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AS

**SPANISH**

Paper 3 Speaking

Report on the Examination

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## General comments

It was pleasing to see that many teacher-examiners had clearly read the feedback on last year's exam and acted upon the advice given to ensure that this year's tests were well conducted. The majority of students had clearly prepared effectively, and this year were more adept at exploiting material from the cards. In general, teacher-examiners had recognised the importance of asking follow-up questions to ensure that students could demonstrate a full understanding of the printed material. As with last year, many students did not stray far from the text book material when asked to give examples of Hispanic idols, festivals and places of cultural interest. However, some did provide examples that demonstrated a more extensive knowledge of the relevant sub-themes. Clearly the wording of the questions this year helped ensure that, in most cases, the discussion remained in the realm of Hispanic speaking communities and countries, which was most encouraging. Teacher-examiners are encouraged to read the suggested points related to specific questions in this year's mark scheme to help prepare future students.

## Administration

In most cases the administration of the tests was very good. However, it is important that teacher-examiners refer to the *Instructions for the Conduct of AS level Examinations* booklet, available on e-AQA, to ensure that they are introducing each test as instructed, that audio files are correctly labelled, and that the relevant information (including the teacher-examiner's name) is provided on the accompanying label or insert card. Teacher-examiners should be aware that mobile phones should not be used to time the tests as they can interfere with the recording, and it is also important that microphone position and audibility levels are checked, particularly in the case of those students who are quietly spoken, as examiners can only mark what they can hear. It is also important that teacher-examiners remember that they must follow the prescribed card sequence order. Again, this year visiting examiners reported that arrangements at centres were very good.

## Conduct of the test

### Preparation Time

A notable improvement this year was that it was clear that most students made good use of the preparation time to prepare responses to the three printed questions, as well as using the time to prepare their own questions to ask the examiner.

### Timings

In the vast majority of cases timings were adhered to, with few tests below the 12 minute minimum or beyond the 14 minute maximum. However, it is important for teacher-examiners to note that the student's card-related question must be asked before the 7 minute maximum for each card. Questions asked after these times for each card time will not be credited, and this will clearly have an adverse effect on the score for AO2.

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## Student performance

**Assessment Objective 1** Understand and respond in speech to spoken language including face to face interaction.

Scores for this AO were generally good, with most students scoring 3 or above. However, many teacher-examiners asked all three printed questions without follow-up questions in between. It is important that teacher-examiners remember that there must be sufficient unpredictable elements to enable the students to access the full range of marks available for AO1. It is therefore best practice, and in the student's best interests, for teacher-examiners to ask responsive follow-up questions between the three printed questions so that students can effectively develop their ideas and opinions. Teacher-examiners should also ensure that they do not allow students to deliver lengthy pre-learnt responses as these will not attract marks for AO1.

**Assessment Objective 2** Understand and respond in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources.

Again, the scores for this AO varied considerably. Those students who, as a result of their own preparation or in response to appropriate teacher-examiner questions, were able to demonstrate a full understanding of all the printed material and ask an appropriate question were able to access the full range of marks. However, many students failed to fully exploit the material on the card. In cases such as these, it is important that teacher-examiners ask suitable follow-up questions to ensure that the student has the opportunity to demonstrate a full understanding of all the printed material and to go beyond their prepared responses to show a deeper understanding of the content of the card. Some teacher-examiners simply read out the information on the card and asked the students to comment, but better practice would be to 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.

### Student's question (credited within the AO2 score)

Teacher-examiners are reminded that there is a requirement for students to ask the examiner a question in each part of the test, and that teacher-examiners should verbally prompt the students to do so at a suitable time before the 7 minute maximum time. Student questions should include a conjugated verb and elicit information or an opinion and should not be a rewording of a printed question. It is also worth noting that, if students use a question such as '*¿Estás de acuerdo conmigo?*' or '*¿Qué opinas?*' it needs to be clear what statement they are referring to. Teacher-examiners should be aware that, if they feel that the student's question has not met these criteria, they can ask the student for an additional question. It is therefore good practice to ensure that students are fully aware of the criteria prior to the examination. The teacher-examiner's response to the student's question should be brief so as not to use time available for the student to demonstrate their knowledge and linguistic skills. In cases where a question was not asked, was inappropriate, was asked after the maximum time for the card or could not be understood, the AO2 score was reduced by one mark.

**Assessment Objective 3** Manipulate the language accurately, in spoken form, using a range of lexis and structure.

Many students demonstrated a sound knowledge of the basic tenses and used a good range of vocabulary and complex language, enabling them to access the full range of marks available. Pronunciation was generally good and rarely had a significant impact on comprehension. Some

students had clearly invested time learning complex set phrases but then really struggled to conjugate basic tenses; this had an adverse effect on their score for AO3. It was noted by examiners that many students struggled with the verb *sorprender*, both in response to the printed question '¿Te sorprende(n)...?' or as part of their response to the printed question '¿Cómo reaccionas ...?'

The most frequent grammatical errors were:

- Confusion of *ser* and *estar*
- Incorrect numbers: students struggled with the percentages and figures in the printed material
- Incorrect pronunciation of the alphabet: LGBT proved particularly taxing for some students
- Incorrect genders
- Incorrect direct and indirect object pronouns
- Incorrect conjugation of *gustar*, *encantar* and other impersonal verbs

**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

It was pleasing to see that this year more students were able to access the full range of marks available for this AO due to the fact that they demonstrated a secure knowledge of the sub-theme within the context of a Spanish-speaking community and were able to evaluate their evidence. Many students, however, failed to access the higher bands due to a lack of focus on target-language speaking countries/communities. Teacher-examiners are reminded that any questions they ask 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 communities. Some teachers asked questions of a general or personal nature that could not attract marks for AO4. Students should be made aware that using examples from non-target language speaking countries (eg idols such as Justin Bieber and the Kardashians) will also not attract marks for AO4.

It is worth noting that many students cited General Franco as being responsible for all of the problems in modern Spanish, and even Latin American, society. It would be in their best interests to have some more relevant, current political figures, policies or similar information to use as justification for their opinions.

### Stimulus Cards

*Tarjeta A: ¿Cuánto cuesta una boda en España?*

This was a popular card, but many students failed to effectively communicate the figures in the printed material and some struggled with the word *encabeza*. Students who fared well were able to discuss why it might be that women spend more than men, the changes in family structure and marriage/divorce laws in the Hispanic world, and the impact that these have had on modern society.

*Tarjeta B: La iglesia Católica en Cuba*

This was not a popular card and, again, students struggled with the figures given in the printed material. Many students failed to recognise the suggestion that the church in Cuba is becoming the domain of the older generation even though the figures show that three quarters of the population consider themselves Catholic. Some students, however, effectively explained their understanding

of the reasons for the changes in Cuba as well as suggesting why the popularity of the Catholic Church has decreased in Hispanic societies in recent years. Many cited the current Pope as a positive thing for the Catholic Church and someone who is encouraging the Church to embrace changes in modern society. Despite the topic of the card being the Catholic Church in Cuba, many students blamed Franco for the changes mentioned in the printed material.

*Tarjeta C: El móvil inteligente en España*

This was a popular card, but performance varied considerably. Successful students focused on the importance of *smartphones* as opposed to mobile phones in general and the preference of smartphones over computers, and were able to discuss their use in Hispanic communities. However, the majority of discussions were very generic and based on the student's personal use of mobile phones and the role of the internet without any focus on target-language speaking communities; this inevitably impacted on the AO4 score awarded. As with other cards, many students struggled to express the figures provided in the printed material.

*Tarjeta D: La piratería en Latinoamérica*

This card was less popular, with many students incorrectly stating that all '221 millones de *internautas*' illegally download material. There was a general misconception that everyone in Latin America is poor and all countries are underdeveloped, which was the justification for high levels of piracy. Some students, however, were able to reference a lack of enforced piracy laws as a reason for the problem in Latin America, as well as some government initiatives to combat piracy in countries such as Mexico and Peru.

*Tarjeta E: ¿Trabajos aptos para las mujeres?*

This was quite a popular card but frequently misinterpreted, with students failing to recognise the significance of the Armed Forces and blaming General Franco for the situation in Mexico. Many students struggled with the figures in the printed material and the idea that women now have access to all roles in the Mexican Army but only a few hold senior posts. Some students, however, were able to talk knowledgeably about the changing role of women in Hispanic society and, in particular, their role in politics, giving examples of female leaders such as Michelle Bachelet and Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner. The *brecha de género* and *techo de cristal* were often mentioned, as were changing paternity leave laws.

*Tarjeta F: Sitges: Destino turístico del colectivo LGBT*

This was a popular card that produced some interesting discussions, with more able students recognising the role that Sitges has played as a holiday destination for the LGBT community since the 1980s. Information regarding *la ley de matrimonio homosexual*, gay adoption policies in Spain and similar legislation throughout the Hispanic world were also cited, as were *Orgullo gay* celebrations throughout Hispanic countries and Pedro Almodovar's role in promoting awareness of LGBT issues in his films. Some students, however, struggled with the pronunciation of Sitges, the idea of *el cuarto puesto* and the acronym *SIDA*.

*Tarjeta G: La caridad de los famosos*

This card was very popular, but in many cases students did not fully exploit the material on the card, saying little about Julio Iglesias, his achievements and charitable work. The pronunciation of *Iglesias* caused issues for some students, as did the concept of him donating his jeans, which

would then be sold by the charity to raise money. Students who successfully handled the material on the card were also able to reference other Hispanic idols who are involved in charitable work such as Shakira, Salma Hayek, Messi and Penelope Cruz. Pitbull was the principle example of an idol who sets a bad example, along with Messi (for his alleged non-payment of taxes) and several other footballers.

*Tarjeta H: Una pasarela española ‘sana’*

This was a relatively popular card which led to some interesting discussions about the use of *modelos de talla cero*, the *Pasarela Cibeles* and the impact of social media on the self-image of Hispanic adolescents. However, many students misinterpreted the information about the number of models accepted and much of the further discussion was of a general nature, which therefore did not attract high marks for AO4.

*Tarjeta I: Cataluña: El crecimiento de la identidad regional*

This card was not very popular, and many students struggled to effectively convey the idea that young Catalans feel a greater link to their region than to their country. They often found Question 2 difficult to answer knowledgeably. More able students were able to discuss the movement for independence in more detail, young people’s role in this, and the distinguishing features of other autonomous communities such as the País Vasco and Andalucía. *Ocho Apellidos Vascos* was often referenced to highlight the stereotypes that exist about regional differences in Spain. In some cases, the discussion moved to other Hispanic countries, which goes beyond the sub-theme of the card. It is important that students and teacher-examiners are aware that for cards on the sub-theme of *La identidad regional en España* the discussion must remain within the realm of Spain.

*Tarjeta J: La Tauromaquia*

This was another relatively popular card, with students discussing the virtues of bullfighting and its role within the regional identity of Andalucía as well as the bans in other regions of Spain. The conversion of former bull rings to shopping centres and similar attractions was referenced. However, many students struggled to give detailed information regarding the comment that ‘*el mundo del toreo mueve mucho dinero*’. As with Tarjeta I, some students and teacher-examiners moved the discussion to other Hispanic countries, which goes beyond the sub-theme.

*Tarjeta K: El Tango, una pasión renacida*

This was not such a popular card, and students who chose it did not always manage to fully exploit the printed material. Many students mistook the tango to be a Spanish dance and spoke of Buenos Aires as being a place in Spain. The idea that *Patrimonio de la Humanidad* could be a dance also caused issues for some. Other students were able to discuss the merits of other Hispanic dances such as Flamenco, *la Jota* and *las Sevillanas*, with many students drawing on personal experience of having participated in dancing on trips to Spain. The third question proved more taxing for most, but some students spoke about the increased popularity of reggaeton and musical collaborations between Hispanic and English/American singers which exposed the wider world to Hispanic musical styles.

*Tarjeta L: Benidorm, ¿Patrimonio de la humanidad?*

This was a popular card, although the irony of Benidorm applying for UNESCO World Heritage status was not picked up on by most students. Whilst many mentioned its popularity amongst British tourists and its beaches, bars and buildings, the information about it being '*una de las ciudades más sostenibles ... en un lugar excepcional por su entorno natural*' was generally overlooked. Students did suggest other places of cultural interest but did not stray far from the text book, with Machu Picchu, the Sagrada Familia and the Alhambra being the most common suggestions.

**Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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