

SPANISH (Foreign Language)

Paper 0530/01

Listening

General comments

The overall performance of the candidates was good, with many candidates achieving top or very near top marks. There were few weak performances. Candidates had clearly been well prepared for the examination and rubrics were generally understood and followed.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1-8

Most candidates could cope with all the questions in this exercise. **Questions 3**, about the weather, and **4**, where it seemed *gafas* was not understood by all candidates, proved the most difficult.

Exercise 2 Questions 9-14

Most candidates understood the passage well. For **Question 9**, a number of candidates answered *por la mañana*, which was not accepted by Examiners (the question specifically asked for '*Hora*'). In **Question 10**, some had difficulty identifying *goma* and for others, *lápices* seemed to be the problem word. In **Question 11** weaker candidates did not know *árbol*. **Questions 13** and **14** were usually correct: *fútbol*, *tenis*, and *bailar* were all familiar to candidates. Unfortunately, however, some candidates misread the rubric and ticked only one answer when two were required.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 15-22

The majority of candidates could answer most of the questions. **Question 18** caused the most problems: candidates were required to distinguish between not being able to use their mobile phone, but being able to use the telephone booths. Weaker candidates tended to opt for True when False was the correct answer. **Questions 19** and **22** also caused some difficulties, but to a far lesser extent.

Exercise 2 Questions 23-29

This exercise proved challenging for many candidates. Most could cope with **Questions 23-26**, though **Question 23**, where the most accessible answer was *cerca*, caused occasional problems. *Fresca* in **Question 26** also proved challenging for some weaker candidates. In **Question 28**, stronger candidates were able to explain that the problem with swallowing the plastic was that as a result turtles could not swim and eat. For **Question 29**, many candidates thought that restaurants should be advised to avoid the offending material; the correct answer was to avoid these restaurants.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 30-35

This multiple choice exercise on the subject of an actress who changed career to work as a nurse was accessible to most candidates and even weak candidates were able to answer **Questions 30** to **32**. **Questions 33** and **35** were more demanding, requiring candidates to understand the train of events.

Exercise 2 Questions 36-41

This exercise was a good discriminator: in general it was handled reasonably well by stronger candidates but proved demanding for weaker ones. Nearly all could answer at least part of **Questions 36** and **Question 38** was challenging for candidates, who had to explain that these diets resulted in people becoming very nervous and weak. In **Question 40**, candidates needed to explain that the drinks in question had too much sugar (many had problems spelling *azúcar*) and do not take away your thirst. In **Question 41**, better candidates understood that the new tendency was fast food and the reason for this tendency was that nowadays there is less time for everything.

SPANISH (Foreign Language)

Paper 0530/02

Reading and Directed Writing

General comments

This year's paper was tackled well by the large majority of candidates. As is usually the case, **Sections 1** and **2** were completed confidently by nearly all, while **Section 3** allowed stronger candidates to show their worth. The large majority of the Centres are to be congratulated on doing an excellent job in preparing the candidates so thoroughly for this paper. Nearly all of them tackled the exercises purposefully, really entering into the spirit of the questions and producing some first-rate pieces of writing and comprehension, and an encouraging proportion did themselves justice with a very fine total mark.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1-5

This was done well by most candidates. **Question 2** caused some problems, perhaps because *Biblioteca* sounded like a plausible place in which to buy books. Others went astray in **Question 5**, not knowing the particular meaning of *Servicios*.

Exercise 2 Questions 6-10

This exercise proved very accessible to candidates. **Questions 6** and **10** were usually the cause of any difficulties.

Exercise 3 Questions 11-15

This exercise was also very well done with many examples of full marks. The most common error was to answer F for **Question 12** and B for **Question 13** instead of the other way round.

Exercise 4 Question 16

Candidates found this first writing exercise fairly straightforward and scores of 4 or 5 marks out of 5 were usual.

Section 2

Exercise 1 Questions 17-22

This exercise was done extremely well with large numbers of candidates scoring full marks. In **Question 17** some candidates carelessly wrote *están cansadas*, which could not be accepted. *Están casadas/son dos/son mayores* were all enough to score the mark. In **Question 19**, *en el campo* on its own did not score. Examiners were looking for answers along the lines of *con su abuela/cerca de Santander/en una casa de campo*.

Exercise 2 Question 23

This exercise in directed writing was also done very well indeed by many candidates, with the majority scoring the full 15 marks. Candidates were required to write about what they do during the holidays or at weekends, including where they do these activities and with whom and why they like or dislike these activities. Most candidates were awarded the full 10 marks for communication. Of those who did not score full marks, some had omitted a reason why they liked/disliked their chosen activities (candidates who do not

cover all the tasks stated in the rubric cannot score full marks for communication), while other candidates' answers that were so brief or repetitive, that there was simply not enough detail to reward.

Accuracy ticks were awarded as in Paper 4, and 20 or more ticks sufficed to gain the maximum five marks available; this target was attained by a large majority of candidates.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 24-29

This exercise proved more of a challenge than any of the previous ones. However, there was still a high proportion of candidates who managed full, or almost full, marks. **Questions 27-29** proved the most demanding. **Question 27** was False: according to Gervi to train less would be a serious mistake. Answers along the lines of *piensa que eso sería el peor de los errores/un gimnasta debe ser el mejor cada vez/si uno no da el 120 por ciento, no gana nada* were all acceptable. **Question 28** was True: Gervi won gold on both occasions. **Question 29** was False because although Gervi did have some bad times he never considered leaving the sport.

Candidates should be reminded that in this final section of the examination, it is not enough just to locate the required information in the text and transfer it to the space provided for the answer: language must be manipulated so that answers are appropriate, eg in this case verbs had to be changed from the first person to the third.

Exercise 2 Question 30-37

This final comprehension exercise proved the most difficult for average or weak candidates, although numerous strong candidates scored full marks or just short. In **Question 30**, Examiners were looking for answers along the lines of *que es pequeño/que cabe en la palma de la mano/que contiene mucha música. No pesa* and other later advantages mentioned in the text were not accepted. In **Question 34**, a list of items from the text was unacceptable without some attempt by the candidate to convey the notion that the author's taste was very broad.

SPANISH (Foreign Language)

Paper 0530/03

Speaking

General comments

To be read in conjunction with the Teacher's Notes booklet for Paper 3, June 2007

Sample size

The correct sample size for moderation was submitted by most Centres. Centres are requested to select as wide a range of ability as possible in order that Moderators can check accurately the standard of assessment and provide feedback. If there is a large range of marks, Centres should avoid sending the tests of candidates awarded the same or virtually the same mark and should do their best to include the highest and lowest scoring candidate.

Quality of recording

In most cases the overall quality of the recordings was very good. Centres are responsible for ensuring reasonably quiet conditions for the recordings. The recording equipment should be tested in situ before the actual test. The microphone should be positioned so that both the Examiner and candidates are clearly audible. Candidates should not identify themselves on tape – this should be done by the Examiner – and Centres should indicate the end of the recording by stating 'end of sample'. Examiners are reminded that once a test has started the cassette should run without interruption and should not be stopped and re-started during a test. Centres should clearly label their cassettes with the Centre name and number and the candidates' names and numbers.

Administration

The vast majority of Centres completed their Working Mark Sheets correctly, transferred marks to the MS1 (computer-printed) Mark Sheet accurately and forwarded copies of these to CIE with the recorded sample, as required. Those few Centres where this was not the case are reminded that they are responsible for the correct addition and transcription of marks. The quality of the recordings and the addition and transcription of marks onto the MS1 Mark Sheet should all be double-checked prior to despatch of the sample.

Assessment

The assessment of candidates was both positive and consistent in the vast majority of Centres. The application of the marking criteria by some Examiners was excellent. More careful assessment is required by some Examiners in the Role plays. Candidates can be awarded three marks for a response which has minor errors. A minor error does not include an incorrect tense. Candidates are awarded two marks for full communication with linguistic errors. Only one mark can be awarded if a task has two elements and only one is completed. In the Topic and General conversation sections there was a slight tendency to be overgenerous on Scale (b) Linguistic Content. Likewise, there was a tendency to be more generous at the top of the ability range and a little severe at the bottom of the ability range. There was also a tendency to severity when awarding marks for Impression. All assessment should follow the general principles as explained in the Teacher's Notes booklet.

Comments on specific questions

Materials for the Speaking Test should be opened four working days before the Centre's assessment starts. It is particularly important for new Examiners or Examiners who have not carried out the speaking test for some time to familiarise themselves with the procedures and prepare their own roles thoroughly. Careful preparation is essential. The role of the Examiner is indicated on the cards provided and Examiners should adhere to their given roles. Examiner should not miss out parts of their given role, nor should they ask questions which elicit information that is not required. Where a task consists of several elements, candidates

must be given the opportunity to complete each element. For weaker candidates it is perfectly possible to break down the task and ask each element in turn. However, Examiners should allow candidates to give their marks and unless their role specifically requires them to do so, should not offer candidates alternatives to choose from. Candidates cannot be awarded marks for a response that has been supplied by the Examiner.

Role Plays

Role Plays A

At the restaurant

These tasks were straightforward and the majority of candidates encountered few problems. The greeting formed part of the first task and those candidates who omitted it could not score the marks allocated to it. In Tasks 3 and 4, short responses were acceptable provided that the information required was communicated.

At the tourist office

Generally, candidates copied well with the specified tasks. In Task 5, asking an appropriate question proved difficult for some candidates, especially for those who attempted to ask the location of the event.

At the train station

Mostly, candidates communicated the necessary information, though in Tasks 4 and 5 some had difficulties with vocabulary items and grammatical accuracy.

Role Plays B

The **B** Role plays were more challenging, requiring candidates to make use of different tenses or more sophisticated structures in order to communicate accurately. Candidates should be reminded to read rubrics carefully in order not to omit elements of the task and to understand clearly what is required. The majority of candidates responded well to the open-ended nature of the tasks.

Phoning a Spanish friend

Most candidates carried out the specified tasks well. In Task 3 a short response was acceptable provided that the information required was communicated. In Tasks 4 and 5 some candidates had difficulties switching from past to future tenses. Weaker candidates failed to understand the second element of Task 5.

Phoning a language school

The vast majority of candidates managed to communicate all the information required however the language used was not always appropriate. Some candidates had already completed the second element of Task 2 as part of Task 1. This is acceptable. In Tasks 3 and 4, candidates often encountered difficulties with the correct use of tenses. Some candidates were requested to spell their names in Task 5: this was not a requirement of the task.

Arranging a party

Candidates entered the role convincingly and communicated the required information well. In Tasks 4 and 5 a few candidates attempted to provide too much information. A few candidates misunderstood the second element of Task 5.

Topic Conversation

Candidates presented a good range of topics. Although the topic presented by candidates should be one of their choosing, it is important that they are appropriately guided when making their choice. While candidates should be discouraged from choosing topics where there is insufficient scope in terms of language and discussion they should also be advised against presenting topics which are clearly beyond their linguistic ability. This is the opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their linguistic abilities talking about a topic in which they have a real interest. The role of the Examiner is crucial in matching the level of the questioning to each candidate's ability and in leading the candidate into using a variety of time frames, eg by asking questions which will elicit past and future tenses. Examiners should allow candidates to speak for a

maximum of two minutes before asking specific questions. The remaining three to four minutes should be spent discussing the topic. Topics should be prepared, but not pre-learnt and delivered as a monologue.

Test 3 General Conversation

Many candidates, encouraged by their Examiners, were able to fully demonstrate their communicative and linguistic abilities using a range of structures, vocabulary and ideas. Examiners are reminded that they should indicate to candidates the point at which the Topic conversation has finished and they are moving on to the General conversation section. The General conversation should last approximately five minutes in total: the length of this section of the test varied and where it was either too short or too long this often disadvantaged the candidates. Examiners are reminded that they should aim to cover at least two or three of the defined content topics in this section of the test and that, as in the Topic conversation, it is important for Examiners to match the level and the type of questioning to the ability of the candidate.

SPANISH (Foreign Language)

Paper 0530/04
Continuous Writing

General comments

The overall standard of candidates' work was very good. There was scope for stronger candidates to show the full range of their ability and even the weakest candidates were able to respond to the writing tasks, albeit in a limited manner. There were only a very few candidates who were so weak they struggled to communicate. Most candidates obtained full marks for relevant communication and often where marks were lost it was because candidates had not read the rubric carefully enough or because elements of the required answer were dealt with outside the 140-word limit.

In this examination, candidates are expected to produce two pieces of extended writing in which they have the opportunity to demonstrate their linguistic competence in terms of complexity, accuracy and range of structures, vocabulary and idiom. A system of positive marking is used and rewards both accuracy and ambition. Each exercise is marked out of 25, of which five marks are awarded for relevant communication, fifteen for accuracy of language and five for general impression. No credit is given for anything beyond the 140th word since the rubric stipulates 110-140 words. The first stage in marking for Examiners is to count up to the 140th word and cross out the remainder. Any tasks carried out after the 140th word are not awarded marks for relevant communication and nor do they contribute to the mark awarded for accuracy. Candidates should be advised to write 140 words or just under in each of the two questions. Candidates should do a preliminary word count and keep a running total to avoid losing marks unnecessarily. Candidates who wrote far too many words often failed to achieve full marks for relevant communication due to their verbosity. Similarly, candidates who wrote under the suggested word limit, while fulfilling the requirements for relevant communication, were often unable to gain all the available marks for accuracy.

Comments on specific questions

Marking for communication

In **Question 1(a)**, although there was some good use of descriptive vocabulary when describing geographical location, there was a tendency to give far too many details on this part of the task. A few candidates overlooked the requirement to write about *el alojamiento* or were unfamiliar with the vocabulary item. A wide range of vocabulary was used to describe possible activities though a number of candidates did not make the activities personal, merely providing a list of what could be done.

Examiners saw many excellent responses to **Question 1(b)**, in which convincing opinions were expressed. Some candidates wrote impersonally and failed to mention what they themselves liked to wear and where they liked to buy these clothes.

In **Question 2**, some candidates, though they described in detail how they won the prize, omitted to say what the prize was, thus forfeiting one of the marks for communication. Others went into great detail describing their day in the capital, but unfortunately the amount of detail meant they did not complete the writing task within the word limit.

Marking for accuracy of language

Common errors included the following:

In **Question 1(a)**, inconsistent use of register, incorrect use of register, use of *ser/estar*, gender of *país* and *ciudad*, agreement of adjectives, meaning of *alojamiento*, failure to accent the second person plural of the present tense where necessary (*podéis, estáis*), failure to accent person plural of the future tense (*iréis, visitaréis*), the present tense of the verb *ir*.

In **Question 1(b)**, collective noun *la ropa*, agreement of adjectives, use of *gustar*, the present tense, *preferir*, spelling of common words such as *diferente*.

In **Question 2**, incorrect use of tenses, some misuse of perfect tense when preterite tense required, failure to accent certain verbs, difficulties with common verbs in the preterite tense (*llegar, jugar, decir*), gender of *capital*, use of reflexive verbs, use of prepositions with some verbs (*ir a, consistir en*), confusion between *sentir* and *sentar*.

As in the past special attention was paid to verbs. Strong candidates varied tenses and knew how to use them appropriately while weak candidates lapsed into the present. With those of middling ability, a common defect was the incorrect use of the perfect when only the preterite was appropriate. Candidates writing lists of items (clothes, places to visit, activities) gave themselves less opportunity to score as highly as those careful to include adjectives and verbs. It was common to omit vital accents on verb endings. All verbs scored for accuracy, but only if used correctly and accented if necessary. Credit was also given to interrogatives (which must be accented), to negatives, to prepositions, to adverbs except for the very common *y* and *pero*, to adjectives correctly positioned and agreeing, to pronouns other than subject pronouns and reflexives, to pronouns correctly joined onto a verb: in all these cases a tick is awarded when a unit is correct. Four units are worth one mark to a maximum of fifteen marks.

Marking for general impression

Up to five marks were awarded for the quality of language used: use of idiom, vocabulary, structures and appropriate tenses. In order to score the full five marks for impression, the writing had to display the features mentioned and read fluently like good Spanish.