Examiners' Report /
Principal Examiner Feedback

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GCSE Spanish (5SP01) Paper 1H

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Examiner Report

Higher Tier candidates scored well overall on the questions common to both tiers although some questions proved to be less accessible than expected.

Question 1 (crossover question)

This question required candidates to be able to recognise details from a longer extract of dialogue which contained familiar language in a less familiar context. It was based on a dialogue in which Alberto was talking to a waiter in a restaurant. At Foundation Level about half of the candidates scored two marks as opposed to Higher Level candidates who scored three of the four available marks. Answers (c) and (d) were more correctly identified than items (a) and (f).

Question 2 (crossover question)

Candidates had to listen to some young people discussing the benefits of their town and match them against a given number of headings. The question was very well done by the majority of candidates at both Foundation and Higher tiers. The main problems proved to lie in Alfredo (i) *gasto mi dinero en CDs* which some candidates did not equate with going to the shopping centre and in María (iii) *me gusta ir de excursión en barco* which candidates failed to interpret as going to the river.

Question 3

Question 3 which targeted grade B required candidates to listen to Daniela and Raúl talking about camping trips. They had to select four possible answers from a series of multiple choice options. The majority of candidates performed well although *Yo siempre he disfrutado encontrándome al aire libre* in (ii) proved difficult for some. Equally in (iv) *no se gasta casi nada* proved to be challenging for many. Nevertheless, many candidates scored the maximum four marks available.

Question 4

In this question which targeted Grade A*, candidates were required to listen to two longer extracts of dialogue about media and culture and select the correct statements from the choices given. It was pleasing to see that both extracts proved to be quite accessible as over half of the candidates scored 6 out of the 8 available marks. In the first extract some candidates failed to understand *crucigramas* and *se pueden compartir con amigos* in (ii). Equally, in the second extract *podemos escoger entre tantos tipos de películas* and *¿por qué no invitamos a los amigos a acompañarnos?* proved to be problematic in (iv).

Question 5 (crossover question)

Question 5 required candidates to listen to two short dialogues in which some friends were talking about their summer jobs and to select items referred to in the conversations from a number of listed possibilities. At Higher Tier over 93% of candidates scored the 4 marks available for this question. Difficulties mainly encountered for Foundation candidates were the misunderstanding of *suelo organizar excursiones* and *tengo que archivar papeles*.

Question 6 (crossover question)

This question targeting Grade C required candidates to fill in a form in English. This question was done well by most candidates although some had problems identifying the correct day.   Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday commonly appeared in (a). It would seem that a high proportion of candidates were not able to target the correct time in (b) as answers given included: 7.30, 10.30, 12, 8, half past, morning and noon amongst others. The main difficulty lay in (c) as very few candidates correctly understood *ayuntamiento*. Incorrect answers included: in front of the library, outside the hotel, opposite the shop, in the town centre, down the road, next to the tourist office and in front of the train. There were not many difficulties with (d) apart from some interpretations such as shopping centre, landmarks, the church, monuments and swimming pool.

Question 7

This question required candidates to recognize opinions from an extract about young people discussing going to university. They had to select the correct option from the choices listed. The question was done well by most candidates in part (iv) particularly. In part (i) some candidates did not equate *lo que más me procupa es que no conoceré a nadie* with making friends whilst in part (ii) *no me apetece mucho compartir un piso con otros chicos* proved to be problematic for a small number of candidates. In part (iii) many failed to grasp that *creo que el nivel va a ser muy alto* linked to coping with studies.

Question 8

Candidates were required to answer specific questions in English based on an interview with the actress Penélope Cruz. The question proved to be challenging for many candidates. Incorrect answers were given owing to the lack of recognition of specific lexical items and to a certain amount of guesswork which led to some very imaginative, creative and amusing responses.
In (a) the answers given were mostly successful and candidates coped well although many confused *padres* with father. A few understood the concept of there being a close-knit, caring family but conversely others thought that Penélope had a troubled relationship with her father. Many candidates were unfamiliar with *cariñoso* perhaps mistaking this for *caro* as there were quite a few references to her being from a well off family. Some thought she was in care.

In (b) the strongest candidates understood the idea that she had seen a film with an actress in it who inspired her. Clearly a few candidates misunderstood *película* making references to hairdressers.   *Representación* was at times rendered as a presentation by Penélope. Only a few candidates understood that she had seen an Almodóvar film. The most common incorrect answer by far was that she wanted to be famous.

In (c) the majority of candidates recognized *trabajadora* and *fuerte* although *exigente* was widely unknown and certainly not written as an answer.   Many candidates made references to the fact that Penélope had lots of friends or that she was a good friend and liked to be with her friends.

In (d) most candidates were able to score by recognising *positiva* and although far fewer accurately understood believe in yourself or unachievable, many provided acceptable answers. Many candidates read the question to be advice specifically for auditions rather than a general approach to the career and referred to talking clearly, having charisma or being creative, no doubt misinterpreting *creer en tí* as creative.

Question 8 (e) allowed higher level candidates to give detailed answers but weaker ones did struggle. Many understood natural disasters because of its similarity with English. *Sin techo* was considered by some to be a place as a few candidates referred to Penélope helping children in Techo. There were several instances of candidates misunderstanding *la miseria* and referring to Syria, for example she helps victims in Syria. Other incorrect answers included she takes it seriously and it is a serious matter. There was a fair amount of guesswork and general answers lacking specifics such as she helped charities, she raised lots of money, she gave an opportunity to poor children, amongst many others. Candidates who misunderstood *víctimas de un desastre natural* referred to victims of abuse, violence, disease, disability and crime.

It was pleasing to note that very few candidates answered in Spanish this year, for which they would not have been credited with marks. Poor presentation in a minority of cases continues to render answers which are almost indecipherable and some candidates do not write in the spaces provided. It is imperative that candidates are reminded that they should write their answers clearly.

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