



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Spanish 4695 *Specification*

46953 Speaking (Controlled Assessment)

Report on the Examination *2010 examination - June series*

Further copies of this Report are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

COPYRIGHT

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

Copyright © 2010 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334). Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX

General Comments

The requirements of the new speaking test were quite different from the previous Specification A examination, although there were more similarities with Module 1 of Specification B. There were obviously some areas where teachers felt less confident with their role and this is natural in a new specification. However, there were many examples of tests which were conducted well and which clearly showed that teachers had thought carefully about the tasks they used with their students and that they had prepared well for them. The focus of this report is to give advice to centres so that teething problems that were encountered this year will be fewer in next year's tests.

On a general note, centres need to be fully aware of the requirements of the tasks and it is recommended that teachers are fully familiar with the *Controlled Assessment Handbook* and the *Frequently Asked Questions* documents, which can be found in the Teacher Resource Bank (TRB) on the AQA website. There are also some *Additional Exemplar Tasks* in the TRB which can be used by centres in their entirety or adapted to suit their own students' interests and ability.

Where answers to particular queries cannot be found, each centre can contact its own Controlled Assessment Adviser, who will be able to provide answers to those questions. Centres have been informed as to who their Adviser is and the contact details of that person. Many teachers have already used this facility and it has proved to be a valuable provision. Centres can use the mfl@aqa.org.uk mailbox to ask for the details of their Adviser.

This year the choice of tasks was wide-ranging and usually allowed students to perform to the best of their ability by allowing them to give and justify opinions, to use different tenses and, probably most importantly, to develop their answers. Students who answer fewer questions with longer answers are far more likely to achieve marks in the top bands than those who give shorter answers to more questions.

The main bullet points on the task sheet were usually tackled in the same order as they appeared on the sheet, which is the correct thing to do, but sometimes the task was made more difficult for students by teachers who asked the questions in a random order.

It is very important that teachers are familiar with the Assessment Criteria, which can be found in Section 3.4 of the Specification. These criteria must be used to mark the tasks and they also can guide teachers when they decide what to include in their main bullet points on the task sheet. For example, for students to score 7 or more marks for Range and Accuracy they must use 'a variety of verb tenses'. In practice this means two or more, although more able students will improve the complexity of their language by using more. So the main bullet points on the task sheet should enable them to do this.

When tasks are marked, it is important that the Assessment Criteria are adhered to and that different teachers' marks are standardised within a department, as with coursework in the previous specification. If the marking of individual teachers is not in line, it obviously makes moderation a very difficult process and can lead to an adjustment of marks.

Some centres recorded the tasks on cassette tapes and others used audio files. When cassette tapes are used there must be one per student and this can lead to extra difficulties of storage and of cueing for a different task. Also the quality of tapes currently available for purchase can be quite poor.

Advice to teachers

Timing of the Task

The task must last between 4 and 6 minutes for a student to have access for full marks for Communication. The time starts when the teacher asks the first question about the first main bullet point. Any introduction to the task is ignored, for instance *Ahora vamos a hablar de las vacaciones*. It is very important that students are aware of the timing so that they know how much to prepare. The recommendation is that they prepare about 4½ minutes of their own input, thereby allowing time for the teacher's questions and for the unpredictable bullet point at the end. If on 6 minutes the teacher is speaking, marking stops at that point and anything said thereafter by the student is not marked. If the student is speaking on 6 minutes, he/she is allowed to complete the utterance and then marking stops.

Task Sheet

The task sheet containing the main bullet points to be covered during the test must be in **English**. Giving the students a copy of the sheet in Spanish would potentially help them with the task and could be considered as malpractice with the result that the candidate would fail to be awarded any marks.

The Unpredictable Question/Bullet Point

The last main bullet point on the task sheet is an exclamation mark and this signifies that the teacher will ask a question for which the student has not been able to prepare an answer. There are several things that the teacher should bear in mind when deciding on the unpredictable questions for a task:

- Depending on the size of the class, there should be 4-6 unpredictable questions from which the teacher will choose one at random for each of the students.
- In order for the student to accomplish the unpredictable bullet point, he/she must answer the question by using a verb. It is preferable to ask a question that will be easily understood by the student, maybe using a cognate, and that it can be answered easily by less able students but will also give scope for the more able to expand their reply. A good question could be *¿Te gusta la televisión / la radio / Internet?, etc. ¿Por qué (no)?* At a basic level a student can say *Sí ... es interesante* whereas a more able student may develop the response by saying something like *Sí, me gusta pero a veces creo que hay demasiada publicidad entre programas y por eso prefiero ver canales tales como la BBC.*

Task Planning Form

If the Task Planning Form (TPF) is not completed correctly, students run the risk of failing to gain marks, because they may have received more help than is permissible. If the following advice is adhered to, then they will not disadvantage themselves, or run the risk of malpractice.

- Check that the TPF contains no more than 40 words, in Spanish and/or English.
- Check for conjugated verbs and insist that the student obliterate them. *Es* and *hay* are ones in particular to look out for.

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 candidate 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 centre's moderator, who will then select a sample.
Recorded Task	The recording of this task is sent to the moderator if the candidate 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 centre that the work is that of the students and has been carried out in line with the requirements of the specification.

The Moderation Process – a Quick Guide

1. Before 7 May, complete the Centre Mark Forms (SR for recorded task and SU for unrecorded task) and send the appropriate copies of both forms to AQA (top copy) and to your moderator (pink and yellow copies).
2. Receive the Centre Mark Form from your moderator highlighting the students whose recorded tasks are needed for the moderation sample, indicated by the letter S alongside the candidate name.

If your centre has 20 candidates or fewer, you should send the recorded tasks of all candidates to the moderator with the pink and yellow copies of the Centre Mark Forms. The top copy should be sent to AQA.

3. Send to the moderator the following:
 - Centre Mark Forms (pink and yellow copies)
 - A recording of the Recorded Task for all students in the sample
 - A completed and signed Candidate Record Form for all candidates in the sample
 - The Centre Declaration Sheet (signed)
 - The Task Sheet for all tasks used by any candidate in the sample
 - A copy of the unpredictable questions for all tasks used in the sample
 - The Task Planning Form for each candidate (if used)

Please ensure that the recordings are clearly labelled (see *Instructions for the June 2011 AQA Examinations – New GCSE Specification*).

Guidance Notes

The guidance notes provided to moderators have been reproduced here.

1 Timings

Timing begins as soon as the teacher asks the first question relating to the first main bullet point. From that point, the task should last between 4 and 6 minutes.

If the task lasts for less than 4 minutes (even 3' 59"), a student cannot get full marks for Communication. It would still be possible 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, marking stops at 6 minutes.

2 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	Number of main bullet points not covered	Maximum mark for Communication
2-3 + ! task	1	7
2-3 + ! task	2	5
4 + ! task	1	8
4 + ! task	2	7
4 + ! task	3	5
5 or more + ! task	1	9
5 or more + ! task	2	8
5 or more + ! task	3	7
5 or more + ! task	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.

3 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.

If a student has developed fully answers to the main bullet points and gives a short answer, including any part of a verb (eg present participle, infinitive) to the unpredictable question, 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 is considered when deciding whether it has been answered appropriately, using a verb. Any other unpredictable questions, (eg to make the task last at least 4 minutes) are taken into account when awarding an overall mark.

Once the candidate gives an incorrect answer (either in Spanish, in English or in any language other than the one being tested) then no credit is given for further attempts.

If the candidate gives a partially correct answer in Spanish and the teacher asks more questions to elicit further information so that the main bullet point is fully covered, such information is marked.

If a candidate says, in Spanish, 'I don't understand' or 'please repeat' (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 candidate 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 candidate says, either in Spanish, in English or in any language other than the one being tested, 'I don't know' (or equivalents) then this counts as an incorrect answer and no more rephrasing is allowed.

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

4 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 candidate to gain the highest marks for Communication?

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

Can students get a high mark in a Speaking task 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.

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.

What do moderators do if it is clear that the wording is identical to model answers in a text book or to the wording of the tasks of other candidates at the same centre?

Such work is referred to the AQA Irregularities and Malpractice department.

Communication Criteria

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

- The immediate future counts as future tense. A present tense verb with a future time marker does not. For example: *Voy a ir al cine* is a tense other than the present (the immediate future), but in the sentence *Este fin de semana voy al cine* the verb is in the present tense.
- 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 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 perfect, 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, as appropriate to GCSE level. Use of the subjunctive or similar grammatical structures are not a requirement. 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**.

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*.
- 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 it 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 an opinion to be formed.

(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 *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. On occasion it is necessary to listen very carefully to what is being said in order to get the intended meaning. Such things as pronouncing 'qu' as 'kw' may be more prevalent.

1 mark

- What is said is barely understandable and comprehension is difficult. There may well be very little evidence, 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 can't 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

- It is not possible to 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 5 is awarded for Communication, the highest mark that can be awarded 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 one mark or more is awarded for Communication, at least one mark must be given in all other categories.
- If zero is awarded for Communication, zero must be given for all other categories.

Annual Teacher Support Meetings

Centres are reminded that language-specific Teacher Standardisation Meetings will be held in Autumn 2010. These half-day meetings are provided to assist teachers in the application of the assessment criteria and are free of charge. Further details can be obtained from the Events page of the AQA website (www.aqa.org.uk) in due course.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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