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# **Examiners' Report**

## Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Subsidiary  
in Spanish (WSP02) Unit 2: Understanding and  
Written Response

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## Introduction

WSP02 01 is a unit from the brand new IAL Spanish specification which does not supersede a previous one.

It is assessed in a written examination available in January and June of each year. The assessment lasts 2 hours 30 minutes and is made up of 90 marks. It can contribute to either the International Advanced Subsidiary or the International Advanced Level qualification.

Assessment across Unit WSP02/01 relates to following General Topic Areas:

<b>General Topic Area</b>	<b>Sub topics</b>
Youth matters	Family relationships and friendships Peer pressure and role models Music and fashion Technology and communication
Lifestyle, health and fitness	Food and diet Sport and exercise Health issues Urban and rural life
Travel and environment	Tourism, travel and transport Natural disasters and weather Climate change and its impact Energy, pollution and recycling
Education and employment	Education systems and types of schooling Pupil/student life Volunteering and internships Jobs and unemployment

## Assessment

The assessment for this unit has three sections.

### **Section A: Listening (20 marks)**

Students will be required to listen to a range of authentic recorded material and to retrieve and convey information given in the recording by responding to a range of questions.

Students will need to show understanding of both the general sense and specific details conveyed. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and short answers in the target language.

### **Section B: Reading and Grammar (30 marks)**

Students will be required to read authentic printed materials and to retrieve and convey information by responding to a range of test types in the target language. The questions will elicit non-verbal responses and answers.

Questions are linked to a range of reading comprehension exercises.

Students will also need to understand and manipulate grammatical structures in the target language by selecting the most appropriate word form to fit a gap and by manipulating sentences that appear in a previous exercise from the section and reforming the sentence around a given word.

### **Section C: Essay (40 marks)**

Students will write a 240-280 word essay in the target language, in response to a short stimulus and four related bullet points. The assessment rewards learners for communicating relevant information effectively as well as for the quality of the language produced.

## Comments relating to individual questions from the 1706 series:

### Section A: Listening

#### Q1. Multiple Choice

Students were provided with four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question. (The correct response, and three distractors). Question 1 was taken from the sub topic of sport and exercise.

Q1(b) Students needed to pay attention to the detail in the question *mas que nada* to correctly identify the **main** reason for the speaker choosing yoga.

Other elements of the question required competence in identifying synonyms and antonyms and were generally correctly answered.

#### Q2. Multiple Choice

Students were provided with four options A, B, C, or D for each item within the question. (The correct response, and three distractors). Question 2 was taken from the sub topic of natural disasters.

Q2(a) Students had to recognise the crucial part of the recording "*a parte de*" as this showed the relative frequency of the different types of disaster. The common mistake was not taking this detail into account.

#### Q3. Summary completion

Question 3 was a listening summary task on youth unemployment. There was a mixture of word types in a pool of 8 and the correct response had to be inserted into sentences summarising the text.

Q3(a) Most students were successful in connecting the ideas of contraction and reduction of opportunities in the labour market, even though different verbs, in different tenses were used. This shows a useful skill of retaining clusters of language which share the same meaning.

Q3(b) The most difficult word to identify was *la motivación* in Q3(b), perhaps because the main distractor for this element also had the suffix - *ación*, but this element was still answered correctly by a high proportion of students

In general, for this question, it was evident from the exam papers that some students used a skilful process of identifying the possible correct responses, and then focusing their listening upon those possible responses, from which one was then eliminated.

#### Q4. Short Answer Questions

This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 4 was taken from the sub topic of music and fashion and is the most challenging of the listening tasks, in length and linguistic capability. Although full sentence answers are not required, sometimes it was necessary to add a word to something drawn on from the recording in order to make the information fit the requirements of the question.

For example, in Q4(g), students were required to say **how** the artist promotes his music, not **how he does not** promote his music. Answers that included reference to traditional methods earned the mark.

Q4(a) Students who scored a mark here were those who were able to make the first person description on the recording apply to the question in the third person. A common error here was confusing the adjectives applied to the tour with those relating the artist eg *más íntimo*

Q4(b) It was essential to note that that the question was specifically asking about the repertoire of songs, not the tour in general. A common mistake involved focusing on the concert in Lima, rather than the repertoire at said concert, ie *será la primera de la gira*.

There were several instances in Q4 where students made grammatical errors whilst still securing the available marks. These responses are marked on the basis of communication, rather than accuracy of language.

## **Section B: Reading and Grammar**

### **Q5. Multiple Choice Questions**

Students were provided with four options: A, B, C, or D for each item within the question. (The correct response, and three distractors). Question 5 was taken from the sub topic of climate change and its impact.

Q5(a) Most students were successful in linking *los bosques* and *los arboles* and the sentence stem.

Q5(d) Many students successfully connected the noun *reunión* in the responses with the verb *se juntaron*.

### **Q6. Short Answer Questions**

This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Question 6 was taken from the sub topic of food and diet.

Students are asked to express responses in their own words, as much as possible. Whereas most students offered concise responses, there were cases where responses comprised of large sections of language lifted from the text. Most students were mindful to ensure that they were actually addressing the question.

Q6(b) required reference to the third paragraph, as the question directed students to this section of text. Examiners were alert to responses which disputed the reliability of advertising slogans, and such answers were awarded marks, provided that they had also answered the question.

Q6(d) asked for examples of what is done to food to mean that it is no longer natural. There were some rare cases where students answered this without basing the response on the text, relying on general knowledge instead and thereby not scoring a mark.

### **Q7. Short Answer Questions**

This was the most challenging of the comprehension questions, in length and complexity. This required responses using a single word, a phrase or a short sentence. Each item was worth 1 or 2 marks. Students were asked to express their response by using their own words as much as possible. There was no need to use unnecessarily ambitious structures. Long answers often contained irrelevant material and often did not directly answer the question. Question 7 was taken from the sub topic of technology.

In Q7(a), students needed to adapt the information given to provide a response which clearly mentioned a benefit to children. A good example of this would have been 'les ayuda con su aprendizaje'.

In Q7(b), students needed to read the question carefully and offer a concise answer: it was asking about the **surprising** results of the study. Where students did not score, it was because they simply recounted results of the whole study.

## **Q8. Sentence Transformations**

Students were required to write out the correct form of each targeted word. Question 8 was taken from the sub topic of technology.

Q8(a) Most students correctly identified the subject of the verb as being *el estudio* and conjugated the verb appropriately, in either the preterit or present tense.

Q8(b) Most students correctly offered the conditional tense here. A small number responded with the present tense, which was also a correct answer.

Q8(c) Most students correctly identified the subject of the verb as still being *el estudio* and conjugated the verb appropriately, although this was more challenging as they had to consider the sentence in its entirety to do this.

Q8(d) The majority of students were confident that this word did not require any change. Students should always be aware of this possibility.

Q8(e) Most students answered this question, which required basic adjectival agreement, correctly.

Q8(f) A pleasing proportion of students correctly identified the need for a subjunctive here, showing good preparation in the required grammar structures for this specification.

Q8(g) Students had to read the sentence to the end to realise that the plural *personales* was required.

Q8(h) Students who answered this correctly were those who related the verb in question *-perder-* to the time frame being set by the question. When a response in the future tense was given, the accent needed to be correct in order to gain a mark.

Q8(i) For this item, students needed to understand that the *él* related to both the *fotos* and *los datos* and therefore needed to be transformed into its plural version – ie *ellos*.

Q8(j) This was a high demand question and students were required to transform this reflexive verb into the future tense. An accent was required, as omission of the accent would mean that the response was not accurate.



## **Section C Writing Question 9**

This section requires students to write an essay in response to a short stimulus. The recommended length is 240–280 words, although this is only a guide and students should not be concerned by the exact length of their response. The bullet points allow students to offer opinions and to use a range of tenses. It was essential that students firmly fixed their response on these bullet points. If one point was missed out, the maximum content score was 16 marks. Question 9 was taken from the sub topic of role models.

### **Comments relating to the four bullet points:**

Bullet point 1 – This was well addressed by most students.

Bullet point 2 – The most successful responses included reference to both positive and negative characteristics of famous people in terms of being role models.

Bullet point 3 – This was answered well with some very insightful answers.

Bullet point 4 – On some occasions, this bullet point was misunderstood. Some students responded with how they could help the cousin to find a role model, rather than how it could be beneficial to the cousin to have a role model.

### **Q9 What students did well:**

- Most essays addressed all four bullet points
- Used one paragraph per bullet point for clarity
- Responses were typically of between 240 and 280 words
- Most students attempted to develop bullet points
- Many essays offered a wide range of complex structures and lexis
- Exemplification of bullet points, based upon personal experience, but directed the essay to its target audience- an adolescent cousin
- Structured the response to contain only relevant material.

### **Q9 How students could improve upon performance:**

- Be sure to address all four bullet points
- Avoid digression from the required content
- Planning can help to ensure that ideas are well organised and developed. Consider making the essay plan early on during the exam, to avoid rushing this very significant part of the exam
- Always give several ideas for each bullet point. These may either be separate ideas, or one basic idea with development.

Examiners encountered a high number of essays where students had used a pleasing range of tenses and an impressive amount of appropriate vocabulary. The essays responded imaginatively to the bullet points and were, on the whole, very interesting to read. Many essays were well

planned and each bullet point was addressed in its own paragraph. This is a useful technique, as it clearly shows both the student and the examiner that the points have been covered. Discursive expressions were used to good effect to provide coherence and clarity. There were lots of examples of appropriate use of tenses and time clauses. The best essays were those which adopted a style fit for the purpose of the piece, in this case an informal email to a younger relative. Some students spent time before writing to create a list of tenses and verb conjugations as an aide memoire and this often resulted in language that was varied and accurate.

## General

Based on their performance on this paper, students are offered the following advice:

- Ensure that handwriting is clearly legible
- Address all elements of each question, especially Q9
- Read the question again after you have answered it to check that your response directly answers it
- Consider alternative ways of wording your answer; clear and concise is best
- Where two pieces of information are required by the question, you should clearly demarcate the separate ideas / points that you are making
- Avoid the use of untargeted lifts from texts
- Base all comprehension responses upon evidence from the text/recording
- Use your own words, as much as possible
- Be aware of grammatical structures associated with this specification

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