

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students demonstrated a reasonable understanding of the requirements set out in the Revised VCE Spanish Study Design.

The new oral component of the examination has two sections. Section 1: Conversation (approximately 7 minutes) is about the student's personal world, for example, school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations. Section 2: Discussion (approximately 8 minutes) explores aspects of the language and culture of Spanish-speaking communities using the subtopic selected for the Detailed Study.

It was evident that this new arrangement gave students the opportunity for a more relaxed and realistic exchange of ideas and allowed greater control over the areas discussed. Students of Spanish, together with their teachers, chose topics that were relevant to the students' age group so that their knowledge and performance were of high quality. Two of the topics chosen for discussion were The Future of Marriage (*El Futuro del Matrimonio*) and The Rights of children in the Spanish-speaking world (*Los Derechos de los Niños en el Mundo Hispanohablante*). The students' enthusiasm when talking about these topics was obvious and showed how well prepared they were to discuss their texts effectively.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students of Spanish were able to converse fluently about their personal world and were well prepared to speak on a variety of related topics. Less successful students needed more preparation on their topics. There were excellent students who managed to advance the exchange appropriately and effectively. They were able to discuss other issues that came up in conversation during the first section. These students showed a lot of initiative and maintained the conversation well. A few students answered with monosyllabic responses which did not allow them to fulfill the criterion of 'capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively'.

The relevance, breadth and depth of information from most of the students was satisfactory and students were well-prepared to converse at some length. Most students used accurate vocabulary and grammar but a few made mistakes in the conjugation of verbs and had difficulties using the subjunctive mood.

Most students demonstrated clarity of expression, corrected their own mistakes and were ready to use effective repair strategies. Students should learn to use appropriate strategies when talking about the different subjects they are doing at school. It is important that students know how to refer to them in Spanish as students had to ask the assessors for that information. Some of the subjects students mentioned in English were: Human Development (*Desarrollo Humano*), Artistic Design (*Diseño Artístico*), Graphic Design (*Diseño Gráfico*), Environmental Studies (*Estudios sobre el medio ambiente*). Most students greeted and farewelled the assessors, appropriately.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students had to indicate to the assessors whether they had studied Language and Culture through the texts or the VET option. They also needed to mention the subtopic chosen for their Detailed Study and, in no more than one minute, introduce the main focus of their subtopic, alerting assessors to any objects brought in to support the discussion.

Many students demonstrated good knowledge of the texts and were able to discuss them at length, expressing their ideas and opinions.

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Students seemed well prepared and understood the requirements of the new end-of-year examination. Sections 1 and 2 of the paper, Part A, required a response in English, Part B in Spanish. Most students responded in the appropriate language, those that did not failed to gain any marks for that particular question. Students must read and follow instructions carefully. For example, in sections where word limits are given, excessively long pieces will not meet the criteria appropriately. In Section 3, responses which have been memorised by the student and bear no relationship to set the task are also inappropriate.

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Most students seemed to read the questions first and then answer them accurately after listening to the text. Students are advised to concentrate on the questions they have in front of them when listening to the text, to make notes during the first listening and to check out their impressions in the second listening, before completing the answer during the pause. Some questions required short answers so students should read instructions carefully. Throughout the examination students were given an indication of how long their answers should be by the provision of lines. When a full sentence was required this was indicated in the instruction. The marks allocated to a given question also provide a guide as to the appropriate detail of the response.

In Text 1 most students responded appropriately although some confused the word '*derecho*' which means 'law studies' for 'right' and they used the word 'right' mistakenly for the word 'law'. In Text 2 a few students were confused and answered the questions in Spanish, and received no marks for their answers. Text 4 contained a new concept: 'the Euro'. Only the most competent students managed to obtain full marks for these questions.

Text 1 – Answers in English

Question 1

1. The role of women in the world of business has changed lately.

Question 2

1. the daughters of business people know very well what they want to do
2. they have great self-confidence.

Question 3

1. Business Management
2. Economics
3. Law.

Question 4

1. A common goal for these women is to set up their own companies.

Text 2 – Answers in English

Question 5

2. One important effect is the revival of interest in sport in Latin America due to the Olympic Games in 2000.

Question 6

1. Latin American fans watched the events very late at night and in the early hours of the morning.

Question 7

1. Cuba won the most gold medals
2. Their total was 11.

Text 3 – Answers in English

Question 8

1. the Euro is equivalent to 167 *pesetas*
2. all Spanish business people have to use it.

Question 9

1. Spain is going to switch to the Euro
2. because they are part of the European Union.

Question 10

1. cheques
2. electronic transfers or transfers
3. credit cards

Question 11

1. businesses will get an information package
2. a small subsidy to cover costs

Part B

Most students responded accurately and achieved good results to this part of the examination. They demonstrated an excellent command of the language, and conveyed general and specific aspects of the text appropriately. In general, the vocabulary chosen was very simple. Some students had difficulty in writing full sentences using the appropriate verb forms and word order. In Question 15, some students invented their own answers instead of referring to the text. Students should understand that it is important to use only the information given in the oral text and that their responses should not contain additional information. To obtain a good result in this section, students must read the task carefully and keep the task in mind when listening to the text.

Part B – Answers in Spanish

Text 4

Question 12

1. *El trabajo está ubicado en la optometría más prestigiosa*
2. *Atender al público, contestar las llamadas y la correspondencia*
3. *Un alto nivel de inglés y excelente presentación personal*
4. *Tener experiencia en un trabajo similar*
5. *Tener entre 20 y 40 años.*

Text 5

Question 13

According to the interview an exchange student will find it difficult but rewarding to grasp a new culture

1. *entender una cultura nueva*
2. *comprender el sentido del humor*
3. *acostumbre a la nueva comida*
4. *acostumbre a un medio ambiente Nuevo.*

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A

Most students achieved good results as they demonstrated the capacity to convey general and specific aspects of the text. They understood what was required of them and conveyed the information in English. Although their English was not always accurate, they managed to write enough to convince the assessors that they had understood the task and found the answer. Some students were confused by Question 17 and could not come up with the five decisions that the *Azul River* community took to maintain the cleanliness of the rivers (many could only find three or sometimes four decisions). In Text 6, for the second question students had two possible answers and most responded accurately. Some students did not understand Question 22 and answered incorrectly. It is important that students read questions several times until they are sure of what the question is asking before looking for the answer in the text. All answers to the questions can be drawn from the text that students have in front of them.

Text 6 – Answers in English

Question 14

1. Before people believed that rivers would never dry up
2. Get contaminated

Question 15

1. Our rivers are dirty because people are dumping rubbish
2. Have chemicals in them

Question 16

1. To have clean water

2. To sustain good health

Question 17

Members of the Azul River community decided that:

1. The Council will fine people who throw rubbish in the river 2 million pesos
2. Companies that throw chemicals in the river will be fined 10 million pesos
3. The Council will plant trees along the river
4. Next month the community members will organise a cleanup of the river.
5. A chemical engineer will carry out research into how to solve the problem of contamination of the river.

Text 7

Question 18

1. Carlos Antonio is a student of Information Technology
2. from San Miguel University.

Question 19

It is a pleasure to talk about this topic as I love it.

Question 20

1. bank workers
 2. secretaries
- or
1. car assembly-line workers
 2. some teachers.

Question 21

1. You won't have to leave your home to go shopping
2. You will be able to complete a university course from home.

Question 22

When he says 'That sounds terrible

Question 23

We will not need a computer to read emails because we can use the mobile telephone; we won't need computers anymore.

Part B

Students need to write between 150 and 200 words in Spanish and demonstrate the capacity to understand themes and ideas and be able to identify, explain and create a new text. In this part students were asked to write a letter responding to several aspects of the text provided. Some students failed to include all characteristics of an informal letter but managed to talk about most of the aspects contained in the letter.

Text 8 – Answers in Spanish (150–200 words)

Question 24

Students needed to name and talk about a range of attractive aspects of the documentary about indigenous people, their lifestyle, social relations, education, values, relationships with nature, their rites, festivals, relationships with the earth, crops, and natural elements: rain, sun, moon, jungle. Students needed to demonstrate the capacity to answer questions in a letter with the appropriate turn of phrase and tense. They were also required to observe the conventions of a friendly letter, including correct format, style and register.

Section 3 – Writing in Spanish

Answer one question in Spanish (200–250 words)

Criteria

Relevance, breadth and depth of content

Appropriateness of structures and sequence

Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Question 25

Most students performed satisfactorily in the section. Some students lacked preparation and did not use their time effectively. Students needed to practise different styles for various audiences, be familiar with the techniques for different kinds of writing and know how long it takes to write between 200 and 250 words. Students should practise writing within a time frame, trying to include correction of the text, making links and joining sentences together in

different ways. Students are advised to make time allowances to correct simple mistakes. Students should also plan to make sure they identify and then include all aspects that the task requires.

Students were asked to write a review of a performance for a school magazine, and this needed to include a summary of what happened and their opinion of the quality of the performance. This was not a very popular choice.

Students were expected to produce evaluative writing, with a clear beginning, middle and end and good links between ideas. They needed to include a concluding statement. Students who wrote the review often neglected to include a concluding statement.

Students had to write using the past tense, adjectives and turns of phrase (e.g. *en mi opinion ... según lo que he visto ... Desde mi punto de vista*). Students who wrote a review lacked sophistication in the language, used simple vocabulary and made mistakes in the grammar, mainly in the use of verb forms.

Question 26

The task was to write an article for a Spanish-speaking newspaper on a festival or a celebration the students had attended. Student should have included description of the festival, experience she/he had, reasons why the festival was good/bad. Some students conformed to the conventions of an article but failed to include a description of the festival.

When writing an article, students should include:

- title and author (fictional name)
- introduction
- well developed body of article, good sequencing of ideas
- logical conclusion.

Students were expected to choose appropriate adjectives and a logical structure. They needed to use the imperfect tense to sequence their work logically and use a range of vocabulary and grammar.

Question 27

Students were asked to write a letter to a pen friend in a Spanish-speaking country describing their childhood. The student could have offered the penfriend the following: details of their birthday, family, childhood home, relationship, interests. This was a popular task but some students failed to give details of their childhood and did not offer many details about their interests. The sequence of ideas was often erratic and superficial. Students were expected to use the past tense, first person and adjectives correctly.

Students were expected to follow the conventions of a letter:

- address and date
- greeting
- well developed body of letter
- farewell
- clear sequence of ideas and well-organised ideas.

Question 28

Students were asked to write a short imaginative story. The beginning was given as follows: 'When I woke up as usual at 7 am I had no idea that this was the day that would change my life. It all began when ...'. Students needed to have a good opening for the story, clear imaginative writing, a good sequence of ideas and an effective conclusion. This question was very popular and many students responded to it by writing imaginative pieces, but did not pay much attention to the sequence of ideas or to a good ending.

Students were expected to have a structure for the story, for example title of the story, introduction, body, and conclusion as appropriate to the text type. Organisation and sequencing of ideas within and between paragraphs, cohesiveness of writing within and between paragraphs were important for doing well in this section.

Students were expected to show accuracy of vocabulary and grammar and to use a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures appropriate for the text type/audience, purpose and context of the task.