



AS

Spanish

7691/3 Speaking

Report on the Examination

7691

June 2024

Version: 1.0

Further copies of this Report are available from aqa.org.uk

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges 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 schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

General Comments

It was very pleasing once again to listen to some very good tests in which students were able to show a real progression from GCSE level and were able to demonstrate a good knowledge of the various sub-themes in the context of the Spanish-speaking world. It was clear to see that students had prepared well and were encouraged to demonstrate the full range of their linguistic ability.

Similarly, it was also good to see that many teacher-examiners had read feedback on last year's examination and acted upon advice given to ensure that this year's tests were well conducted. However, there were some incorrectly conducted tests that directly impacted on the student's ability to access the full range of marks available for the various AOs and in particular AO1, AO2 and AO4. Where this was the case, a Teacher-Examiner Tester Performance Record (TTPR) will have been sent to the centre with explicit guidance for the relevant teacher-examiner to ensure that they can amend the way that they conduct speaking tests for future series.

Prior to conducting the tests, teacher-examiners are reminded of the importance of consulting the documents *Instructions for the Conduct of the Exams* and *Report on the Examination Paper 3*, both of which are updated each series and are available via Centre Services, with the former having any amendments or changes for the current series clearly highlighted in yellow.

Administration

In most cases the administration of the tests was good but there were some centres who did not, when uploading the audio files to the Media Submissions Portal, include the required supporting documentation (ie a signed attendance list with the name of the teacher-examiner(s) who conducted the test(s) as outlined on page 13 of the *Instructions for the Conduct of the Exams* document).

In addition, this booklet gives instructions regarding the correct labelling of audio files. Teacher-examiners should also make sure that they refer to the Summary of Procedures (page 21) to ensure that they are introducing each test correctly.

Teacher-examiners are reminded of the importance of positioning the microphone correctly and checking audibility levels, particularly in the case of quietly spoken students, as examiners can only mark what they hear. It is recommended that the microphone is positioned closer to the student than the teacher-examiner and that teacher-examiners avoid rustling papers whilst the student is speaking as this can prevent the student's responses being clearly heard.

Teacher-examiners are reminded that they must follow the prescribed card sequence order.

As with previous series, visiting examiners reported that arrangements at centres were very good.

Conduct of the Test

Preparation Time

In the majority of cases, it was evident that the students had made good use of the preparation time to prepare full responses to the three printed questions and prepare their own questions to ask the examiner. However, in some centres, the student's lack of familiarity with the three printed questions suggested that maybe they had not made best use of the 15 minutes preparation time. Centres should remind students that during the preparation time they can make detailed notes and use these throughout the discussion.

Timings

It is important to note that the timing of the test starts when the teacher-examiner asks the first printed question on the first card chosen by the candidate and stops at 14 minutes. The timing is **not** paused for the transition between the first and the second card and so it is important that teacher-examiners are aware of this and ensure that there is a smooth transition between the two cards.

Each discussion of a sub-theme should last between 6 and 7 minutes and so teacher-examiners need to ensure that they manage the time carefully. The student's card-related question needs to be asked before the 7-minute maximum for each card is reached, so best practice is to encourage the student to ask their question earlier in the discussion. It is important that teacher-examiners are aware that questions posed after the 7-minute maximum for the relevant card will not be credited and this will clearly have an adverse effect on the mark which can be awarded for AO2.

Student Performance

Assessment Objective 1

Understand and respond in speech to spoken language including face to face interaction

Marks awarded for this AO were generally good this year with many students achieving at least 4. Many teacher-examiners ensured that they asked responsive follow-up questions to enable students to develop their ideas and opinions. However, again this year, some teacher-examiners allowed students to deliver lengthy responses to the three printed questions and did not ask sufficient unexpected questions, thus having an adverse effect on the mark which could be awarded for AO1. In the worst cases, no questions beyond the three printed ones were asked resulting in a low mark for AO1.

Teacher-examiners are therefore reminded that in order for students to access the full range of marks available for AO1 there must be sufficient unpredictable elements. Best practice for teacher-examiners is to ask follow-up questions in between the printed questions. In addition, it is important that these questions are responsive to the student's answers, as opposed to teacher-examiners simply working through a list of pre-defined questions on the sub-theme in general.

In some centres it was clearly the case that students were responding to very familiar follow-up questions and delivering pre-learnt responses which had an adverse effect on their mark for AO1. A genuine, spontaneous conversation is supposed to take place and so students should not be given prior knowledge of the teacher-examiner's questions that will be asked in the test itself. It is also in the

student's best interests that the teacher-examiner's unpredictable questions encourage them to develop their ideas and opinions rather than just seeking factual information.

Assessment Objective 2

Understand and respond in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources

Again, this year, students generally achieved 3 to 4 marks but, unfortunately, in many cases incorrect preparation of candidates and the poor conduct of the test had a direct impact on the mark which could be awarded for AO2. It is important that teacher-examiners are aware that in order to access the full range of marks available for AO2, as well as responding to the three printed questions and asking an appropriate question, students need to demonstrate that they have 'a very good understanding of the printed material'. This means that students need to show that they have fully understood the key messages contained within the material on the card. In many centres, students have clearly been taught to respond to the first printed question with a generic summary of the sub-theme and therefore their responses do not reflect a 'very good' understanding of the explicit material on the card.

In their preparation of students, teacher-examiners are therefore encouraged to ensure that students, in their answer to the first printed question, are fully aware of the need to respond and react appropriately to most of the key messages given in the printed material. Students must be discouraged from simply reading out the information verbatim as this in itself does not show understanding.

If it is that in response to the first printed question, the student has not demonstrated understanding of most of the explicit key messages, then teacher-examiners should ask suitable follow-up questions that allow the student to demonstrate a full understanding. Teacher-examiners should avoid simply reading out the printed information on the card and asking students to comment and instead should ask the student a question such as '*¿Qué más nos dice la tarjeta sobre...?*' and allow the student to select and develop the relevant information from the card.

Teacher-examiners are also encouraged to sensitively challenge any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the printed material on the part of the student.

Student's question (credited within the AO2 score)

Teacher-examiners are reminded that students need to pose a question within the 7-minute time limit for each card. To meet the requirement to ask a question, the student must seek information or an opinion relevant to the sub-theme of the card. Asking for clarification or repetition will not meet the requirement. The student's question must contain a conjugated verb. Rephrasing or repetition of the printed questions or of a teacher-examiner's unpredictable question will not meet the requirement.

In this series the majority of students asked their question without being prompted and ensured that the question was appropriate, which was very pleasing. There were, however, examples of questions having been asked after the 7-minute maximum time for the card, so teacher-examiners are reminded that they should verbally prompt students to ask a question at a suitable time before the 7-minute maximum time is reached. Best practice is to prompt the student earlier in the discussion so that there is time for the student to pose a second question if the first question does not meet the requirements outlined above. In cases where the first question does not meet the requirements, teacher-examiners should prompt the student to ask a second question.

It is important that the teacher-examiner's response to the student's question is as brief as possible, ideally just a few words, so as to not use valuable time for the students to demonstrate their knowledge and linguistic skills.

Assessment Objective 3

Manipulate the language accurately, in spoken form, using a range of lexis and structure

It was encouraging to see that most students achieved 6 or 7 marks for this AO, with application of grammar mostly being accurate. Those students who scored in the top bands of the mark scheme demonstrated a sound knowledge of the basic tenses and used a good range of vocabulary and complex language. However, as in previous series, some students focused on trying to shoehorn in unnecessarily complex pre-learnt phrases at the cost of grammatical accuracy in simple structures and the conjugation of basic tenses; this had an adverse effect on their mark for AO3. It was again evident that many students struggled with the verb '*sorprender*' as part of their response to the printed question '*¿Cómo reaccionas tú...?*'.

The most frequent grammatical errors were:

- Incorrect genders
- Lack of adjectival agreements
- Use of *me sorpresas* in the place of *me sorprende*
- Confusion of '*fui*' and '*fue*'
- Confusion of *ser* and *estar*
- Incorrect numbers: students often struggled with various of the dates and figures given in the printed material
- Incorrect conjugation of basic past, present and future tenses
- Incorrect conjugation of *gustar*, *encantar*, *preocupar*, *interesar* and other impersonal verbs especially in the third person forms
- Lack of subjunctive after phrases such as '*no creo que...*'; '*es importante que...*'; '*me sorprende (de) que ...*'.

Assessment Objective 4

Show knowledge and understanding of, and respond critically to different aspects of the culture and society of countries/communities where the language is spoken

Most students scored between 5 and 7 for this AO. In the main, the reason why many students failed to access the full range of marks available was due to a lack of focus on target-language speaking countries or communities. In order to access the higher bands for this AO the students need to demonstrate a very good knowledge of the sub-theme within the context of the Spanish-speaking world and evaluate their evidence, offering a critical response and developing their arguments, justifying their points of view and drawing conclusions based on their understanding of the sub-theme within this context. Teacher-examiners therefore need to ensure that their unpredictable questions target the right kind of information, so questions of a personal or general nature should be avoided and instead all questions

should be worded in such a way as to elicit responses that include detailed reference to, and conclusions drawn in relation to practices, trends or attitudes in Spanish-speaking countries/communities.

Stimulus cards

Tarjeta A: *Independizarse de los padres*

This was a relatively popular card and most students understood the overall gist of the information and were able to talk knowledgeably about the '*taza de emancipación*' in Spain but some students struggled with the key messages regarding needing to earn 1,800 euros in order to be able to buy a house and that the Spanish government offers '*pocas ayudas*'. In response to question 3, students were able to discuss a range of problems including high unemployment rates amongst young Spaniards and limited contract jobs.

Tarjeta B: *La Iglesia quiere recristianizar una fiesta anglosajona*

This was a popular card and, whilst students generally grasped the overarching theme of rechristianising Halloween, some struggled with the detail in the second and third paragraphs relating to wanting parents to change the costumes that their children wear and '*recuperar la tradicional celebración cristiana de Todos los Santos*'. In response to questions 2 and 3 students were able to knowledgeably discuss the decline in popularity of the Catholic Church in Spain, its links to the Franco regime and differences in religious observation in Spain and other Spanish-speaking countries.

Tarjeta C: *El supermercado de Amazon llega a España*

Students who chose this card generally understood the overarching theme, but many failed to grasp the idea that payment would be made via the app as opposed to in the supermarket itself. In response to question 2 students cited changes in working hours and ease as reasons for the increase in online shopping and much reference was made to '*el ciberacoso*' in answer to question 3. However, there were students who explained the benefits of applications such as '*Tienes sal*'.

Tarjeta D: *Antisocial: una aplicación inusual*

Another popular card, students had mixed reactions to the *Antisocial* app and parents' ability to see what their children were using their phones for and being able to block inappropriate apps. Most referenced the ease and range of communication as principle reasons for the increased use of mobiles amongst young people in the Spanish-speaking world. The principle disadvantage cited was '*el ciberacoso*' with students presenting relevant evidence from a range of Spanish-speaking countries to support their arguments.

Tarjeta E: *El Orgullo Gay en México*

Most students were saddened that those attending the first Mexican Gay Pride were subjected to verbal abuse but were pleased that the situation had changed and that so many would be in attendance this year. In response to question 2, students were able to talk knowledgeably about how things had improved for the LGBTI community throughout the Spanish speaking world with changes in same sex marriage and adoption laws often being used as examples of improvements. Whilst in their answers to question 3 students felt that things had improved with regard to sexual equality, many raised concerns

about, amongst other things, the '*techo de cristal*' that they feel still exists and the lack of female representation in government and executive roles throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

Tarjeta F: *El uniforme sexista*

This was a very popular card, and most students were able to demonstrate a very good understanding of most of the key messages. Students were unanimous in their view that the uniform rules were unfair and sexist and were pleased by the support that María Fernández's petition had received. Students generally felt that sexism is still very evident in the Spanish-speaking world but that things had improved drastically for women in Spain in the post Franco years with increased freedoms for women.

Tarjeta G: *Alba Palacios: un ídolo para la comunidad trans*

Students felt that Alba Palacios was a great role model for young people and were sorry that she still received insults from some fans. Rafael Nadal and Lionel Messi were frequently cited as being other sports personalities who had done a lot to help others through their charity work, whilst both Shakira and Salma Hayek were top of the list of other celebrities mentioned by students in response to question 3.

Tarjeta H: *Pablo Escobar, ¿ídolo del pueblo colombiano?*

Students understood why Escobar was viewed as a criminal by many but also as an idol for others, however the key messages contained in the last two sentences were often overlooked by students. In response to question 2 many students cited celebrities such as Bad Bunny, Dani Rovira and Luis Suarez as having done things that meant that they were not good role models. Most students felt that famous Spanish-speaking males did not necessarily have more influence than their female counterparts and Frida Kahlo, Shakira, Salma Hayek and Penelope Cruz were often referenced as females with a significant influence within the Spanish-speaking world.

Tarjeta I: *La peculiar tradición de un pueblo en Extremadura*

Most students felt that this was a peculiar and somewhat 'extreme' tradition but that those who take part are justified in doing so due to their religious beliefs. The long connection with the Catholic Church and importance given to observing Catholic practices during the Franco era were referenced in response to question 2, and '*La Tomatina*', '*Los San Fermín*' and '*Las Fallas*' were popular festivals that were discussed in response to question 3 together with Flamenco music and dance.

Tarjeta J: *La lengua asturiana*

Responses to this card were quite polarised with stronger responses able to identify and show full understanding of most of the key messages contained within the printed material whilst others confused the official status of *Asturiano* and exactly who speaks it. Most students felt that regional languages needed defending as they were an important part of the culture and identity of the regions and needed to be maintained. Art, architecture, gastronomy and music were the key areas identified as being other things that identify regional identity, with Moorish architecture and buildings designed by Gaudi often being referenced as well as dishes ranging from *Gazpacho* to *Paella Valenciana* and *Cocido*.

Tarjeta K: *El Museo Guggenheim en Bilbao: un proyecto excepcional*

A relatively popular card, most students were in agreement that the Guggenheim has had a positive impact on Bilbao. Some students struggled with the concept of ‘*el efecto Bilbao*’. *Teotihuacán*, *Macchu Picchu*, the *Alhambra*, *Sagrada Familia* and *Aqueducto de Segovia* were popular choices in response to question 2. In answer to question 3, students chose a range of examples including the artwork of Spanish artists such as Velazquez, Dali and Picasso and dances such as *el flamenco*, *el tango*, *las sevillanas* and *la jota*.

Tarjeta L: *Aguada Fénix: una construcción de la civilización maya*

Again, this was another popular card with students feeling that the discovery of the ruins was a good thing for the Spanish-speaking world and that it was good that the public could not visit the ruins, however some students confused the location of the site. In response to question 2 students felt that sites such as *Aguada Fénix* were beneficial because they teach us so much about the rich cultural heritage of the Spanish-speaking world. *Teotihuacán*, *Macchu Picchu*, the *Alhambra*, *Mezquita de Córdoba*, *Sagrada Familia* and *Aqueducto de Segovia* were popular choices in response to question 3.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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