allowed on the Task Planning Form a good many students often failed to**

conjugate those verbs when they transferred them to their response. Most helpful practice seemed to involve: writing a number of key words next to a series of bullet points which reflected the bullet points in the task (advise students to write Spanish words and to **check their spelling carefully**, and remind them that they could include an English translation alongside a word as long as this is included in the total count). **Unacceptable practice had students writing too many words or including conjugated verbs – sometimes still visible in spite of an attempted deletion. Please be sure to check your students' Task Planning Forms, offer them such advice as is allowed and, if they exceed the word limit or include conjugated verbs, the best solution would be to ask candidates to write out a new Form since supposed deletions often remain visible. Please be aware that any sentence in the Controlled Assessment which uses a conjugated verb that appears on the Task Planning Form will be ignored by the examiner in the assessment process.**

- **Criteria for Assessment** – It would be an advantage if students were aware of the criteria so that they know how to attain marks. It would be helpful, for example, if they were aware that they need to convey as much **relevant** information as they can as **clearly** as they can; that it is important to give opinions / express ideas and points of view and to develop these – usually by providing reasons for their views; that they will be rewarded for a variety of vocabulary and structure and for attempting more complex sentences; that the use of more than one verb tense will be required to reach the top band under Range of Language.
- **Materials** – Since there is no need to use Awarding Body stationery, it is important that each student is instructed by the teacher to include all of the following information: Centre number, candidate's name and number, **Task 1 or Task 2** and **the title of the task (which is the same as that set by the teacher and entered on the Candidate Record Form).**
- **The write-up** – Students should be made aware that their final piece must be written in one single session of 60 minutes. Whilst some candidates wrote impressive responses within this time, others clearly struggled to get everything they wanted to write down on paper in time and stopped mid-paragraph or even mid-sentence. There are, of course, marks available for a well-organised structure and students would be well advised to keep an eye on the clock and to try to round off their piece in an organised way even if they have to leave out some of the information they were originally intending to include.
- **How much to write** – Whilst it is true that it is the quality not the quantity of the work that affects the assessment outcome, guidance is provided in the specification: 200-350 words across both tasks if aiming at grades G-D; 400-600 words across both tasks if aiming at grades C-A* (page 13). Students should be aware of this guidance and that the shorter their response, the more difficult it becomes to meet the upper bands of assessment criteria for Content, and, therefore, for Range of Language and Accuracy. **A piece of less than about 100 words is unlikely to be awarded above 6 marks for Content; a piece of less than about 200 words is unlikely to be awarded above 9 marks for Content; a piece of longer than 200 words has access to the full mark range.** While there is no upper limit on the number of words, the writing of some candidates who produced very long answers often showed a marked decline in quality towards the end.

Sending materials to the examiner

Sincere thanks to the great majority of colleagues who, once again, provided all necessary documentation in an efficient and helpful way. A checklist is available on the AQA website (<http://www.aqa.org.uk/>) so that teachers can ensure they have sent all necessary documentation.

- It is helpful if students' individual portfolios are fastened together securely. **Treasury tags are most convenient (paper clips are much less successful and individual plastic wallets are very time-consuming.)**

- Please be sure to include for each student:
 - A Candidate Record Form for each task (**check that this has been signed appropriately** and that you have indicated whether or not the student has used a Task Planning Form)
 - A Task Planning Form for each task (if used by the student)
 - **One** copy of the task sheet for each task
 - Two pieces of work (if you are only submitting one piece of work for a student, please make this clear)
- Having now collated all necessary paperwork for each candidate, **please place the work in candidate order for the entire school** and send all materials to the examiner in the AQA envelope provided by **7 May**.

Advice to Students

- Once you know the title of your task and your teacher has given you the bullet points to use in your controlled assessment, think carefully about how you intend to write about each one and prepare to write as much as you can and as clearly and accurately as you can.
- Make sure that what you write can be read clearly. Writing on alternate lines may be a good idea since it gives you space to make alterations when you check your work at the end.
- Remember that you are producing a piece of continuous writing, not answering a series of questions. Never start your response to a bullet point with *sí* or *no*. The examiner must be able to understand your response without referring to the bullet points. For example, a new paragraph that begins *El señor Smith es muy simpático* does not make a great deal of sense as it stands, but one that begins *Tenemos muchos buenos profesores en mi colegio. El señor Smith es muy simpático* is very clear!
- It will improve your mark if you can use a variety of vocabulary and structures, if you can express opinions clearly (not necessarily just variations on *me gusta...* try other ways of expressing opinions, like *Me parece que...* / *Yo diría que...* / *Mucha gente piensa que..... pero yo no estoy de acuerdo....*) and, when you can, justify these opinions by giving a reason. It also helps if you can use different tenses by saying what you did in the past, and/or what you are going to do or will do in the future, for example.
- You are allowed to use a Task Planning Form on which you may write up to 40 words (in Spanish and/or English) and you may take this Form into the Controlled Assessment with you once it has been checked by your teacher. Be sure to spell words accurately on this sheet so that they will be accurate in your Assessment. It might be wise to include the same order of bullet points on your Task Planning Form as the teacher gave you on the Task Sheet and then jot down a few words next to each one. If you are worried you may forget what a Spanish word means, you could write the English translation next to it, as long as the English word is included in your final count. Remember not to use conjugated verbs (parts of verbs in whichever tense, e.g. *voy, fui, iré*); if you want to jot down verbs, you can only include infinitives (e.g. *jugar, comer, salir*) **but remember that you may need to conjugate them when you use them in your written piece.**
- You are allowed to use a Spanish-English/English-Spanish dictionary when you write up your Assessment. You should use this to look up occasional words, but do not waste too much time looking up lots of words; you only have 60 minutes and you need to write as full a response as you can. To be sure you have selected the appropriate word, it is best to check it in the Spanish-English section of the dictionary. Remember, also, that your dictionary is likely to contain verb tables and you could always use it to check that you have written the part of the verb/the tense of the verb accurately.
- Be sure that everything you write is relevant to the title.
- Try to write as much as you can about each bullet point but keep an eye on the clock! Remember you only have 60 minutes. If you follow the order of the bullet points provided,

this should bring a well-organised structure to your piece, but if time is running out you might choose to round off the piece neatly even if you have to cut short what you were intending to write.

- To sum up, prove to the examiner just how good your Spanish is!

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

Guidance Notes for Examiners

The following guidance, provided to examiners during the examining period, is reproduced below for information.

Assessment issues

1. Task Planning Forms (TPF)

If more than 40 words have been used, examiners will ignore when awarding a mark, the parts of the student's response (ie the phrases or clauses) which use words noted on the TPF beyond the first 40.

If a conjugated verb appears on the TPF, examiners will ignore the clause(s) where that verb is used when awarding a mark for Range of Language and Accuracy. If the sentence (with the conjugated verb discounted) still communicates, then it may be counted towards the mark for Content. The same applies to the use of codes (eg a picture of an eye to represent the Spanish word *hay*).

Visuals on Task Planning Forms are not permitted.

2. Exactly what do examiners mark?

- They mark the student's response **to the title**.
- They do **not** mark a response to the bullet points which have the status of guidance. The student may choose to ignore the bullet points completely.
- The response must be relevant to the title.

3. Must the title relate directly to the Contexts defined in the specification?

No. The title can be anything.

4. How do examiners identify the title?

- The title is the task.
- The task and the scene-setting may seem blurred or merged together. The focus is the task.

See examples in *Additional Exemplar Tasks: Controlled Assessment Writing and Speaking* on our website within Example answers for your language at

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/spanish/gcse/spanish-4695/past-papers-and-mark-schemes> where the task and scene setting are clearly separated

5. What is a relevant response?

- The response must be relevant to the task.
- Students are not penalised for not responding to the scene setting details.

6. And what if there is a significant amount of irrelevant material?

- It would affect the mark for CONTENT.
- Only the material which is relevant should still be assessed for RANGE OF LANGUAGE and ACCURACY.

7. What if a student has omitted an entire aspect of the title?

A student with the task 'Home, local area and special occasions' who writes nothing about home area, for example, could be considered to have completed two thirds of the task. The piece could therefore be eligible for the 10-12 band for Content, assuming the piece fulfils the criteria for that band in other ways. This would still allow the student access to all mark bands for language.

8. What if there is a significant duplication of material across the two pieces of work submitted?

- The same material cannot be credited twice.
- Incidental and occasional overlap do not count as duplication.

9. What if it is clear the student's entire response is identical (ie exactly the same, word for word) to model answers in a textbook or to the wording of tasks from other students at the same centre?

The work would be referred to AQA's Irregularities/Malpractice Department.

10. Does the number of words affect assessment?

- The quality not the quantity of work affects the assessment outcome.
- 200-350 words across both tasks if aiming at grades D-G, 400-600 if aiming at grades A*-C, is for **guidance** only.
- Obviously, the shorter the assignment, the more difficult it becomes to meet the upper bands of assessment criteria for CONTENT (and therefore other categories).
- There is no *upper* limit on the number of words. The whole piece will be read and marked by the examiner.

11. How does the CONTENT mark affect the marks for RANGE OF LANGUAGE and ACCURACY?

Content Mark	Maximum Mark for Range of Language	Maximum Mark for Accuracy
0	0	0
1-3	1-4	1-2
4-6	1-6	1-3
7-9	1-8	1-4
10-12	1-10	1-5
13-15	1-10	1-5

12. The criteria for assessment

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

(a) CONTENT

GENERAL OVERVIEW

If the descriptor fits the piece exactly, then the examiner will award the middle mark in the band. If there is strong evidence of the descriptors and/or the examiner had been considering the band above, the highest of the three marks would be awarded. If there is just enough evidence and/or the examiner had been considering the band below, then the lowest mark in the band would be awarded.

13-15 marks

- Students provide a **fully relevant** and **detailed** response with **almost all** information conveyed **clearly** and **developed**.
- They must offer ideas / opinions / points of view (minimum 2) and at least two of them must be explained or justified.
- The piece should have a well organised structure, ie a sound ordering of ideas but **not** necessarily a formal essay structure or an introduction, conclusion, etc.

10-12 marks

- The response will be **mostly** relevant and **a lot** of information will still be provided and conveyed **clearly** and will **generally** be developed.
- There is a requirement to give **and explain** ideas / opinions / points of view (minimum 2)

7-9 marks

- The response will be **generally** relevant with **quite a lot** of information conveyed **clearly**.
- There will still be evidence of an ability to **develop** ideas.
- There is a requirement to give opinions / points of view (minimum 2).

4-6 marks

- The response is **limited** but **some** relevant information will be conveyed.
- There will be **some development** of basic ideas.
- There is a requirement to give opinions (minimum 2). These could be very simple, eg: 'I like French. I like Spanish. France is good.' = 3 simple opinions.

1-3 marks

- The response is **very limited** with **little** relevant information conveyed.
- There will be **no real structure**.

0 marks

- No relevant information is communicated in a coherent fashion. If zero is awarded for Content, zero must also be awarded for Range of Language and Accuracy.

DETAILED CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES

i) Relevance This refers to relevance to the title (ignoring scene-setting, etc).

Examiners look out particularly for the following scenarios:

- The piece on a specific topic that strays into other areas (eg *My School Routine* should not have long digressions on work experience or future career).
- The piece with a title covering a range of topics which only mentions one of them (eg the title is *School and Future Career* but the student only mentions 'school').
- The piece which starts with a long preamble about the student which is not relevant to the title.
- Work where there is a significant duplication of material across the two tasks submitted. The same material cannot be credited twice. Examiners do not count incidental and occasional overlap as duplication.
- Examiners are aware of the principle of balance. The piece on *My holiday last summer* which includes a couple of sentences on what the student generally does/will do next year is perfectly acceptable but if the student takes $\frac{1}{3}$ of the piece talking about what (s)he usually does and $\frac{1}{3}$ of the piece dealing with next year's plans then the work should not be judged 'fully relevant' unless the student has been able to link this material clearly to the title. Similarly with the task on *My Work Experience* where a large part of the piece is taken up with what the student will do next year.
- Irrelevant material in the work is taken into account in awarding the marks, even if there is sufficient relevant material to meet the recommended word length. For example, if a student has written 600 words and 300 words are relevant to the title, the examiner cannot simply ignore the 300 words of irrelevant material and deem the piece to be fully relevant.

In practice, the vast majority of tasks will be fully relevant but many will not score in the top band for Content because of other limitations. However, any piece which is not judged fully relevant cannot be awarded a mark in the top band. Where it is obvious from the task sheet that the bullet points have led the student into including irrelevant material, the examiner will treat the lack of relevance as leniently as possible. Material which is deemed irrelevant will be discounted when assessing Range of Language and Content.

ii) Information conveyed

- It is necessary to consider the amount of information given and the extent to which it is developed. (Development of information/ideas means going beyond a basic response to give additional detail.)

Note that a piece which does not reach the recommended length specified in the specification (minimum 200 words across both pieces for grades G-D, minimum 400 words across both pieces for grades C-A*) is unlikely to score highly for Content, ie a piece of less than about 100 words is likely to fall into the Limited or Poor band, a piece of less than about 200 words is unlikely to score above the Sufficient band. However, a piece of 200+ words will in theory have access to the full mark range. The examiner is assessing primarily quality rather than quantity and precision and clarity of expression are more important than the number of points made.

- There is no *upper* limit on the number of words. The whole piece will be read and marked.

iii) Expression and explanation of ideas/points of view/opinions

- Ideas, points of view and opinions must be viewed as one notion and are the same for assessment purposes.

- To score 4+ for Content there must be at least **two** opinions/points of view/ideas expressed.
- To score 10+ for Content, at least **two** opinions must be expressed **and explained / justified**. At a basic level, explanation of an opinion is most likely to consist of a statement of the opinion followed by *porque...*, but more able students may find more subtle ways of justifying their opinions. For example, the explanation may come before the opinion (see below).

Information/Opinions – Examples

13-15 marks	Detailed response – almost all information developed . A number (at least two) opinions expressed and explained in some detail.	<i>En Sheffield hay tanto que hacer y por eso me encanta vivir aquí. Hay teatros, discotecas, bares e incluso una pista de hielo pero mi lugar favorito es el cine en el centro. Normalmente voy allí los sábados con mis amigos sobre todo si ponen una película de terror. Preferimos las películas que dan miedo – son más emocionantes que las películas románticas. Total, en Sheffield hay muchísima movida y por eso yo diría que es una ciudad ideal para los jóvenes.</i>
10-12 marks	A lot of information- generally developed . At least two opinions expressed and explained .	<i>Me gusta vivir en Sheffield porque – aunque es industrial – creo que es una ciudad muy interesante. Hay mucho que hacer aquí, por ejemplo la pista de hielo. También me gusta ir al cine en el centro con mis amigos. Preferimos ver las películas de terror porque son emocionantes.</i>
7-9 marks	Quite a lot of information. At least two opinions. Some development of information and opinions.	<i>Me gusta vivir en Sheffield. Es una ciudad interesante pero es industrial. Me gusta ir al cine en el centro con mis amigos para ver películas de terror.</i>
4-6 marks	Limited response – some information – some development . At least two basic opinions expressed	<i>Vivo en Sheffield. Sheffield es grande. Es industrial. Me gusta Sheffield. Me gusta el cine.</i>
1-3 marks	Very limited – little information. Few or no basic opinions	<i>Vivo en Sheffield. Sheffield es grande.</i>
0 marks	No relevant information communicated.	<i>Me habitación Sheffield. Me ami be Wayne.</i>

iv) Clarity of expression In order to gain a mark of 7+ for Content, there is a requirement that information, opinions and development of points be conveyed **clearly**. The following are the factors most likely to affect clarity of expression:

- incorrect choice of vocabulary/dictionary errors (eg *atadura* for *corbata*, *fieltro* for *me sentí*, *abanico* for *hincha/forofo*, etc)
- gross grammatical errors which hinder communication. Errors with verb endings, particularly the wrong person of the verb, are particularly important here.
- omissions of words, phrases or whole sentences. These generally occur where the student has attempted to learn by heart a draft version of the task and remembered it imperfectly so that the sense of the sentence or paragraph is impaired.
- (occasionally) gross errors of punctuation

v) Organisation For the top Content band there is a requirement that the piece should have a **well organised structure**. Pieces scoring in the bottom band may have **no real structure**. Note the following points:

- A well organised structure means a sound ordering of ideas but not necessarily a formal essay structure with an introduction, conclusion, etc.
- Students are, however, required to produce a continuous piece of writing rather than a series of answers to the bullet points on the task sheet. A piece which cannot be fully understood without reference to the task sheet is unlikely to demonstrate a well organised structure.
- In the vast majority of cases, the requirement for a piece placed in the top band for Content to have a well organised structure will not be an issue. It will be other factors which determine whether it scores in the top band and many pieces placed in lower bands will also be well organised.

13-15 marks	Well organised structure	<i>Normalmente voy de vacaciones a Francia con mi familia. Solemos pasar dos semanas allí en agosto y nos alojamos en una pensión. Sin embargo, el año pasado decidimos ir a España y nos alojamos en un hotel en Madrid.</i>
10-12 marks (and below)	(Structure less well organised – can only be fully understood by reference to the task sheet)	<i>Voy de vacaciones a Francia con mi familia. Pasamos dos semanas allí en agosto y nos alojamos en una pensión. Fuimos a España y nos alojamos en un hotel en Madrid.</i>
1-3 marks	No real structure	<i>Voy a Francia. Fuimos a España. Fuimos a Madrid. Voy con mi familia. Nos alojamos en un hotel.</i>

CONTENT – SUMMARY

- **Content not fully relevant** Examiners will not award a mark above 12
- **Structure obviously not well organised** Examiners will not award a mark above 12
- **Fewer than 2 opinions explained** Examiners will not award a mark above 9
- **Only one opinion or no opinions expressed** Examiners will not award a mark above 3
- **Deciding on a mark within the Content band** If the descriptor fits the piece exactly examiners will award the middle mark in the band. If there is strong evidence of the descriptors and/or examiners considered the band above, then examiners will award the highest of the three marks; if there is only just enough evidence and/or examiners considered the band below, then examiners will award the lowest mark.
In the top (Very Good) band, a performance which matches the descriptor **exactly** will be awarded the middle mark of 14; the top mark (15) **comfortably** fulfils all of the criteria and *may* even go beyond them.

	Relevance	Information conveyed	Opinions expressed / explained	Clarity of expression	Organisation
Very Good 13-15 marks	Fully relevant	Detailed response – almost all information developed	A number (at least two) opinions expressed and explained in some detail.	Almost all information conveyed clearly	Well organised structure
Good 10-12 marks	Mainly relevant	A lot of information - generally developed	At least two opinions expressed and explained	A lot of information conveyed clearly	(Structure less well organised – can only be fully understood by reference to the task sheet)
Sufficient 7-9 marks	Generally relevant	Quite a lot of info - some development	At least two opinions. Some development of opinions.	Some information conveyed clearly	
Limited 4-6 marks	Some relevant information	Limited response- some information – some development	At least two basic opinions expressed	Clarity of expression generally a problem	
Poor 1-3 marks	Little relevant information	Very limited - little information	Few or no basic opinions expressed		No real structure
0 marks	No relevant information communicated in a coherent fashion				

(b) RANGE OF LANGUAGE**GENERAL OVERVIEW**

9-10 marks

- A variety of **tenses** must be used **successfully**. This means two or more tenses and a minimum of one instance of a tense use which is other than the default tense used. 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. An overall judgement needs to be made as to whether “verb tenses are used successfully.” There needs to be evidence that the student can communicate messages successfully in more than one tense. There may be minor spelling errors but provided they do not prevent communication they can be credited.
- The use of different tenses is not a ‘passport’ to the 9-10 band.
- There must be evidence of **successful use of complex sentences**. This could be:
 - use of subordinating conjunctions (but this is not an absolute requirement)
 - use of adverbial phrases (*al llegar...*, etc).
 - use of infinitive constructions after a preposition (e.g. *después de ir*), after an adjective (eg *fácil hacerlo*) or after a verb (eg modal verbs; *prefiero ir* etc)
 - a range of different structures leading to longer, more varied sentences (eg *suelo ir* rather than *voy*)
 - use of pronoun objects
 - use of adverbial conjunctions (eg *sin embargo*) or prepositional phrases (eg *por ejemplo*)
 - regular use of connectives to form longer sentences.

However, this is GCSE so even in the highest mark band examiners are not necessarily looking for use of the subjunctive or similar grammatical structures.
- There needs to be a **wide range of vocabulary**. This means that students will not be too repetitive in the words they use.

7-8 marks

- **Mainly successful** use of complex sentences. The note above about what constitutes complexity for the 9-10 band will also apply here.
- No specific requirement to use more than one tense but the use of different tenses may constitute evidence of ‘more complex sentences.’
- There must be a **good range** of vocabulary, so students in this band will again be trying to avoid repetition of the more common words.

5-6 marks

- There will be some attempts made at longer sentences using appropriate linking words. At this level this will often mean repeated dependence on simple connectives such as ‘and’ / ‘but’, though ‘because’ will also be found fairly frequently when students attempt to explain ideas and points of view. Use of other forms of complex sentences will often not be wholly successful.
- There should be **some variety** of vocabulary, though students will generally be using a more basic range of vocabulary than in the higher bands and there may be more repetition.

3-4 marks

- Language will be basic, with **short, simple sentences**. Attempts at longer sentences and more difficult constructions will usually not be successful.

- Vocabulary will generally be appropriate to the basic needs of the task but will be **limited**, with a lot of repetition and overuse of a few common verbs such as *to be*, *to have*, *to like*, *to go*.

1-2 marks

- Little understanding of language structure shown with just the occasional short phrase which is correctly used.
- Vocabulary will be very **basic**, with only isolated words correctly used. Vocabulary will often be anglicised.

DETAILED CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES

i) Variety of vocabulary

Consider particularly:

- use of synonyms, eg *prefiero* and *me encanta* rather than just *me gusta viajar*, *coger (el tren/autobús...)*, *llegar a* etc, rather than just *ir*, *espléndido*, *emocionante*, *estupendo*, *maravilloso*, etc, rather than *bueno*, etc.
- use of 'Higher Tier'/more sophisticated vocabulary – though this may vary somewhat from centre to centre depending on course books used, etc.
- dictionary use – frequent poor dictionary use is likely to have a limiting effect on the mark available

ii) Variety of structures

Consider:

- use of infinitive constructions introduced by prepositions (*después de*, *antes de*, *al*, *para*, *sin*), adjectives (*Es fácil hacerlo*), nouns (*Tengo la intención de salir*) and after verbs (*Prefiero ir*, *suelo ir*)
- use of object pronouns (*Se lo daré*)
- use of connectives such as *tanto... como...*, *no sólo... sino también...*, *por un lado... y por otro...*, *por una parte... por otra parte...*, *además(de)*, *aparte de*
- use of adverbs and adverbial phrases such as *sin embargo*, *por eso*, *por lo tanto*, *también*, *el año que viene*, *por ejemplo*
- use of *desde hace* constructions and constructions such as *Llevo 5 años estudiando español*
- use of comparative expressions (*tan... como/que*, *más/menos... que...*)
- use of demonstrative adjectives and pronouns (*este*, *ese*, *aquel*, etc)
- use of complex sentences and a range of tenses (v below)

iii) Use of complex/longer sentences

Consider:

- use of subordinate clauses introduced by eg *si, cuando, donde, porque, como, aunque, mientras que, ya que, dado que* and relative pronouns such as *que, lo que*
- use of the present subjunctive after verbs of wishing, command, request, emotion, after *cuando* to express the future, after *para que* to express purpose

and, when considering use of longer sentences:

- use of co-ordinating conjunctions: *y, pero, así que*

iv) Use of tenses

- To score 9 or 10 marks for Range of Language a variety of **tenses** must be used **successfully**. This means two or more tenses and a minimum of one instance of a tense use which is other than the default tense used. The tenses could come from the same time frame (for example the preterite and the imperfect). A greater range of tenses will add to the complexity of the language used.

An overall judgement needs to be made as to whether “verb tenses are used *successfully*.” There needs to be evidence that the student can communicate messages successfully in more than one tense. There may be minor spelling errors but provided they do not prevent communication they can be credited.

- The immediate future (ie *voy a* + infinitive, etc) counts as a separate tense (and a different tense from the future (ie *iré*). A present tense verb with a future time marker (eg *La semana que viene voy a Barcelona...; Dentro de dos años espero ir a la Universidad.*) does not.
- The present subjunctive does not count as a separate tense from the present indicative. A construction using the present tense to refer to the past (eg *Toco el piano desde hace 2 años / Llevo 5 años estudiando español / Acabo de salir*) counts as the present tense. Similarly a construction using the present tense to refer to the future (eg *Espero ir al cine*) counts as the present.
- The imperfect subjunctive and the passive voice are not required for active use in this specification but should be credited if used.
- The use of different tenses is not a ‘passport’ to the 9-10 band.
- Below the 9-10 band, use of a range of tenses is a factor to take into consideration when judging use of a variety of structures/complex language.

RANGE OF LANGUAGE – SUMMARY

- **Only one tense used** Examiners do not award a mark above 8
- **Only one or no longer/complex sentences** Examiners do not award a mark above 4
- **The Range of Language mark must not be more than one band higher than the mark awarded for Content.**

	Variety of vocabulary	Variety of structures	Use of complex / longer sentences	Use of tenses
9-10 marks	Wide variety of vocabulary. Avoidance of repetition. Use of 'Higher Tier'/more sophisticated vocabulary	Wide variety of structures used successfully	Successful use of complex sentences – handled with confidence to produce a fluent piece of coherent language	At least two tenses used successfully
7-8 marks	Good variety of vocabulary – some attempts to avoid repetition	Good variety of structures used with some success, enabling the student to communicate with some degree of precision.	Mostly successful use of complex sentences	No requirement to use more than one tense, but, when used, a range of tenses can be considered under variety of structures
5-6 marks	Some variety of vocabulary but repetition of some common words	Some variety of structures, though more difficult structures may not always be used successfully	At least two attempts at longer sentences using appropriate linking words (eg <i>y</i> , <i>pero</i> , <i>porque</i>)	
3-4 marks	Limited vocabulary but appropriate to the basic needs of the task. A lot of repetition. Overuse of common words such as <i>ser</i> , <i>tener</i> , <i>ir</i> , <i>gustar</i> , <i>hay</i> , <i>bueno</i> . There may be poor dictionary use.	Basic language using simple structures which are rarely linked. Attempts at difficult constructions will often be unsuccessful	Sentences mainly short and simple. Attempts at longer sentences may be flawed	
1-2 marks	Very limited vocabulary, often anglicised or containing many cognates. Incorrect use of some words. Sometimes, only isolated words used correctly.	Little understanding of language structure. An occasional short phrase or sentence may be correctly used.		
0 marks	No language produced which is worthy of credit			

Examples

9-10 marks	<i>Vivo en Dundee y me gusta porque hay un gran variedad de tiendas, lo que es importante para mí ya que me encanta ir de compras. La ciudad se encuentra a lado del Río Tay y es muy pintoresco. Dundee es una ciudad dinámica con un Universidad, un teatro y un excelente centro cultural, donde a veces ponen películas españolas... En el siglo diecinueve muchos irlandeses llegaron a Dundee porque en Irlanda la gente se moría de hambre.</i>
7-8 marks	<i>En cuanto a la gente con quien yo trabajaba una mujer se llevaba Aicha, una amiga de mi familia. Tenía el pelo rubio y corto y llevaba gafas. Me llevaba con ella porque amable y era no estricta... En el futuro me gustaría ser florista porque pienso que es muy interesante y me gustan flores.</i>
5-6 marks	<i>En mi tiempo libre me gusta hacer patinaje porque es facil. me encanta navegar por internet en mi ordenador portatil. No soporto fumar y beber. me encanta la fotografia porque es divertido. me gusta la musica especialmente 'Rock'. me encanta la comida rapida y una coca-cola porque es deliciosa. Sin embargo es mas calorias.</i>
3-4 marks	<i>Voy a describir a el cantante justin bieber. Me encanta Justin mucho, en el musica. es fecha de nacimiento marzo uno 1994. justin bieber tiene el pelo castano y corto y los ojos de marrone. justin bieber no tiene e hermano y hermana su lugar de nacimiento es canada.</i>
1-2 marks	<i>Mi familia y yo era sano. comer - fruta, pollo, pescado y verduras. beber - aqua. Cuando joven yo mal sano no comer – fruta, pollo, pecado, y verduras comer – patatas, fritas y pasteles. No tomar – futbol, volbol y rugby.</i>
0 marks	<i>yo trabajo abierto de Lunes. De viernes abierto de ocho y tres el empleados hay be muy un poco algo y antento de mi.</i>

(c) ACCURACY**GENERAL OVERVIEW**

NB. Range of tenses is assessed under RANGE OF LANGUAGE. The range of tenses is not considered when assessing Accuracy.

5 marks

- **Largely accurate.**
- Major errors only usually appear in complex structures.
- There may be some minor errors (eg gender).
- Verbs and tenses are **secure**.

4 marks

- Errors occur but the piece is **generally accurate**. Mistakes made will not generally impede communication.
- Verbs and tenses are **usually correct**.

3 marks

- **More accurate than inaccurate**, though there will often be fairly frequent errors.
- The intended **meaning is clear**.
- Verbs and tenses are **sometimes unsuccessful**.

2 marks

- **Many errors.**
- Mistakes **often impede communication.**
- Verbs are **rarely accurate.**

1 mark

- **Frequent errors.**
- Mistakes **regularly impede communication.**
- **Limited understanding** of basic linguistic structures.

DETAILED CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES

- There are only 5 marks available to cover the whole range of ability (ie 8 grades). Each mark will therefore cover a relatively wide range of performance and a mark of 5 will represent more than an A* performance.
- The mark awarded for Accuracy must not be more than one band higher than the mark awarded for Content.
- Examiners are not over-influenced by the standard of accuracy in the last part of a piece – this will probably be the most inaccurate bit. If in doubt, they re-read the whole piece.
- A repeated major error (ie one where communication is impeded) should be considered each time it occurs. Repeated minor errors will incur no further penalty after the first occurrence.

		Major errors	Minor errors	Verbs/tenses
5 marks	Largely accurate	Hardly any, usually only in attempts at more complex sentences	A few (eg mistakes of gender, minor spelling mistakes)	Secure
4 marks	Generally accurate	A few, usually only in attempts at more complex sentences	Some	Mostly correct
3 marks	More accurate than inaccurate	Some gross errors but the intended meaning is clear	Fairly frequent	Sometimes correct
2 marks	Many errors	Many – communication is often impeded	Many errors – most sentences contain mistakes	Rarely correct
1 mark	Frequent errors	Frequent – errors regularly impede communication	Frequent – Limited understanding of basic linguistic structures	Limited understanding
0 marks	No language produced which is worthy of credit Little, if any understanding of the most basic linguistic structures			

Examples

5 marks	<i>Hice más prácticas laborales en una escuela primaria. Trabajaba de nueve a tres e iba a mi sitio de trabajo en coche o a pie. Normalmente durante una semana escolar me levanto a las siete y media pero durante mis prácticas me levantaba a las siete menos cuarto.</i>
4 marks	<i>El fin de semana pasado fui a montar a caballo con mi madre, este tipo de deporte es peligroso pero fácil también emocionante. Luego fui al restaurante y comí pollo y patatas fritas y bebí limonada. Luego al domingo fui al parque con mis amigos y comí comida rápida y bebí sprite, jugué al fútbol con mis amigos, lo pasamos bomba.</i>
3 marks	<i>El fin de semana pasado fui al centro comercial porque muchas tiendas, fui con mis amigos y también mi hermana. fuimos en coche. comí muchas cosas por ejemplo los vaqueros azules y camisetas también zapatillas. fui al restaurante y comí pollo y patatas fritas y bebí una coca-cola. Luego fuimos a casa. Gasté cuarenta libras en el restaurante y gasté sesenta libras en mi ropa.</i>
2 marks	<i>Normalmente, yo nunca desayuno para la vez me gusta desayuno. cuando como me gusta tostada mi madre dice desayuno es sano. Aversión el fumar es repugnante un malsano. En mi opinión el alcohol me gusta pero es perjudicial.</i>
1 mark	<i>En el futuro yo y mi familia voy a comer sano y más ejercicio. beber más zumo de fruta y menos coca y también comer menos comida, comida rápida y más verduras, pollo y sano comido. En mi opinión una vida sana importante. también no engordar en mi opinión.</i>
0 marks	<i>Yo aprendí mucho sobre la estafa de los trucos del comercio. Me gusta mucho porque yo aprendí mucho porque la industria y personas me gustan mucho a mí.</i>

The assessment sheets overleaf are used by examiners, in conjunction with the mark scheme, when they assess the work of students.



GCSE Spanish Examiner Assessment Sheet

Centre Number:						Candidate Number:						TASK 1
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Content /15

Tick examples of:

Points of View / Opinions	Explained / Developed
Is there any irrelevant / overlapping material?	If so, how much?

Overall Response:

Mark Band	Information Conveyed	√ ? X		Tick either if applicable
13-15	Detailed - sound ability to convey clearly		Well organised	
10-12	A lot conveyed clearly			
7-9	Quite a lot conveyed clearly			
4-6	Limited – some relevant information conveyed			
1-3	Very limited – little relevant information conveyed		No real structure	

With this information in mind and adopting a 'best fit' approach, select the accurate mark band.

If you considered the higher band, award the highest of the three marks; if you considered the lower band, award the lowest of the three marks.

Range of Language /10

Tense usage - tick examples of:

Past	Preterite	Other past tense	NB there must be an example of at least two different tenses (not time frames) for the award of 9-10 marks
Present			
Future		Ir + a + infinitive	

Overall Response:

Mark Band	Vocabulary and structure	√ ? X	Sentences	√ ? X	examples
9-10	Wide variety		Complex and successful		
7-8	Good variety		Complex and mainly successful		
5-6	Some variety		Longer with appropriate linking words		
3-4	Basic		Mostly simple		
1-2	Inappropriate		Little understanding of language structure		

With all of this information in mind and adopting a 'best fit' approach, select the accurate mark band.

If you considered the higher band, award the higher of the two marks; if you considered the lower band, award the lower of the two marks. Remember that the mark band for Range of Language may only be up to one mark band higher than the mark awarded for Content.

Accuracy /5

Accuracy of verbs / tense formation

Underline the most appropriate: secure / usually correct / sometimes unsuccessful / rarely accurate

Overall Response:

Mark Band	Accuracy	√ ? X
5	Largely accurate	
4	Generally accurate	
3	More accurate than inaccurate	
2	Many errors – often impede communication	
1	Frequent errors – regularly impede communication	

With all of this information in mind and adopting a 'best fit' approach, select the accurate mark.

Remember that the mark band for Accuracy may only be up to one mark band higher than the mark awarded for Content.

Total mark out of 30 for Task 1



GCSE Spanish Examiner Assessment Sheet

Centre Number:					Candidate Number:					TASK 2
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Content /15

Tick examples of:

Points of View / Opinions	Explained / Developed
Is there any irrelevant / overlapping material?	If so, how much?

Overall Response:

Mark Band	Information Conveyed	√ ? X		Tick either if applicable
13-15	Detailed - sound ability to convey clearly		Well organised	
10-12	A lot conveyed clearly			
7-9	Quite a lot conveyed clearly			
4-6	Limited – some relevant information conveyed			
1-3	Very limited – little relevant information conveyed		No real structure	

With this information in mind and adopting a 'best fit' approach, select the accurate mark band.

If you considered the higher band, award the highest of the three marks; if you considered the lower band, award the lowest of the three marks.

Range of Language /10

Tense usage - tick examples of:

Past	Preterite	Other past tense	NB there must be an example of at least two different tenses (not time frames) for the award of 9-10 marks
Present			
Future		Ir + a + infinitive	

Overall Response:

Mark Band	Vocabulary and structure	√ ? X	Sentences	√ ? X	examples
9-10	Wide variety		Complex and successful		
7-8	Good variety		Complex and mainly successful		
5-6	Some variety		Longer with appropriate linking words		
3-4	Basic		Mostly simple		
1-2	Inappropriate		Little understanding of language structure		

With all of this information in mind and adopting a 'best fit' approach, select the accurate mark band.

If you considered the higher band, award the higher of the two marks; if you considered the lower band, award the lower of the two marks. Remember that the mark band for Range of Language may only be up to one mark band higher than the mark awarded for Content.

Accuracy /5

Accuracy of verbs / tense formation

Underline the most appropriate: secure / usually correct / sometimes unsuccessful / rarely accurate

Overall Response:

Mark Band	Accuracy	√ ? X
5	Largely accurate	
4	Generally accurate	
3	More accurate than inaccurate	
2	Many errors – often impede communication	
1	Frequent errors – regularly impede communication	

With all of this information in mind and adopting a 'best fit' approach, select the accurate mark.

Remember that the mark band for Accuracy may only be up to one mark band higher than the mark awarded for Content.

Total mark out of 30 for Task 2

Total mark out of 60 for both tasks