

# Examiners' Report Summer 2009

GCSE

## GCSE Spanish (1246)

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## Spanish 1246/1F Listening and Responding

### Paper 1

#### General Comments

Foundation and Higher candidates entered for the listening test this summer achieved results which were in line with previous performances. Topic areas covered and task types set were well within scope and a full spread of the marks available was achieved. Once again teachers are to be congratulated on the way in which they had clearly prepared their candidates for the examination. Lexical items that were particularly well recognised at Foundation tier included: *fútbol, piscina, parque, castillo, hamburguesa, hotel, mecánico, inteligente*. Foundation candidates struggling with Grade C and D questions Q11 - 15 *El tiempo libre*, Q16 *Un atraco*, Q22 *las vacaciones* and Q23 *El colegio*, were able to achieve success throughout the rest of the paper. There were very few answers left blank.

#### Foundation Tier

The questions targeting grades F and G were generally well answered by the majority of candidates.

#### Questions 1-5

The items *vela, baloncesto* and *nadar* proved problematic to some.

#### Questions 6-10

Questions 7 *cuatro dormitorios* and 9 *una piscina* were almost always correctly scored. Some candidates struggled with answer 6 *un piso de lujo* and Question 8 *un salón enorme*.

#### Questions 11-15

This was the first of the crossover questions and discriminated well between candidates below and above grade D. At the weaker end problems were encountered with matching what was heard with the choices available as previously noted: Q 14 *conocer otros países* (linked with answer B *travelling*). Q 15 *novelas y revistas* (linked with answer A *reading*) Question 12 was well answered with the majority clearly able to understand *surfear por Internet*.

#### Question 16

The mean mark scored for this question was 2.5 of the 5 marks allocated. The second of the 4 crossover questions, it targeted Grade C and was therefore appropriately challenging. The description of the thief *joven/alto/rubio* (iv) was generally noted with confidence with the greater majority scoring at least one of the two marks available. In (i) candidates frequently correctly identified *colegio* which was sufficient to score, but sometimes became confused by *enfrente de* noting this as *France* or a specific area within the school. *A las ocho* (ii) was well recognised but *(de) la mañana* was sometimes noted as *mañana* which clearly, was not correct. Whilst most candidates recognised *teléfono móvil*, they frequently wrote this in English and therefore failed to score a point for this section of the question. Right information in the wrong place on the question whilst rare, was not allowed.

#### Questions 17-21

Answers for these questions had a variety of outcomes with no particular pattern emerging. The following lexical items were most frequently wrongly scored: Q19 *tiendas* Q20 *iglesias*

### Question 22

This was the third of the crossover questions and targeted Grade C. Candidates responded well and generally scored as predicted. The mean mark for this question was 2.5 of the 5 marks available. The less successful items chosen for a response were: (b) *la duración* linked to *pasamos dos semanas* and (h) *el precio* linked to *nos costó caro*.

### Questions 23(a) and 23(b)

This final crossover question targeted Grade D. In question 23a candidates unable to identify (i) *quinientos* were more successful in identifying the school subjects (ii) *la informática* and (iii) *el inglés*. In question 23b (ii) *un club de ajedrez* was frequently misunderstood.

### Questions 24 - 28

Overall these questions were well answered. Candidates were familiar with the vocabulary and generally scored well throughout. Weaker candidates encountered problems with Q25 *un bocadillo de jamón*. In Q26 *una ensalada mixta* option H *pollo* was often selected as the response.

### Questions 29(a), 29, 30(a) and 30(b)

The final sets of questions targeted Grade E and above. Candidates were required to listen to short dialogues and extracts of familiar language spoken at near normal speed and to answer specific questions about what they had heard. They were asked to note their responses in English. Very, very few answered in the wrong language. Some good responses were noted by examiners although there was some evidence of guess work. In Question 29a *camarero* was often misinterpreted as *cameraman/photographer*. *Interesante Q23b* was more frequently correct than incorrect despite some exotic spelling.

In Question 30a Adrián's work placement details (Saturday/weekend/hotel work) were generally more successfully noted than in Q30b the tasks he completed whilst on work experience *Lavar los platos, trabajar en la cocina* and *poner la mesa*. Candidates sometimes resorted to imaginative guess work based on the answers given either for Q29a or 30a. For example: *makes beds, makes films, takes pictures, serves the customers*.

### Questions 31(a), 31(b), 32(a) and 32(b)

The final set of questions also targeted Grade E and above. The topic Family life was familiar to all candidates who generally made a good attempt to respond appropriately. In question 31a some candidates were unable to distinguish between *hermano* and *hermana* when noting the number of siblings. *Mayor* and *menor* were often confused but did not negate the answer. In question 31b *mecánico* was sometimes wrongly noted as *mechanical*. *Guapo* was sometimes noted as *fit, pretty, beautiful*. This was allowed. *Me llevo bien con él* was rarely selected as an answer. In question 32a *inteligente* was more often correctly than incorrectly scored. In question 32b the correct answer *strict* was sometimes lost between *demasiado* and *a veces*.

## Spanish 1246/1H Listening and Responding

### Paper 1

#### General Comments

Foundation and Higher candidates entered for the listening test this summer achieved results which were in line with previous performances. Topic areas covered and task types set were well within scope and a full spread of the marks available was achieved. Once again teachers are to be congratulated on the way in which they had clearly prepared their candidates for the examination. At Higher tier candidates were far more successful with the crossover questions Q1-5, Q6, Q9 and Q12 than their Foundation counterparts. They were familiar both with the topic areas covered and the tasks set. However as noted in previous series they sometimes struggled with sections of questions targeting Grade B and above which required them to interpret and process the information heard and to provide reasons for their selected answers particularly when required to write their answers in Spanish. Words and phrases either misheard or misinterpreted included the following: Q 4 *conocer otros países* linked with answer B *travelling*. Q 5 *novelas y revistas* linked with answer A *reading*, Q7(i) Eva: *trabajé con niños* linked with E *un colegio* and (iii) Camila: *busqué destinos interesantes para unos clientes* linked with A *una agencia de viajes*.

#### Higher Tier

##### Questions 1 - 5

Overall candidates achieved well in this first set of questions making a confident start to the examination. Most frequent errors were made when matching Q3 (F) *ir de compras*, Q4 (B) *conocer otro países*. Q5(A) *leer novelas y revistas*.

##### Question 6

The mean mark scored for this question was 3.5 of the 5 marks allocated. The description of the thief *joven/alto/rubio* (iv) was generally well recognised with the greater majority scoring both of the two marks available. In (i) candidates sometimes correctly identified *colegio* as the place sometimes became confused by *enfrente de* noting this as a wrong specific area within the school. *(De) la mañana* (ii) was sometimes noted as *mañana* which has an entirely different meaning. Occasionally candidates wrote *teléfono móvil* in English and therefore failed to score a point for this section of the question. Right information in the wrong place on the question whilst rare, was not allowed.

##### Question 7

The majority of candidates managed to score at least two of the four marks available for this question. (i) Eva: *trabajé con niños* linked with E *un colegio* and (iii) Camila: *busqué destinos interesantes para unos clientes* linked with A *una agencia de viajes* were problematic to some.

##### Question 8

Whilst most candidates were able to identify football as the preferred TV sport, many of them struggled to note the reasons. Sometimes wrong assumptions were also made about what was heard. For example, *no se puede ver el fútbol en verano*. Candidates sometimes used short hand A=/ B=/ C=/ to refer to each sport. This

was accepted where notes clearly indicated a reason for the selection or non selection of each option.

#### Question 9

Candidates generally scored well throughout this question. Most sections were well understood although weaker candidates struggled with the choice of *quinientos* as the answer to 9a (i) and *un club de ajedrez* in 9b(ii).

#### Question 10

With the mean mark as 3.5 of the total 5 marks available, this question was clearly, well answered. Most frequently missed was the match between the adjectives (f) *segura* linked to *cámaras de seguridad* and (h) *lujosa* linked to *de alta calidad*.

#### Questions 11(a) and 11(b)

Candidates had varying degrees of success with answering these questions. In section a. (*aspectos positivos*) candidates were generally able to identify at least one good reason for visiting the restaurant from the 5 referred to in the conversation. In section b. (*aspectos negativos*) candidates often identified key words from the text but sometimes struggled to explain the negative aspects of the evening out. Answers given were often too brief to score. For example *mesa* noted without either *pequeña* or *en un rincón oscuro*. *Comida basura* was sometimes wrongly noted as *la comida es basura*. More able candidates answered this question well demonstrating their ability both to interpret and paraphrase in the target language.

#### Questions 12

Candidates generally achieved well on these questions as suggested by the mean mark of 4. The less successful items chosen as with the responses at Foundation level, were (b) *la duración* linked to *pasamos dos semanas* and (h) *el precio* linked to *nos costó caro*.

#### Question 13

Candidates in general made a good attempt to complete this final A\* task. However, whilst a lot of information was provided in answer to each of the questions set written responses did not always provide the required information. Occasionally candidates wrote their answers in Spanish thus failing to score any of the marks available. Key stumbling blocks to success were: Q13a. *Estados Unido* and *Los años cuarenta* which was sometimes incorrectly taken to mean *1940*, Q13b (i) where most candidates were able to identify at least one of the three groups of people involved in a teen court but with common errors noted with the wrong age range *12 - 18* and *padres* interpreted as *fathers*. *Professor* was sometimes noted as *head teacher*. This was allowed. In question 13b (ii) there was evidence of some guess work based on candidates own understanding of how a court works. The key message *working together* was often interpreted as *the teacher* making all the decisions alone. In 13c most candidates were able to identify at least one of the seven crimes although here too was evidence of some interesting guesswork related to some quite worrying crimes being committed in schools! In the final section of the question (13d), where candidates correctly identified the key vocabulary *clubes extraescolares*, *tareas domésticas*, *bricolaje*, *proyectos comunitarios*. They often failed to make the appropriate link. For example noting *banned* from extra activities, cleaning the school or doing housework *at home*.

In both tiers of the examination, candidates achieved marks throughout the paper. They clearly understood what they had to do and generally answered in the correct language. Candidates appear to have found the examples provided helpful. The



length of each rubric and the required written content to support each task was not a noted barrier to positive outcomes. On the whole, candidates entered for both tiers of the GCSE examination performed with continued confidence.

## Spanish 1246/2F\_2H Paper 2: Speaking

### General Comments

The candidates this year had been generally well prepared for the exams and were encouraged to feel at ease by the sympathetic conduct of the oral examinations by the Teacher Examiners. Most of the students were given every opportunity to demonstrate their competence over a wide range of vocabulary, structures and tenses and to engage in a natural conversation. However, in some cases students were asked the same questions both in the prepared and unprepared sections of the conversation and had been drilled to repeat identical answers; this practice is counter-productive and colours the overall assessment of the candidates' performances. The timing of the conversations was largely accurate, although a few centres still ignore the timings and recorded conversations that either occasionally fell short of the minimum time allocated, thereby depriving the candidates of some of the marks, or went far beyond the time limits. Teacher Examiners are perhaps unaware that examiners stop listening once the time has expired. It is advisable that Teacher Examiners use a stopwatch when conducting the exams and ensure that the timings are accurate. Some Teacher Examiners were ill prepared for conducting the conversations and there were occasionally unnecessarily long pauses accompanied by the shuffling of papers while the TEs tried to find the page they wanted or long gaps before another question was asked. This can often be unsettling for the candidates. Most Teacher Examiners now realize that re-phrasing of the role-plays results in candidates being deprived of the marks but a few still persist in this practice at the unfortunate cost to their students.

The administration carried out by centres this year was generally efficient and thorough, although there are still examples of candidates who took a different level being marked as present and L3s arriving with no indication of the candidate on the tape insert and no recording. Sometimes it was difficult to see whether the candidate had been marked as present or absent. A few centres used CDs and the quality of some of these was poor with much background noise, the sound fading or distorted and the microphone favouring the examiner rather than the candidate. Some centres had recorded Foundation and Higher candidates on the same tape and in a few cases the tape ran out half way through the oral and had to be continued on side B. This is clearly disconcerting for the candidate and breaks the flow of conversation. Nevertheless the overall quality of the tape recordings was good and extraneous noise was kept to a minimum.

### A Role-Plays

These role plays were straightforward on the whole and presented few difficulties.

A1 The most popular request was for 'naranjas', sometimes mis-pronounced as 'narandjas', occasionally 'manzanas' and rarely 'uvas'. Naranjas was probably the most frequently chosen fruit since candidates would be familiar with the word from their colour vocabulary as well as from the fruit. As in role-plays A3 and A6, the usual confusion between ¿Cuánto?, ¿Cuándo? and ¿Cuántos? was apparent in Task 3. A few candidates still confuse the symbols for 'Goodbye' and 'Thank you' in Task 4.

A2 A few Teacher Examiners began the role-play by greeting the candidates with the 'Hola' or 'Buenos días' they required for Task 1, effectively depriving them of the mark. Task 4 created some difficulty for candidates who chose to say the name of a food rather than 'Quiero comer'.

A3 'Camiseta' was the most popular choice for Task 1. Again '¿Cuánto es?' occasionally caused problems as did the symbol for 'Thank you' (see the comments made on A1 above).

A4 Most candidates knew the word 'mesa' but as usual there were a few examples of 'tabla'. The question mark in the illustration for Task 4 caused a little confusion but the candidates were not penalized and the examiners accepted both a correct response to the question asked by the Teacher Examiner and the candidate's own attempts to ask the question ¿A qué hora?

A5 Some candidates encountered problems with Task 1, asking for 'La estación' without mentioning 'de trenes' and running into difficulty with the pronunciation of 'cine' (sometimes given as 'cinema' or mis-pronounced as 'seen'). Some candidates requested 'información'. The pronunciation of 'lejos' in task 3 was at times suspect.

A6 'Boli' or 'bolígrafo' was the most popular choice for Task 1. Occasionally 'stylo' was heard. There was some confusion between 'páster' and 'postal'. Some candidates chose to ask for 'sellos' but frequent mispronunciation rendered the item as 'selos' which lost marks. Some tried unsuccessfully to offer 'stampas'. Once again Task 4, asking the cost, sometimes caused confusion (see the comments made in Tasks A1 and A3 above).

## **B Role-Plays**

There was more inconsistency with the handling of these role-plays.

B1 Few candidates had problems with Task 1 and 'playa' and 'parque' were the most popular choices. Some had difficulty remembering 'billete' which was often given as the French 'billet' or the English 'ticket'. A few asked for an 'entrada'. Some had problems answering the unpredictable Task 3 and could not think of 'ida' or 'ida y vuelta'. There was some confusion between 'sale' and 'llega' in Task 4.

B2 A surprising number of candidates did not know 'partido' and used 'match' instead. Some misinterpreted the task and said 'Quiero jugar al fútbol'. There was the usual confusion between 'empieza' and 'termina' in Task 2 and a few candidates wrongly asked '¿Qué hora es?' but Tasks 3 and 4 caused little difficulty, with the most popular meeting place being the park.

B3 Again most candidates chose to go to the park in Task 1 and there was the usual confusion between 'abre' and 'cierra' in Task 2, with some candidates resorting to 'empieza' or 'termina'. Task 3 caused some difficulty with a number of candidates responding with 'Inglaterra' in answer to the question about their nationality. 'Soy Inglaterra' raised a few eyebrows. Task 4 was generally successfully achieved.

B4 The first three Tasks were generally successful, although some candidates ran into problems with Task 2, ignoring the picture prompts and responding 'grande' or 'público'. Task 4 proved a stumbling block for some who failed to ask the question

and instead said that they were going to eat in the canteen or asked ¿Dónde está la cantina? Some Teacher Examiners were also at fault by asking the question that the candidates were expected to ask.

B5 The airport and the railway station were the most popular choices for Task 1 which was generally successfully completed. Some candidates lost marks by saying they wanted to go to the 'estación' without clarifying which of the two stations - bus or train - they wanted. Occasionally a candidate failed to read the card correctly and chose the name of a country they wanted to go to which made for some amusement when they subsequently asked '¿Está lejos?' and were informed 'A veinte minutos'. Others simply said 'Quiero ir en autobús/tren'. In Task 2 there were some problems with the pronunciation of 'lejos' - typically 'legos' - and there were the same problems with the unpredictable Task 3 as in role-play B3 (see comments above). A surprising number of candidates did not know 'maleta' in Task 4 and resorted to 'bolsa' or 'mochila' thereby losing marks.

B6 There were few problems with the first 3 Tasks in this role-play, most candidates choosing 'me duele la cabeza' for Task 1. Some candidates ignored the implication of the two shaded days on the calendar icon though, for example, 'desde ayer' was just as acceptable as 'dos días'. The last question proved problematic for some who used '¿Cuándo?' or '¿Cuánto?' instead of '¿Cuántas?'

B7 The most popular lost items were the 'paraguas' and the 'bolsa'. At least one candidate chose to say that the item lost was 'dinero' and later ran into difficulty when asked to describe the colour. Task 4 again highlighted the common confusion between 'abre' and 'cierra'.

B8 Most candidates remembered 'cansado' in Task 1 but a surprising number said they were 'aburrido'. 'Pollo' was the most popular food choice for Task 2, although mispronunciation - 'polo' - caused confusion with an iced lollipop. One candidate thought the illustration of a chicken was in fact a frog. Many candidates do not know the difference between 'pez' and 'pescado'. Several problems were encountered with the pronunciation of 'ducha' in Task 4 which commonly turned into the Mussolini 'duce' or the French 'douche'. Some asked where the shower was instead of asking whether they could take one.

## C Role-Plays

These role-plays were generally well done although they were sometimes difficult for the weaker candidates.

C1 Most candidates came up with good reasons why they wanted to a job in the hotel with typical answers such as 'Me gusta trabajar con gente' or 'Quiero practicar mi español' or even 'Necesito dinero'. Some candidates were thrown by the first unpredictable question which often had to be repeated and some candidates decided to describe their school rather than their studies. Task 3 was widely successful but Task 4 was challenging, especially for the weaker candidates, who found it difficult to express simple questions about salary and working hours, often resorting to reading out the words on the card with no attempt at asking proper questions. Task 5 gave the candidates plenty of opportunity to expand their answers.

C2 This role-play proved to be fairly straightforward, most candidates choosing to play tennis in Task 1 and giving sound reasons for their choice. The first unpredictable was usually successfully answered, although some had problems with the '¿Cómo es?' question, and candidates had little difficulty with Tasks 3 and 4. The last unpredictable question was at times misunderstood and candidates spoke of their own families rather than the family of their Spanish friend.

C3 The most common lost property in Task 1 was 'una bolsa'. The first unpredictable question asked what they were doing when the loss occurred and several candidates launched into a description of the missing item or saying where they were rather than answering the question. Use of the wrong tense sometimes lost the candidate marks. Tasks 3 and 4 gave little difficulty but in Task 5, the last unpredictable, several candidates latched on to giving contact details rather than their plans for tomorrow.

C4 A number of candidates gave imaginative responses to describing the problems they had had in Task 1, although some chose to complain about problems with the hotel rather than the excursion, but the first unpredictable question in Task 2 proved difficult for several candidates. Task 3 was generally successful but weaker candidates often only answered the first part of a two-part question. Similarly in Task 4 some candidates could not frame simple questions about the transport and the timing of it while others only mentioned one of the two questions. The final unpredictable Task gave the candidates plenty of opportunity to give expansive and detailed answers.

C5 Most candidates read the role-play card carefully and handled Task 1 successfully while others ran into problems with the first unpredictable question when they used the pictures to describe where they wanted to go to in Task 1. In Task 3 many candidates seemed to confuse how was their journey with how did you travel, answering 'en tren' or 'en avión' rather than giving an opinion. A number of candidates did not understand 'planes' in the Task 5 unpredictable question.

C6 Few candidates knew how to describe a street accident in Task 1, although the rest of the role-play was generally well answered. The first unpredictable question was handled successfully in most cases as was the description of the person responsible for the accident in Task 3. Most candidates focused on the volume of traffic as an answer to Task 4, although some also mentioned the narrow streets. Again in Task 5 some candidates latched on to providing contact details rather than describing their plans for tomorrow (see the comments to C3).

C7 Some candidates could not describe an accident they had suffered and chose to complain of 'un dolor de cabeza' instead. Similarly Task 2 proved hard for the weaker candidates as they tried to explain how the accident occurred, often resorting to a description of what they were doing instead. Some did not understand the word 'datos' in the unpredictable question Task 3.

C8 Most candidates had read the instructions on the card carefully and were well prepared to answer the Tasks 1 and 2. The first unpredictable question proved difficult when candidates were expected to describe the journey they had made that morning. In Task 4 some candidates were content with simply answering 'Me llamo...' rather than providing several details about themselves. Finally a surprising number of candidate were thrown by the word 'planes' in the final unpredictable question, Task 5 (see the comments to C5).

## A Summary of Recommendations

1. Role-plays must not be re-phrased by the Teacher Examiners nor should additional questions be asked.
2. Teacher Examiners should keep strictly to the timings of the conversations - 4-5 minutes for Foundation and 6-7 for Higher. The use of a stopwatch is strongly recommended.
3. The microphone should be positioned to favour the candidate rather than the Teacher Examiner with the tone and volume controls set to zero.
4. Extraneous noise and interruption must be kept to a minimum.
5. Teacher Examiners should listen to the recordings before submitting them to ensure that the candidates have recorded clearly.
6. Teacher Examiners should endeavour as far as possible to conduct a natural conversation with the candidates rather than slavishly following the suggested questions printed at the end of the Teacher Examiners' Handbook. They should listen to their candidates' responses and develop the conversations accordingly rather than conduct a question and answer session.
7. The candidates should be given every opportunity to demonstrate their linguistic ability over a variety of time frames, vocabulary and structures.
8. Candidates should not be drilled to give identical Pavlovian responses to questions learnt by heart in the Conversations.
9. Questions asked should be open rather than closed and require more than just a 'sí' or 'no' answer.
10. Foundation and Higher candidates should be recorded on separate tapes and tapes should not be allowed to run out half way through the recording.
11. There should be clear introductions recorded at the start of each tape and 'end of side A; the recordings continue on side B' should be clearly heard after the last candidate has been recorded.
12. Finally the administration and paper work - Attendance Registers, tape insert cards etc. - should be carefully completed and checked before despatch.

Nevertheless, there were many examples of good practice from the majority of Centres who are to be congratulated on their expert conduct of the tests and the care that was taken with the administrative details.

## Spanish 1246/3F Paper 3: Reading and Responding

### General comments

The paper proved to be accessible to candidates and clearly tested their knowledge and understanding of Spanish. The majority of candidates have been well prepared for the examination and demonstrate that they understand the rubrics and format and have practised in preparation for the examination. This was particularly evident in questions where candidates were required to choose from a list of options, although in questions which specifically required answers in either Spanish or English, some candidates lost marks by answering in the wrong language.

Very few candidates left significant gaps in their answers or failed to complete the paper at either level.

### FOUNDATION TIER

#### Question 1

This question was generally well done by candidates of very limited ability and gave the true F and G candidates an opportunity to score marks. Some difficulties occurred with 'zapatos' and 'una corbata' at the very weakest end of the range.

#### Question 2

As above, true Foundation candidates scored well on this question and were able to demonstrate their level of understanding.

#### Question 3

Most candidates responded well to this question. The main difficulty encountered here was the spelling of the words matemáticas and tecnología, although recognisable versions were credited with a mark. A substantial minority of candidates failed to recognise 'tiene un año' as the age of the school and the phrase 'arte dramático' was not universally well known.

#### Question 4

Foundation candidates found this a difficult question and there was some evidence of guesswork and simply 'filling in' the gaps at random.

#### Question 5

This was well attempted by all candidates who scored well and clearly understood this basic language.

#### Question 6

Both the Spanish and the icons were clearly understood in this question, leading to success for many Foundation candidates. There was no particular pattern of error or repeated difficulty.

#### Question 7

Candidates found this question challenging but the best were able to work out their answers correctly. There was some evidence of guesswork in the mismatch of advert to comment. Candidates would do well to focus on key words in this type of question and find the clear links, rather than being distracted by detail.

#### Question 8

The majority of candidates were comfortable with this question and scored well as an understanding of the passage overall guided their answers.

### Question 9

Some students answered this question in Spanish and so did not score any marks. There was some evidence of candidates imposing their general knowledge of mobile phones rather than taking the information from the text. In part (a), several candidates did not recognise the word "mes" and instead of 'month' wrote 'week' or 'year' as a guess at a time frame. 'Nuevo' was frequently confused with 'nueve' and gave rise to 'the 9<sup>th</sup>' as a common answer. In part (d), many answers were not specific enough and the phrase 'not much' was common rather than 'nothing'. In part (e), the word 'divertirte' in the text was frequently rendered as 'diverted calls'.

### Question 10

This question was a good discriminator at this level. Many candidates scored well here and demonstrated a good overall understanding, although some had been trained to offer too many alternatives to each part question and so lost marks due to this 'scatter gun' approach. A common error included candidates confusing the Spanish word "planes" with the English word "planes" and wrote "learn to fly planes" as the answer to section (b). Several answers gave 'conducir' as 'conductor' and missed any reference to driving. Some candidates overcomplicated the sense of the text and confused the words "música" and "estudios" and so thought that the answer to part (d) was "work in a music studio". This part of the question also gave rise to a basic misunderstanding of the word 'dinero' as not a few candidates interpreted this as 'work in a diner/restaurant'.

## Spanish 1246/3H Paper 3: Reading and Responding

### General comments

The paper proved to be accessible to candidates and clearly tested their knowledge and understanding of Spanish. The majority of candidates have been well prepared for the examination and demonstrate that they understand the rubrics and format and have practised in preparation for the examination. This was particularly evident in questions where candidates were required to choose from a list of options, although in questions which specifically required answers in either Spanish or English, some candidates lost marks by answering in the wrong language.

Very few candidates left significant gaps in their answers or failed to complete the paper at either level.

The crossover questions generally discriminated well and were consistently completed more accurately by candidates who entered at the higher level.

Higher level candidates in particular generally demonstrated a good understanding of content and concepts.

### HIGHER TIER

#### Question 1

This question served a good purpose at this level as Higher Tier candidates scored more highly than Foundation Tier entries and were able to demonstrate a good understanding of the content throughout and make logical links between key words.

#### Question 2

Higher Tier candidates once again scored better here than at Foundation entry and overall did well on this question.

#### Question 3

Candidates generally performed well on this question and there was no particular pattern to the errors which did occur.

#### Question 4

This question was well handled by the more able end of the range of entries which demonstrated an understanding of the more subtle aspects and implications of the text and were able to match the two sentence halves accurately. As in previous years, some candidates matched sentence parts which were grammatically correct but did not bear any relation to the meaning of the text itself.

#### Question 5

This question was well done by the majority of candidates and posed no specific difficulties or clear pattern of error.

#### Question 6

Candidates found this question challenging, with only the higher end of the entry demonstrating a clear understanding of the more extended extracts. Section F, on keeping the environment clean posed particular difficulty.

#### Question 7

Most candidates responded well to this question. Errors were similar to those encountered at the Foundation Tier.



### Question 8

Candidates were suitably challenged at this level by this question. Some had difficulty linking 'sondeo' and 'encuesta' and answered 'revista' to part (i). Otherwise, answers were logically arrived at by candidates who were able to take an overview of the text and subsequently work on the detail within that context.

### Question 9

This was deliberately the most difficult question on the paper and proved to be a very good discriminator at the higher end of the ability range. Very good candidates scored very highly and demonstrated a clear and precise understanding of the subtleties expected at this level, in terms of content vocabulary, grammar and higher level inference. Some candidates used their general knowledge of talent shows and guessed answers rather than referring directly to the text.

In spite of generally good performances on this question, some candidates had a shaky start with part (a) and included 'models' and 'organised people' in their answers.

Most candidates answered part (b) correctly by mentioning 'girls and boys between 15 and 18 years old'. The word 'talent' was less often mentioned. Some candidates thought that 'teenagers' alone would score a mark, but this was too vague.

Many candidates talked about 'a hotel in Barcelona' in answer to part (c), other candidates offered different versions of the word "accessible" without mentioning words like 'place', 'venue' or 'location', so it was not clear exactly what was accessible.

Part (d) was well covered in general, with candidates understanding the overall concepts required for full marks. The main cause for loss of marks in this section was the idea that it was the public which was reacting, not the model who was reacting to the public.

In part (e), many candidates did not know the word 'éxito' and thought incorrectly that it was to do with 'exit' and wrote several versions of 'exiting the competition' or 'exit on to the catwalk'. Some also thought that the word 'celebrar' was connected with meeting celebrities.

The word "formulario" in part (f) was sometimes confused with the words "formula or format", but on the whole this part of the question posed no major difficulties.

## Spanish 1246/4F - Writing (Foundation)

### General Comments

Candidates were appropriately entered for this tier.

#### Question 1

Candidates scored well in the main. Candidates' choices for bedroom items were virtually limitless and most produced a fairly comprehensive list with little repetition. As in previous years, the main mistakes included French words, English words, infinitives, repeating the example and the inclusion of words like *fútbol*. Many candidates used the visual stimuli for help.

#### Question 2

As in previous years, few candidates scored full marks. The main difficulties were with *quiere* and *está* with very few candidates writing the accent on the latter word. *Llega*, *bebe* and *cena* were completed confidently and correctly by many candidates. Despite the long pedigree of this question, candidates still write in the wrong tense, write the verbs in the first person or copy the infinitive. Many candidates found it impossible to match up the gaps for nouns with the preceding word, for example, (b)... *la colegio*. Having said that, vocabulary was generally known albeit with a variety of spellings, e.g., *neuve*, *classe* etc. Candidates' attempts at *limonada* were surprisingly weak, however.

#### Question 3

In general, candidates dealt reasonably well with this question. A wide range of options were allowed for bullet point one although the main idea behind the rubric was that candidates were leaving for a short period of time and that would obviously influence their destination. There were many good attempts at conveying the reason for leaving the office and what candidates were going to do later. Bullet point 3 proved troublesome insofar as candidates found it difficult to manipulate the language required to express how long they were going to be, apart from phrases like the bare '*dos horas*' etc

#### Question 4(a)

This was clearly the more popular option of the two crossover questions. Once again, the main problems encountered by candidates centred on the difficulties candidates had with the range of tenses required to express ideas clearly although most candidates did their best to cope with the bullet points. As reported so many times in the past, many candidates continue to write the infinitive with *yo*, *mi* or *me* in front of it. The first bullet point was dealt with inadequately by many with answers like *soy bien*, *soy bueno*, and *estoy bueno* etc. The description of the family in bullet point 2 was handled quite well although there were the usual difficulties with adjectives here. The third bullet point was also relatively well done with candidates often avoiding the manipulation of *¿Te llevas....?* in the question to *me llevo* by the easier and more practised phrase *me gusta*...Bullet point 4 was more problematic in that many candidates seemed at a loss to describe something they had done at home last week. Many lost out on communication by describing activities away from the home. The familiar form of the last bullet point was more to candidates' liking and was handled quite competently overall.

#### Question 4(b)

Similar general comments apply here as for 4a above.

The first bullet point was to most candidates' liking although some had difficulties with the present tense here and some forgot to mention with whom they went on holidays. Re bullet point 2, many candidates could not get past the rather weak (in this context) *fui a ....* barrier and there were few relevant activities mentioned.

The bullet point relating to discos was handled quite well as most candidates could manage *(no) me gusta(n) ....* and convey some reason for liking or disliking them or the music played at such locations. There was a variety of spellings for *discoteca(s)*. The future time frame in the last bullet point was also handled quite well although some candidates struggled over a relevant place of interest to visit in the summer.

## 1246/4H Writing Examiner's Report

Few candidates seemed to have been inappropriately entered for this tier of the exam. There were not many answers which were too long or too short. The usual grammatical weaknesses were observed as in previous years.

### Question 1(a)

This was by far the more popular of the two options. There were some excellent scripts and candidates generally coped well with the bullet points.

There were some very precise answers in clear and accurate Spanish with a pleasing use of subordinate clauses at times. It was encouraging to note that some candidates, even within the limited number of words they were required to write, managed to extend beyond a minimum response with fuller details and the expression and justification of opinions.

Even at this level, however, some candidates still had difficulty with an appropriate response re the first bullet point with the same inadequate expressions as found in the Foundation Tier paper, e.g., *soy bien, soy bueno* and *estoy bueno* etc.

The description of the family was generally well done with weaker candidates often concentrating on physical characteristics and nauseam whereas better candidates often moved on to observations on family members' personality and character.

In bullet point 3, more candidates than at the foundation tier made valiant attempts to manipulate the *¿Te llevas...?* to a response containing *me llevo* but often ended up with *me llevas, me lleva* and at times simply *te llevas* copied directly from the letter. In bullet point 4, the majority of candidates produced a verb which communicated clearly but unfortunately many had missed the fact that the activity should have taken place at home. The familiar form of bullet point 5 clearly encouraged candidates to produce some excellent responses.

### Question 1(b)

This question was far less popular than 1a. There were some excellent scripts and candidates generally coped well with the bullet points. Bullet point 1 presented few problems. Re bullet point 2, as in Foundation Tier 4b, many candidates tended to say where they went rather than what they did on holidays. Candidates coped well with the third bullet point although there were still some surprising mistakes re the spelling of *discoteca(s)*, especially at this level. Many candidates elaborated on their answers here mentioning their interest in certain types of music, their love of dancing or meeting new people etc. The future time frame was handled very well in bullet point 4 although there were still some surprising difficulties re places of interest.

### Question 2(a)

This was the more popular of the two options but apart from the very capable, candidates encountered many difficulties with the first 3 bullet points. Candidates seemed phased by the need to organise a narrative that 'flowed' from the very start of their responses and hit all the bullet points here.

Re bullet point 1, most managed to say something about the bus but many omitted details about the journey because they had already placed themselves off the bus or had decided that the incident was happening to someone else.

Many candidates could not cope with bullet point 2. Interestingly here, although relevant vocabulary was well known, many candidates could not manipulate the language to suit the context. *Chocar, atropellar, robar* and *dañar(se)* etc. were well known but there were extreme difficulties with verb endings and pronouns here.

In bullet point 3, *quién te ayudó* was misunderstood by a large number of candidates, who often performed heroic feats themselves in helping the victim in some way rather than the other way around. Many candidates missed this point completely if they had had something stolen from them.

As if liberated from the labours of the first half of the essay, bullet point 4 was often the point where candidates felt confident with the content and there were lots of good ideas re plans - often too many, as if to compensate for the difficulties experienced in the first 3 tasks.

In bullet points 5 and 6 there were some surprising difficulties with the correct manipulation of *recomendar* giving the familiar nature of this task. Many opted to lift from the stimulus and used *recomendarías* in their answer, sometimes with *me* in front of it whereas others went for the old favourite *recomendarlo*. *Me recomendaria* and *recomiendas* were also used.

In general, responses to this question started badly and finished on a higher note. Many candidates scored in the middle range of marks with the second half of the question helping to balance out the poorer start. A more careful reading of the rubric would not have been amiss here.

### Question 2(b)

This was the less popular of the two options although examiners reported that it was probably better dealt with by candidates overall. There were extensive descriptions of the bag although many candidates spoiled their response here by lifting *dejaste* (sometimes with *me* or *mi* in front of it) from the stimulus. Bullet point 2 was generally well done although some candidates got into unnecessary difficulties here because they decided that they had lost the bag somewhere other than the exchange partner's home. Most candidates attempted to give a reason in bullet point 3 but only the very best were completely successful. In bullet point 4, there were very weak 'reactions' which were poorly expressed and often referred to an angry parent. The vocabulary needed to communicate moods was generally not known.

Re bullet point 5, even native speakers missed the fact that the Spanish friend was going to visit the candidate and not the other way around. Consequently, credit for communication was lost here. Most responses ended well with plenty of details given.

## Spanish 1246/4C: Coursework

### General Comments

#### Comments on overall candidates' performance

In a similar vein to last year, good practice was observed in the majority of centres making the moderation process straightforward for the moderating team. Some centres continue to ignore Edexcel's procedures making moderation difficult.

Candidates' work was generally pleasing with centres setting appropriate tasks containing a broad range of topics many of which were imaginative, well constructed and pleasant to read. As usual, however, a significant proportion was predictable and formulaic to some degree, both in terms of choice of topic and content/structure.

Coverage of topic areas was generally efficient and overlapping was less of a problem than in previous years. The usual overlaps were Holidays with Town/Area and School with Work Experience. It should be noted that in centres where overlapping occurs, candidates are seriously disadvantaged as only two units out of the three can be awarded marks.

Preferred topics followed a similar pattern to previous years, with Holidays and School leading the way this year. The latter were followed by Family, Home and Daily Routine, Fitness and Health, Work Experience and a Film Review. Further down the list were Free Time (especially Shopping), a Letter of Introduction to a Pen Friend, a Profile of a Famous Person, Home Town, the Environment and Special Occasions.

Some centres varied their approach to the Holiday theme with letters of complaint to a hotel and an account of an accident whilst on holiday; moreover, there were some imaginative accounts re why candidates had gone to certain destinations and their first impressions of a place on arrival with a range of tenses and an accurate choice and competent manipulation of correct vocabulary. Fitness and Health was a popular topic and usually centred on a healthy diet and comparisons with a previous unhealthy one. Although there were a fair number of film reviews, many candidates found the challenge a little overwhelming and were not really equipped with the language required to explain the plot well, very often resorting to 'telling the story' in all its lengthy detail.

As in previous years, the general consensus across the whole team of moderators was that approaches to some topic areas like House and Home Daily Routine and School did not always allow candidates the opportunity to use more sophisticated language and work produced by many of them rarely rose above the predictable and pedestrian. 'Playing safe' in this way often precludes candidates from the higher range of marks. One exception to the lack of imagination re school-related units was where candidates at one centre were asked to relate to Hogwarts School of Harry Potter fame with some excellent pieces of work as a result.

Some centres continue to award inappropriately high marks for essay/letter writing templates (or barely different versions of sample material) so that the whole task turns into little more than a gap-fill exercise with little opportunity for candidates to produce their own original work. Centres should bear in mind that if candidates are

given little opportunity to produce their own original work, it is impossible for moderators to agree marks from anything other than the lowest boxes of the assessment grids.

As reported in previous years, the best pieces of work were those where candidates were enabled to use a wide variety of tenses, structures and vocabulary in each unit of their work whilst at the same time allowing weaker candidates to write simple sentences and paragraphs without relying too heavily on stimulus material of whatever kind. In this regard, centres are reminded that the same assessment grids cover the whole range of grades from A\*-G, so that candidates who write simple sentences etc., with little original input, perhaps, should not be accessing the top boxes when assessed.

As usual, many centres failed to submit stimulus material although, as observed last year, moderators reported fewer cases of plagiarism from sources like the Internet etc. Centres are reminded that the moderation team often track down suspect items through a Google search.

Moderators continue to be perplexed by the great differences between the standard of some controlled pieces of work where candidates receive (very) low marks and the other two (uncontrolled) units where candidates suddenly produce excellent work.

There were few cases this year of excessively long units; conversely, moderators noticed an increased number of units where candidates had failed to produce a reasonable number of words as per Edexcel guidelines but had grossly overstated the number of words they had actually written.

Finally, moderators reported generally accurate assessment but a significant number of centres continue to mark their candidates' work too leniently, well outside tolerance; moreover, even more accurate centres often raise marks to the very limit of tolerance. It is important that internal standardisation takes place where more than one member of staff is assessing coursework. Lack of internal standardisation usually has serious and unexpected effects on the final mark/grade outcomes for centres.

## Administration

Moderators felt that the standard of administration was broadly similar to that of last year.

As reported every year, all possible combinations of *OPTEMS forms* were received from centres. The worrying trend to send the top copy of the OPTEMS forms to moderators rather than to Edexcel in Rotherham continued this year.

There was also an increased failure to send the work of candidates who had received the top and bottom marks at centres if those candidates did not appear as asterisked in the randomly selected sample asked for by Edexcel.

Various versions of the *CF1 cover sheets* continue to be sent to moderators. Whichever version is sent, centres are reminded that both teachers and candidates must sign to authenticate the work produced. If there is no room for signatures on the older version of the CF1 form, centres should be aware that there are Authentication Sheets available for this purpose. It reduces the time a moderator has to mark a centres' submission if they have to contact centres for authentication

forms etc. CF1 cover sheets often lacked vital information like the centre's (correct) number, the centre's name, candidates' names, candidates' (correct) exam numbers, details re the topic, word count and controlled/not controlled references. If candidates are required to fill in these details themselves, then it is the duty of their teachers to make a final check before submitting them to Edexcel's moderators.

At least one *EDI* printout did not have the centre's marks included; moreover, there was no way of telling whether the correct samples of candidates' work had been sent.

*Arithmetical errors* were on the rise this year. Some centres failed to total candidates' work correctly on the CF1 sheets and also failed to transfer marks correctly from the CF1 sheet to the OPTEMS form.

Most centres made an effort *to present folders* in a neat and orderly way although some schools do not submit units in the same order as they are itemised on the CF1 sheets, however.

*Handwriting* continues to be a problem. Candidates should be reminded that they have a duty to present that work in a legible way.

*Marks, corrections and comments* continue to be written by teachers on the pieces of work themselves, even though Edexcel specifically requests teachers not to do this. Some comments/corrections at the draft stage are far too specific and outside the parameters allowed by Edexcel in terms of advice allowed to be given by teachers to candidates. Such corrections and comments will adversely affect candidates' marks.

Overall, centres submitted their work *on time*.



## Statistics

### Paper 1F - Listening and Responding

Grade	Max. Mark	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	50	41	34	27	20	13	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	59	50	40	30	20	10	0

### Paper 1H - Listening and Responding

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
Raw Boundary Mark	50	39	36	33	30	18	12	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	35	0

### Paper 2F - Speaking

Grade	Max. Mark	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	50	27	23	19	15	11	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	59	50	40	30	20	10	0

### Paper 2H - Speaking

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
Raw Boundary Mark	50	140	134	128	123	117	114	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	35	0

### Paper 3F - Reading and Responding

Grade	Max. Mark	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	50	36	29	23	17	11	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	59	50	40	30	20	10	0

### Paper 3H - Reading and Responding

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
Raw Boundary Mark	50	41	36	31	27	16	10	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	35	0

### Paper 4F - Writing

Grade	Max. Mark	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	50	33	28	23	18	13	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	59	50	40	30	20	10	0

### Paper 4H - Writing

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U
Raw Boundary Mark	50	34	30	26	23	16	12	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	35	0

### Paper 4C - Written Coursework

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Raw Boundary Mark	60	51	45	39	33	27	21	15	9	0
Uniform Boundary Mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0

### Overall Subject Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
Total Uniform Mark	360	320	280	240	200	160	120	80	40	0

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