

Report on the Units

June 2010

HX77/R/10

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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CONTENTS

AS GCE/ADVANCED GCE SPANISH – H077/H477

REPORTS ON THE UNITS

Unit/Content	Page
Chief Examiner's Report	1
F721/01, 02, 03 Speaking	2
F722 Spanish: Listening, Reading and Writing 1	5
F723/01, 02, 03 Speaking	8
F724 Listening, Reading & Writing 2	10

Chief Examiner's Report

Centres and candidates are to be congratulated for the thorough and professional way in which they have prepared for the new specification through to the final Advanced Level outcome. All papers performed as expected and provided good differentiation. While some candidates will inevitably be disappointed, others will have considerable reason to feel satisfied. The percentage of candidates achieving the new A* grade is heartening.

When compared to the previous specification, the examination papers of the new specification clearly represented a measured and sound evolution, rather than a revolution; nevertheless they offered candidates a significantly greater challenge both in the nature and the depth of the tasks to be undertaken. There was a significantly greater opportunity, in particular, for candidates to be stretched and challenged, if they so wished.

The Reports by the Principal Examiners of each unit offer encouragement, as well as pointers to preparation for future examination series. In particular:

- in all units, the need to be aware of published mark schemes and assessment criteria;
- in the speaking examinations, the need to finalise CDs before sending them in mp3 format, or to upload them via the Repository;
- in the speaking examinations, the need to find a balance between preparation and spontaneity, if candidates are to have access to the highest marks;
- in the speaking examinations and in the essay in unit F724, the fact that factual information is not assessed separately, but for its use to support points of view or reinforce arguments;
- in unit F722, the importance of Task 7 and its two parts, if candidates are to have access to the higher marks;
- in all written units, the need for good time management and good presentation skills, especially readable handwriting.

F721/01, 02, 03 Speaking

General Comments

This is the third series of speaking tests for this specification and Centres appear to have addressed some of the issues raised in the previous series.

Although tests are not marked by Centres, teachers and candidates are strongly advised to consult the published mark schemes to be aware of the criteria applied in assessing the various parts of the tests.

Overall candidates performed well and understood the requirements of the test. Some candidates who may not have scored particularly highly on the role play section nevertheless managed to recoup some credit as a result of careful research and preparation for the topic discussion section.

Section A: Role Play

The role plays were accessible to all candidates and allowed suitable differentiation. Generally candidates appeared to have made good use of the preparation time and were able to make a reasonable attempt to convey the essential information, with either an adequate command of the vocabulary involved or the ability to paraphrase as necessary.

There is a maximum of 15 marks for the use of the stimulus material in the role play. It is important, therefore, that candidates and teacher/examiners study the task requirements on the candidate's sheet in order that the relevant information can be covered. There were some cases where the teacher/examiner – and, as a result, the candidate – rushed through the essential task without clarifying points of detail or even some essential relevant information, only to spend a disproportionate amount of time on general (sometimes irrelevant) questions at the end. It is important to manage the test efficiently so that all candidates have the opportunity to address the extension questions, though such issues may have arisen naturally in the course of the role play.

We continue to emphasise that allowing the candidate to provide a long, uninterrupted summary of the stimulus material does not make a role play – interaction between the candidate and examiner is required. 10 marks are available for response to examiner: key criteria for the higher bands include: momentum, initiative, imagination, well-developed answers, leads the conversation. Candidates should be given opportunities to convince, persuade, clarify points, etc. to allow the role play to develop from being merely a question-and-answer routine. Some Centres are now well accustomed to preparing their candidates to take a more positive and proactive part in the conversation, where a candidate, for example, not only provides the information as it stands, but is able also to comment on the information and show how it is relevant to the Examiner in his or her role in the exchange. Pleasingly, it was clear that many Centres had made a genuine attempt to turn the role play into a more interactive situation.

Similarly, we reiterate that the role play is not intended as a translation exercise, even though some candidates tended to attempt a literal line-by-line translation, perhaps running into word-for-word vocabulary problems as a result. The task is the important element and candidates who are ready and able to paraphrase or convey the essential ideas do gain credit.

It was basic language slips that led to the downfall of a number of candidates: problems with numbers, genders, agreements, *ser/estar*, verb endings, etc. Candidates still had difficulties in asking their initial questions, frequently missing out a verb, or adding a simple question word to the start of the expression on the candidate's sheet, for example: *¿Cuántos los miembros del*

grupo? or *¿Qué detalles de la familia?* Some more practice in asking basic questions would help. Pleasingly, there were many candidates who were able to ask for the introductory information in a fluent and idiomatic way.

Role Play A

The PlusBus scheme with combined tickets for train and local bus travel. The essential information was dealt with well, but key points of differentiation were sometimes blurred by some candidates, i.e. bus travel is unlimited, the website and phone number serve distinct purposes. Not all candidates made it clear that the bus travel could be at the start or end or both parts of the inclusive journey. Perceptive candidates were able to link the appropriateness of the child reductions to the teacher/examiner's family situation, and the extra discount available to those (like the teacher/examiner) holding a family railcard. The extension questions on preferred methods of transport and the candidate's views on the advantages and drawbacks of public transport produced a good range of replies, often very inventive.

Role Play B

A visit to a place of interest. Again, most of this role play was done well, though some of the key points were not always clearly made.

Although the word for tower, together with its gender, was given in the candidate's information (*una torre alta*), several candidates referred to "*el torre*" throughout. Some prompting was necessary to remind candidates that one of the members of the group used a wheel chair, but once established, the relevant accessibility information was given successfully. The availability of group discounts was very relevant to the proposed visit, and only some candidates emphasised the need to pre-book to obtain the discount.

There were some inventive and imaginative ways of conveying the elements of "romantic atmosphere" and "glass floor", and the idea of "walking on air" was usually well made. Surprisingly, many candidates appeared not to know how to pronounce the English word "quays" in the name of the adjoining shopping/entertainment complex.

The extension questions on how to organise a day's visit and the benefits or otherwise of tourism in historical settings gave all candidates sufficient scope to perform according to linguistic ability and perceptiveness.

Role Play C

A visit to the Pleasuredrome leisure centre. This material provided plenty of scope for all candidates, as well as allowing good differentiation. All were able to convey the essential nature of the centre, but as always some key points of detail could be - and were sometimes - missed. A few candidates tended to go for a line-by-line summary of the information with little regard to the actual requirements of the client and his family, together with the wish to try something new.

Keys points for discrimination included the information that not all facilities or entertainments were available every day (for example, the swimming pool, the "*Banda Mariachi*") or that you had to book in advance for the combined theatre/dinner arrangement. Some candidates reminded the teacher/examiner that it was possible to try something new, for example, skating, since you could hire equipment and receive instruction. Some prompting was needed for access/transport links. More perceptive candidates spotted the ways of saving money given in the stimulus material.

Actual times were usually given without problems, though some candidates were unaware of the uses of "*por/de (la mañana, etc.)*" and some had some difficulties with expressing "from... to" in expressions of time.

Section B: Topic Discussion

Topics must be selected from the list of topics/sub-topics for AS in the Specification and must relate to the Spanish-speaking context.

It is important to realise that factual background cultural knowledge is not assessed separately but that candidates need an amount of relevant knowledge to exemplify or support the points and ideas discussed. Grid D of the mark scheme refers to Ideas, opinions and relevance, with criteria such as the ability to develop and explain ideas, express opinions, justify points of view, against the backdrop of relevant information to support the ideas. To their credit, most candidates had prepared material well, had ideas, facts and relevant statistics to support the points they made and often displayed sound analytical skills. In some of the tests, however, candidates were invited to give a series of prepared statements (sometimes of considerable length) of a largely factual nature and with minimal intervention from the teacher/examiner. Sometimes questions were only focused on factual information. All candidates should at least be offered the opportunity to respond to the unexpected, to think on their feet and to re-fashion their material as appropriate to a spontaneous question rather than giving a pre-learnt answer. An example of an inappropriate test would be where candidates pick a person and recite that person's biography, but with little or no attempt to relate to the implications of the topic headings. Similarly, if a film or book is chosen, a candidate must show how that work sheds some light on the topic area selected. (See the helpful FAQs on the OCR website.)

As in the role play, significant interaction with the teacher/examiner is required for the higher mark bands - this is a topic discussion, not a "presentation".

Topic-specific vocabulary was good and, in terms of linguistic structures, there were many successful attempts at using higher-level language, including subjunctives, if-clauses and a range of tenses. Of course, over reliance on pre-learning has a negative implication for the assessment of spontaneity under Grid E.1. There was not infrequently a sharp contrast between the high accuracy of some rather complicated "prepared" answers and the basic errors in the unexpected replies to questions.

As regards pronunciation and intonation, many candidates had made real efforts to sound authentic and their pronunciation was of a high standard. Intonation still needs care – it is particularly adversely influenced in cases of over-prepared utterances.

F722 Spanish: Listening, Reading and Writing 1

General Comments

The June examination varied in demand and produced a good spread of marks across the candidate range. There were opportunities for everyone to show their acquired knowledge, and good candidates produced a very high standard of work in all three skills being tested.

As familiarity has increased with this specification, candidates' responses are displaying greater confidence and better techniques. Answers that would have benefited from a closer reading of the rubric were fairly rare.

Candidates generally seemed to make good use of their time allocation. There was little evidence of failure to finish, although occasionally some answers appeared to have been a little rushed.

The quality of candidates' language contained all the highs and lows to be expected at this level. Unclear handwriting and poor spelling (in both Spanish and English) were sometimes an unwelcome feature.

The number of candidates with varying levels of bilingual background continued to grow. Such candidates generally did well in receptive skills' tasks but sometimes failed to get very high marks for the quality of their written Spanish because of a tendency to write phonetically.

Comments on Individual Questions

TAREA 1

The advertisement for the 'robot chef' was intended as an accessible task at the start of the examination. However, candidates gaining ten marks were not as prolific as might have been expected. A surprising amount of uncertainty was displayed in (a) and (j), where numbers were tested. Errors were commonly made in (c), where B was incorrectly offered as the answer, and (f).

TAREA 2

The gapped summary of a listening text is usually a more demanding exercise. However, on this occasion candidates frequently achieved a higher mark than in the previous task.. Questions (a) to (e) were often answered correctly, and errors tended to be confined to the second half of the test. The main discriminators were (h) and (j), where candidates needed to listen carefully to the recording before choosing from '*probarse*', '*expresarse*' or '*extenderse*'.

TAREA 3

There was a good response to this question, with candidates readily comprehending the underlying scenario. In this exercise the importance of answering the questions exactly and in precise English cannot be stressed highly enough. Many candidates offered answers that, although hinting at understanding, lacked sufficient precision to meet the requirements of the mark scheme.

Most candidates picked up a mark for (a), although there were a few who considered a '*club de natación*' to be a 'national', 'running' or even 'riding' club.

Marks were sometimes missed in (b) and (c) when candidates offered approximate answers such as 'favourably' and 'a competition'. The advice must always be to listen carefully and write down precisely what is heard.

In (d) a number of candidates concentrated on the days but overlooked the key word 'entre'.

Most seized upon the '*fiestas de San Antonio*' in (e), ('parties' was not considered an acceptable translation), and surprisingly some did not get the second mark in this two mark question for noting the equally key '*lo pasarían muy bien*'.

Question (f) was a good discriminator and some candidates were not able to give an accurate rendering of the '*travesía del lago*'. Full details were needed for the mark and many were only able to manage two out of the three points required. Many candidates scored the two marks available for (g), with the only stumbling block being which 'familia' was being referred to.

A precise rendition of '*a tope*' was sought for (h).

Three relatively straightforward marks were on offer in (i), and most candidates were able to pick up at least two of these.

There was considerably more challenge to (j) with the notion of 'the beginning of a firm friendship'. The idea hosting of a reciprocal event, sought in answer to (k), was usually identified.

TAREA 4

In this transfer of meaning task it was pleasing to see that the majority of candidates had sufficient command of Spanish to be able to communicate the essential points of the message.

Candidates appeared to be well aware that a literal word for word translation is not required and that it is important to communicate all the points of the message.

There were many answers that revealed considerable ability to write clear, accurate Spanish. Such candidates were able to write exclusively in either the formal or informal mode of address, and to transfer meaning appropriately – '*tendremos pensión completa?*' ('will meals be included?').

In some cases, however, although the message was communicated, the mark for quality of language was not the same as that awarded for communication. Common errors included '*escuchamos a su mensaje*', '*más que catorce*', adjectival agreements – '*este tarde*', '*su ideas*', '*mejor competidores*', and the perennial problems with '*gustar*' – '*gustamos sus ideas muchas*'. There were also problems with vocabulary – '*datos*' ('dates'), '*la raza/corrida fuera*' ('outdoor race'), and '*acomodación*' ('accommodation').

TAREA 5

This objective exercise in matching the questions to answers given in an interview was generally done well. Some difficulties were encountered with the distractor question (f), (3 being often offered as a wrong answer), and (j) (incorrectly answered as 7).

TAREA 6

This question proved to be an effective discriminator and a wide range of marks were awarded. When candidates did well, they picked up marks for showing comprehension without lifting sizeable chunks of text and for successfully completing the required language manipulation.

Candidates should be advised of the importance of reading questions carefully and noting the tense in which they are asked. At times comprehension marks were lost for answers which were partially correct but which lacked a specific detail required by the mark scheme.

Candidates generally picked up comprehension marks for (a) and (b), unless '*más de*' was omitted in the former or a serious language error interfered in the latter eg '*son relativos*'. The language manipulation required by (c) was a good discriminator, with forms of '*fundir*' frequently

being offered instead of '*fundar*'. There were also many good answers to (c) which avoided this difficulty altogether eg '*estableció la firma*'.

Most candidates could answer (d), although there was occasional confusion between '*rueda*' and '*ruido*'. Provided that sufficient detail was included, the two elements required to answer (e) were generally identified.

The answer required for (f), although detailed, was readily identifiable. This was not the case with (g), which discriminated well. The required detail '*principios del (siglo veinte)*' was often overlooked in answers to (h), but the fact that people might collect toys proved to be a more accessible answer for (i).

Some candidates were unaware of the significance of the plural '*quiénes*' used in (j) and comprehension marks were lost for only including one person in the answer. A few candidates were confused by the use of the first person plural '*elaboramos*' in (l), although comprehension marks were commonly awarded for this and the following question (m). There was an opportunity to use a subjunctive after '*importante*' in answers to (o) and to avoid directly lifting the final six words of the text in answers to (p).

TAREA 7

The significance of the high proportion of marks allocated to this question and the techniques required to answer it seem now to be widely appreciated. However, there were still a few instances of candidates putting more effort into 7(a) (10 marks) than into 7(b) (20 marks). Also, one or two candidates completely ignored the question asked in 7(b), and gave their opinions on Alicia's situation instead.

7(a) Most candidates were able to identify and clearly state a majority of the points in the stimulus text sought by the mark scheme. This is an exercise in paraphrase, and it should be remembered that a brief summary is unlikely to contain sufficient detail to get the very top marks.

This part of the task offered many opportunities for language manipulation. Many candidates were successful in achieving the required transition from the first to the third person in the first part of the text. In the second half of the answer there were some excellent examples of the ability to handle complex structures involving the recommendations by the psychologist ('*es importante que*', '*sugiere que*', '*recomienda que*' etc).

7(b) To answer this part of the task candidates should give their opinions, and develop a range of ideas in response to the question asked. Elaborate introductions and conclusions are not needed, as this will frequently lead to repetition, which is not rewarded. The stimulus question will usually afford the opportunity to present the pros and cons of an argument and, even if they only support one point of view, the candidate should be encouraged to play devil's advocate, as this will give them the possibility of accessing.

The question, concerning the necessity of exams, clearly struck a chord with many. There were many excellent, interesting and thoughtful answers, which presented both sides of the argument.

Quality of written language is assessed over both (a) and (b). One disappointment was that although education is one of the AS topic areas and despite 7(a) giving useful stimulus material there appeared to be little knowledge of relevant vocabulary, particularly with regard to examinations.

Apart from this there was much that was praiseworthy in the candidates' writing. There are a variety of ways to make use of subjunctive constructions when expressing opinions, and likewise many opportunities to use a range of vocabulary and structures. There was clear evidence that candidates are now prepared for and understand the requirements of this task, and many answers were a pleasure to read.

F723/01, 02, 03 Speaking

General Comments

Examiners are able to report that the vast majority of centres entering candidates for this examination conducted the A2 Speaking test very efficiently indeed. Given that this was the first A2 Speaking test of the new Specification, this is very encouraging. The format of this test is similar to that in the legacy specification, so teacher/examiners were not faced with a completely different experience and most candidates were very familiar with the 'new' format. The majority of centres complied with the requirement to record the tests digitally onto CD.

The three stimulus texts appeared to be accessible to nearly all candidates. The impression given to examiners was that all three texts presented the same levels of challenge and that, in general terms, most candidates were able to expand on the issues raised in response to the questions on the theme of the text.

In more general terms, there are several important points to note:

- Teacher/examiners must select a text which is not on the same theme as the candidate's topic/s for discussion in Section B.
- The maximum time for the test is 18 minutes.
- Centres must 'finalize' CDs before sending them to the examiner: speaking tests that are badly recorded, or which are not recorded at all, are sent back to centres to be recorded a second time.
- Each candidate's recording must have **TWO** accompanying documents – the Working Mark Sheet (WMS), complete with the candidate's details, and the topic sheet (Form OTF) with a list of **two** possible topics for discussion.

Examiners are hugely grateful to centres for ensuring that all administration is diligently completed.

Comments on Individual Questions

Textos A, B and C

As always, the key discriminator for all three passages was the ability of the candidate to explain and develop the issues under discussion rather than merely repeating verbatim the point made in the text. Candidates who are able to interpret the text and give responses promptly and with some degree of detail will always attract high marks. It is worth noting that to get good marks in this section, candidates need to respond to and understand both the text and the questions asked by the teacher/examiner on the text as well as on the issues relating to it. Marks are available in the mark scheme for quality of language in this section.

Topic Conversation

Many candidates were able to take the opportunity to engage in a mature, linguistically accurate and insightful conversation and such oral tests are a joy to assess.

The FAQs on the OCR website with regard to A2 oral topics for discussion seem to have played their part in ensuring that the vast majority of candidates selected topics that were appropriate.

Reports on the units taken in June 2010

Examiners were pleased to report that the delivery of pre-learnt material by candidates when asked to go into more detail with regard to their chosen topic/s was not a problem. Marks are lost in Grid E.2 by those candidates who insist on confining themselves to pre-learnt material. The idea is that they are engaging in a conversation. In some centres, it is common practice to refer to the candidate's "presentación" or otherwise simply invite candidates to give a series of mini-speeches without following these up. Rarely do such topic conversations attract high marks. In general terms, however, most candidates were able to respond well to the questions put to them and were able to sustain a meaningful conversation based on their selected topic.

In linguistic terms, there were few surprises this year. Many candidates were comfortable with the use of the subjunctive mood in 'if' clauses, and many candidates were able to employ a wide range of tenses with a pleasing degree of accuracy and phrases introducing personal opinions such as "*a mi modo de ver*" and "*para mí personalmente*" were used in such a way as to give the conversation a very natural feel. Adjectival agreement is sometimes a problem for some candidates as are the subtle differences between "*ser*" and "*estar*".

F724 Listening, Reading & Writing 2

General Comments

This series saw the first significant number of candidates entered and they responded well to the paper, which achieved its aim of allowing them to show their strengths. The highest marks were above 130, on a paper with a maximum of 140 marks.

In all the questions, whether testing reading or listening skills, or in the essay questions, there was something for each type of candidate. Even though some candidates struggled with the language tasks, many centres' candidates seemed well aware of what was expected of them and had prepared accordingly. Most candidates appeared to have had enough time. If some reading questions were not attempted, or only partly attempted, it may have been that a few individuals abandoned the section in order to move on to the essay; or perhaps they had done the essay first and ran out of time for the earlier sections. Some candidates may have rushed through the listening section in order to reach the reading section. It is clear that classic examination skills are essential for managing this.

Those classic examination skills should also include legible handwriting. Some candidates would be well advised to read the questions before trying to answer them, as this might have avoided the arrows and asterisks found by examiners, who could not be sure what was intended.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A Listening

Task 1

A few candidates answered in Spanish; others had first of all answered in Spanish, and then rewritten everything in English – a waste of valuable time. The final three questions were more challenging. Answers to this task were not always as good as those to Task 2, perhaps because of the need to reply in appropriate and precise English.

- a) Many confused petrol and oil.
- b) The best meaning of *particular* was spotted by only a few, some did not realise that the garage in question was singular.
- c) Some candidates talked of refuelling or even repairing cars, and did not realise that the cars were electric.
- d) Most understood the idea of security. Some did not make it clear that the car charged while the drivers were elsewhere.
- e) It was important to specify the price to buy a parking place. The word *plaza* confused some candidates.
- f) Some answers were vague, but candidates did see the idea of preserving the beauty of the area.
- g) Many answered well and realised the building works had finished, but some did not understand the meaning of *freedom* in this context.

Task 2

This was answered well.

- a) If candidates had problems with this question, it was because of unclear spelling of *ritmos* or a failure to use a relevant noun.

Reports on the units taken in June 2010

- b) There were references to him starting to write songs, and some candidates transcribed irrelevant words, eg *lo puede contar con toda exactitud*.
- c) Most had the 2 ideas, but there were some errors in spelling in the second part of the question.
- d) Pronouns caused some difficulty here. Most appeared to have understood but it was often not clear what was not being taken seriously, eg *le, les*.
- e) The first part was usually well answered, but spelling or omission prevented some candidates from getting the second point.
- f) Many managed to express this idea, but some talked simply about the songs he had written and repeated the answer in the next section. There were some difficulties with *me educaran el oído* and *sin prejuicio*. Most understood the concept but there was some difficulty with *reflejasen*.
- g) Many fine answers, but some omitted the specific detail of *medios locales*.
- h) Some candidates were confused by the meaning of *salir*, which was taken literally.
- i) Many gained all 3 points. Some omitted the third part and some candidates could not always express the first two points clearly enough for both marks.

Section B Reading

Tasks 3 & 4

These were generally very well answered.

Task 3 – some candidates did not follow the rubric. The commonest errors were missing out *la manifestación* in (c) and/or *bloquearon* in (d). Some candidates tried to explain the phrase rather than finding its equivalent.

On the whole, only a few candidates had problems on Task 4.

Task 5

The majority of candidates answered reasonably well from the point of view of comprehension, although in (b) there was a variety of incorrect alternatives; in (c) *tener* and *obtener* appeared incorrectly, as did *luchar* in the first part of (d).

It is a concern that some candidates presenting themselves for this A level examination wrote infinitives instead of finite verbs, wrote a finite verb where an infinitive was required and did not always know the relevant verb endings. Sometimes the perfect was used instead of the more obvious preterite; where the imperfect was chosen, endings were not always correct e.g. *cerrían*. Some had problems with the 3rd person plural verb endings and even singular verb endings. Candidates need to be aware that all Spanish written in the paper is assessed.

Task 6

- a) Here there were problems with the formation of the preterite; *detenidos*, if used, frequently lacked the final –s.
- b) There were some problems with *resistir* and the formation of the preterite, as well as omission of personal *a*.
- c) The phrase *actos similares* was important for a correct answer.
- d) There was some confusion over tense (*sabían* rather than *superion*), which verb to use (*saber* or *conocer*) as well as use of *enterarse de*.
- e) There were some difficulties with appropriate synonyms: *pinto/a*, and *ventanas/escaparates/vidrio*. Some answers were about *ventanas* and some missed the key idea of *de/en rojo*.
- f) The idea of *ingreso* was misunderstood.
- g) This was often answered correctly and some candidates did use their own words.

- h) This was often answered correctly but some talked about harm to the world or copied the phrase *camino destructivo*, which in itself did not answer the question.

Task 7

This task was an effective discriminator and the level of achievement varied widely. Candidates seemed to understand the text, but could not express themselves easily or clearly. Some added substantial, and unnecessary, extra information to their answers.

This type of exercise is new to this specification and perhaps some candidates had not allowed themselves sufficient practice. Some of the difficulties were:

- Part 1: *Vive* translated in the present tense, with the rest sometimes given as 'since he was one (or 2) year(s) old'.
- Part 2: *apenas* (mistranslations included 'although'), *castellano* ('Catalan', 'Castilian', spelt in different ways, 'castellano') and *sonrisa*, and also confusion over *lo* (e.g. 'his girlfriend explained everything to him')
- Part 3: the vocabulary – *cuenta corriente* as running/electricity bill or story; and *saldo* as savings or salary. Part 4: the lottery (in many spellings), which was said to be the Easter lottery or even the lottery in Navidad.
- Part 5: Some failed to realise that his balance increased by this amount.

Task 8

Candidates were asked to explain certain phrases, in the context of the original passage and the relevant words were clearly underlined in the text, to help candidates see the context and to aid their understanding.

Explanations needed to avoid using the original words, unless they were used in a different way; therefore in (a) *muchos extranjeros* was accepted but *una población extranjera* was not. Repetition of original vocabulary with *zona*, *pobreza*, *millonario* and *deseo* was not acceptable.

- a) Reference to a specific place was sometimes omitted
- b) This was done well by candidates who were able to reflect the change in circumstance without relying on original words.
- c) This was deliberately challenging. Some only referred to what he would do or wanted to do. Some were able to refer to his hope or ambition as being nothing unusual and some candidates dealt with this question with ease and elegance. The main difficulty seemed to be how to interpret *extrañar*; it was often associated with some idea of leaving the country or being a foreigner (eg *No quiere salir del país/ser extranjero*) or missing someone (e.g. *No quiere dejar sus amigos*).

Task 9

Candidates were required to finish the sentences, with the right information and appropriate grammar. The information was very often correct, but sometimes the grammar was not correct.

In (a) some candidates thought all the tickets were bought by Jamal or Salim. There were difficulties with "were sold" (eg *eran vendidos, se vendió*).

In (b) the idea was that the man bought the ticket *for his friend*.

The second part of (c) caused some confusion over whether the living conditions were good or bad.

In (d), the need for a subjunctive was not always recognized.

Task 10

This was answered well, but in some instances it was not done at all or only a few questions were answered.

There were some cases where the correct information was provided but in answer to the wrong questions (eg for (c) *Tuvo un corte de pelo atrevido*; or for (e) *Porque no ganó la lotería*).

- a) There were some difficulties with being made redundant; some described him as unemployed, which did not answer the question, or said that he won the lottery.
- b) Many expressed the right idea of the promise or assurance that they were going to have a party.
- c) The wording *le hicieron* was sometimes misunderstood. There were sometimes problems with tense, some referred to Salim and others did not say who had no money.
- d) There were sometimes problems with mood (*cobra* as opposed to *cobre*). Some incorrectly stated that he would pay when he won the lottery, rather than when he obtained the prize.
- e) The word *decepción* sometimes caused problems, with answers such as *No le gustan las fiestas*.
- f) A very good discriminator as not all candidates understood the paragraph clearly. There were references made to, for example, free fruit being given away, or money being sent to family members in Ecuador.

Section C Essays

The most popular questions were 11 and 13, followed by 15. These sometimes had general responses that had little or no reference to Spain or the Spanish-speaking world. Sometimes there was no relevant information given in some of the science and technology answers; to tell a reader that Spain uses the internet and has mobile phones was not adequate.

Questions 12 and 14 were also popular; but the response did not always reply to the question set or did not contain relevant information or ignored the imaginative aspect of the question.

Only a few a students chose questions 17 and 18. These questions were often answered well. An example of a good personal response for question 18, with imagination and relevant information and argument, was a letter to a family member living in Guernica.

Where candidates did not achieve high marks it was for one or several of the following reasons:

- some candidates ignored the suggested maximum length, nearly always to their disadvantage
- some candidates failed to answer the question set, preferring instead to write about the sub-topic in general or perhaps to reproduce the answer to another essay they had written earlier
- some candidates misinterpreted the energy question, for example, as “how to protect the environment”
- some candidates produced more of a narrative than a well-argued response
- there were instances of inappropriate, pre-learned phrases, from the standard introductory phrase *Este tema lleva años apareciendo en los medios* to the standard conclusion *Ojalá pudiera concluir diciendo*, and the much overused *granitos/granitas de arena*
- some candidates managed to write whole paragraphs made up of clichés such as “if I was a minister...”, which added no information, did not contribute to the argument and did not earn language marks for the essay
- some introductions were too long
- sometimes timing issues were apparent whereby, for instance, an otherwise good essay was marred by a poor conclusion

Reports on the units taken in June 2010

- sometimes incorrect punctuation made reading difficult and impeded comprehension. This could be the case especially when *aunque* is used, at the beginning of a sentence.

The best answers included statistics and detail to back up logically argued and sequenced essays. Many reflected good use of language and lexis appropriate to the task. There was often wide vocabulary, especially where energy sources or aspects of technology were concerned. It was pleasing to note that there was often a good range of tenses and confident use of the subjunctive.

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