
AS LEVEL SPANISH

7691/3 Speaking
Report on the Examination

7691/3
June 2023

Version: 1.0

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

Copyright © 2023 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.
AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

General Comments

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

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

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

Administration

In most cases the administration of the tests was good. However, one issue this year was that centres did not upload the supporting documentation to the Media Submissions Portal. It is essential that teacher-examiners refer to the *Instructions for the Conduct of the Exams* booklet and follow the instructions (page 14) regarding uploading of the Attendance List and additional information (eg name of teacher-examiner conducting the tests, letters of cards given to each candidate etc). In addition, this booklet gives instructions regarding the correct labelling of audio files. Teacher-examiners should also make sure that they refer to the Summary of Procedures (page 22) to ensure that they are introducing each test correctly.

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

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

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

Conduct of the Test

Preparation Time

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

Centres should remind students that during the preparation time they can make detailed notes and use these throughout the discussion.

Timings

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

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

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 this year with most students scoring between 3 and 4. Many teacher-examiners ensured that they asked responsive follow-up questions to enable students to develop their ideas and opinions. However, this year some teacher-examiners allowed students to deliver lengthy responses to the three printed questions and did not ask sufficient unexpected questions, thus having an adverse effect on the score for AO1. In the worst cases, no questions beyond the three printed ones were asked, resulting in a low score for AO1.

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

In some centres it was clearly the case that students were responding to very familiar follow-up questions and delivering pre-learnt responses, which had an adverse effect on their score for AO1. A genuine, spontaneous conversation is supposed to take place, so students should not be given prior knowledge of the teacher-examiner's questions that will be asked in the test itself. It is also in the student's best interests that the teacher-examiner's unpredictable questions encourage them to develop their ideas and opinions rather than just seeking factual information.

Assessment Objective 2

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

Students this year generally scored 3 to 4 marks but, unfortunately, in many cases incorrect preparation of candidates and the poor conduct of the test had a direct impact on the student's

score for AO2. It is important that teacher-examiners are aware that in order to access the full range of marks available for AO2, as well as responding to the three printed questions and asking

an appropriate question, students need to demonstrate that they have ‘a very good understanding of the printed material’. This means that students need to show that they have fully understood the key messages contained within the material on the card. In many centres, students have clearly been taught to respond to the first printed question with a generic summary of the sub-theme and therefore their responses do not reflect a ‘very good’ understanding of the explicit material on the card.

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

If it is that the student has not fully exploited the material on the card, then teacher-examiners should ask suitable follow-up questions that allow the student to demonstrate a full understanding. Teacher-examiners should avoid simply reading out the printed information on the card and asking students to comment and instead should ask the student a question such as ‘*¿Qué más nos dice la tarjeta sobre...?*’ and allow the student to select and develop the relevant information from the card.

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

Student’s question (credited within the AO2 score)

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

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

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

Assessment Objective 3

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

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

The most frequent grammatical errors were:

- Incorrect genders
- Lack of adjectival agreements
- Use of *me sorpresa* in the place of *me sorprende*
- Confusion of *fui* and *fue*
- Incorrect numbers: students often struggled with the various dates and figures given in the printed material
- Incorrect conjugation of basic past, present and future tenses
- Incorrect conjugation of *gustar*, *encantar*, *preocupar*, *interesar* and other impersonal verbs, especially in the third person forms

Assessment Objective 4

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

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

Given the popularity once again of cards on the sub-theme of *el ciberespacio*, it was surprising that many students had a limited knowledge of technology related issues in Hispanic communities.

Stimulus cards

Tarjeta A: *¿Qué papel tienen los abuelos en la sociedad española?*

This was a relatively popular card and most students understood the overall gist of the information but some overlooked the key messages regarding *apoyo emocional*, *mantienen la familia unida* and *transmiten la historia familiar*. Most students were not surprised by the information and felt that, in particular, the current economic situation and changes in the role of women in the Spanish workforce were the key reasons for grandparents taking on greater childcare responsibilities. In response to question 3, students were able to discuss a range of changes from types of family to legislative changes regarding divorce, same sex marriage, adoption as well as maternity/paternity rights.

Tarjeta B: *El divorcio en España*

This was a less popular card and, whilst students generally grasped the overarching theme of the increase in divorce, some struggled with the detail of the statistics particularly those in the final paragraph. In response to question 2, most simply stated the changes from dictatorship to democracy as being the reason for the increases in divorces in Spain, whilst more successful students were able to discuss alternatives such as economic, religious or work-related reasons. In general, students felt that for young people in the Spanish speaking world marriage does not have the same importance that it had for their parents, although many suggested that marriage was still key in Latin American countries where they felt that a higher proportion of the population followed the practices of the Catholic Church.

Tarjeta C: *El uso de la tecnología entre los mayores en México*

This was a less popular card and responses varied. Students were not surprised by the number of older people engaging with the internet and felt that the prime reason for doing so was to communicate with family and friends. In response to question 3, very few students were able to reference specific strategies or initiatives that governments across the Spanish-speaking world had put in place to end problems caused by the internet.

Tarjeta D: *La policía mexicana lucha contra los delitos cibernéticos*

This was a relatively popular card and most students answered very well, although some struggled to understand the words *acosador* and *advierten*. The vast majority of students felt that it was a positive thing that the police are engaging with young people to discuss the dangers of cyber space and were able to reference data related to the number of young people who have been the victims of cyber bullying in the Spanish-speaking world and regulations regarding minimum ages for having access to devices such as smartphones. The positives suggested by students in response to question 3 were quite generic, such as to help with homework, contact friends and watch films.

Tarjeta E: *El uniforme escolar unisex*

This was a very popular card but many students misunderstood the information as they had not taken note of the mention of *las alumnas* in the first paragraph and this was often left unchallenged by teacher-examiners. The fact that this was a law specific to Galicia was also often overlooked. In

response to question 2, most felt that there was increased equality but still a long way to go and cited *el techo de cristal*, lack of female representation in executive positions and *el femicidio* as significant issues in Spain and other Spanish-speaking countries. With regard to advances in same sex rights, students were able to discuss the new legislation that exists throughout the Spanish speaking world regarding same sex marriages and right to adopt children as well as the discrimination faced by the homosexual population over the last 80 years or more.

Tarjeta F: *La vida de una mujer transgénero en fotos*

This was a popular card that produced some very good discussions. Weaker students struggled with the information regarding the exhibition in Buenos Aires and the reason for Claudia's arrest. In response to question 2, students felt that there had been a shift in recent years and that Spanish-speaking countries in general were more inclusive but that life was still difficult for members of the LGBTQ+ community, particularly in Latin America. Students suggested that sexual equality was improving in the Spanish-speaking world but that there were still many traits of *machismo* engrained in society. However, they recognised that there was greater visibility of women in the realm of politics in particular; (Bachelet and Kirchner were often referenced, along with the high proportion of female ministers in the Sánchez cabinet.

Tarjeta G: *La polémica del rapero Valtoryc*

This was a relatively popular card and, whilst many students were not familiar with the rapper Valtoryc, they felt that the sentence received was unfair. The information regarding the lyrics and the public reaction were often overlooked. In response to question 2, many referenced Pitbull and singers of *reggaetón* as having a bad influence due to what they felt were misogynistic messages in their lyrics and images in their videos. Positive role models discussed included Shakira, Penelope Cruz, Sofia Vergara, Rafa Nadal and Ricky Martin; students felt that their charitable works and good work ethic meant that they projected positive values to young people.

Tarjeta H: *Luis Fonsi y su canción Despacito*

This was a relatively popular card and students were clearly very familiar with Luis Fonsi and the song *Despacito*. Whilst in general students were able to show understanding of the key message in the first two paragraphs, the information regarding how Fonsi had helped the island following the hurricane was often misinterpreted or overlooked. Students all felt that famous people have a duty to do voluntary work and also provide financial support to individuals and organisations. In response to question 3, many students referenced the controversy regarding Shakira's latest song and alleged tax evasion as well as the work of *Pies Descalzos*, together with Lionel Messi's charitable work and failure to pay taxes.

Tarjeta I: *El español y las lenguas cooficiales*

This was not a popular card and many students often misunderstood the information in the first paragraph and did not pick up on the use of *quiere que...* at the start of the second paragraph, leading them to state that these measures were already in place. Many of these misunderstandings were left unchallenged by teacher-examiners. Students felt that Catalan in particular was a popular language due to Catalonia's desire to be independent. In response to question 3, the main aspects discussed were festivals, food, dance and music.

Tarjeta J: *Una plaza de toros madrileña se convierte en un mercado*

This was a very popular card and most students understood the main gist of the information. The key messages in the second paragraph were the least cited by students and many struggled with the idea of *un público no acostumbrado a comprarlos*. In response to question 2, most students felt that finding alternative use for bull rings was a good idea given the decline in interest in bull fighting throughout Spain. Successful students were able to reference statistics regarding the number of Spaniards who attend bull fights, the legislation banning bullfighting in certain regions of Spain and the Spanish government's overturning of these, as well as the conversion of bullrings such as Barcelona's *Las Arenas* into shopping centres. Aspects of regional identity that fascinated the students were principally festivals such as *La Tomatina* and *Las Fallas* together with regional food and languages.

Tarjeta K: *La lengua mapoyo*

This was a fairly popular card and successful students were able to discuss the key messages regarding UNESCO's recognition of Mapoyo, the discrimination that has led to its decline and the new programmes introduced in local schools. Students felt that it was important to protect the different languages in the Spanish-speaking world, with many citing *Quechua* and *Nahuatl* as well as *Catalan*, *Vasco* and *Gallego*. In response to question 3, students generally believed that cultural heritage throughout the Spanish-speaking world is well maintained, in particular traditional food and festivals, but they felt that tourism to places such as *Machu Picchu* was putting heritage sites at risk and so they were pleased with initiatives to reduce numbers of visitors in order to protect the sites.

Tarjeta L: *La ciudad de Elche espera a su Dama*

This card was less popular and, whilst students were able to discuss the origin of the sculpture and its discovery in 1897, many struggled with the key messages regarding where it was first exhibited and the information in the third paragraph relating to the displaying of the sculpture in the city of Elche itself. Students felt that works such as these were a key part of the history and culture of a country, so should be protected at all costs for future generations. In response to question 3, students were able to discuss in detail important works such as *Guernica*, *Machu Picchu*, *El acueducto de Segovia*, *La Alhambra*, *La Sagrada Familia* and *Chichén Itzá*.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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