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**Examiners' Report**  
**Principal Examiner Feedback**

**Summer 2018**

**Pearson Edexcel International GCSE**  
**In Spanish (4SP0) Paper 03**

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Summer 2018

Publications Code 4SP0\_03\_1806\_ER

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## **Overview and timings**

Candidates are expected to participate in a presentation followed by three conversations on three different topic areas, one in Section A and two in Section B. These three topic areas must be chosen from the five topic areas detailed in the specification and each topic area may only be addressed once. If a topic area is repeated, then no marks can be awarded for the repeated topic.

Teacher examiners should remember that the announcement of the candidates name and number, centre and topic areas do not count towards the timing. Timings must begin when the student starts the presentation and when they begin their response to the first question in the discussion in Section A, or when they respond to the first questions in both conversations for Section B. The presentation should be up to a maximum of one minute in length. The following discussion on the picture should be up to a maximum of three minutes and each of the conversations should also be up to a maximum of three minutes. Examiners do not reward extraneous material delivered beyond the allocated timings, which are strictly observed. In addition, in Section A, if material presented in the presentation is then repeated in the follow-up conversation then, no marks will be awarded.

## **Section A: The presentation of the picture/photo**

In the first part of the examination the candidate selects a picture/photo which they then introduce as a presentation, without interruption. This part of the test lasts for up to one minute. This is followed by a discussion based on the picture/photo lasting up to three minutes. The picture/photo must be linked to one of the five topic areas in the specification. The choice of picture/photo is directly linked to the success of the presentation and discussion. It is very important that the picture/photo is quite detailed and offers plenty of scope for discussion. The best pictures/photos contain the following three elements: people, objects and interaction. The picture/photo should also be clear. The picture/photo being in colour also helps.

Most students, had prepared well for their presentation and had thought about how to include higher level linguistic structures and more sophisticated vocabulary. The more interesting presentations and the most successful, were based on something of actual interest and personal to the candidate. Quite often, there was a distinct difference in the performance of a candidate across the two parts of section A. There were some outstanding presentations that included a wide range of tenses, sophisticated vocabulary and higher level structures. At times this contrasted with a follow up conversation that indicated a poorer level of ability. The same level of consistency across both parts is needed to access the higher marks in the mark scheme.

It was also surprising in the lower ability range that some students had not taken the opportunity to prepare adequately and think about the possible questions they might be asked about their picture/photo.

In the discussion on the picture/photo unfortunately a significant number of examiners did not ask follow up questions about the picture/photo but, only asked questions on the general topic area. Please note that this does not fulfil the requirements of this part of the test. Consequently, it would not be possible to access the full range of marks, as according to the assessment criteria, candidates should be 'communicating a wide range of information related to the chosen visual stimulus in order to achieve marks in the highest band for Presentation, communication and fluency.

The majority of teacher examiners were skilled at questioning which allowed candidates to succeed. Most conducted the tests in a very sympathetic and encouraging manner but, teacher examiners should refrain from prompting or correcting the candidates' Spanish as this language cannot be rewarded if the candidate simply repeats what the examiner says. It is worth mentioning here that during the discussion, three stages of questioning should be included. This involves questions relating directly to the picture, moving on to questions which are indirectly related to the picture/photo and then finally questions based on the wider topic area.

## **Section B: Two conversations**

In this part of the examination, candidates are required to take part in two conversations of equal length (up to three minutes each) on two further topic areas from the specification chosen by the examiner. They must be different from the topic area chosen in Section A and must not be known by the candidate in advance.

Before the beginning of the first conversation, the examiner should announce the first topic area to be covered, and then they should announce the second topic area at the changeover to the second conversation.

The most popular topics for discussion, as in previous series, included holidays which allowed students to access three time frames easily and many candidates were able to distinguish well between the different tenses. Discussions which centred on the ideal house, ideal school, ideal holiday and future plans allowed for the use of the present and imperfect subjunctive. It was sometimes evident that students had focused on responses to more complex questions prior to the exam to the detriment of accuracy of basic structures and adjectival agreements.

The modern world and the environment topic still proves to be an interesting topic choice. However, teacher examiners and candidates need to be aware of including different tenses/time frames as conversations can very easily be restricted to mostly the present tense. This is particularly relevant to native speakers, who need to be given the chance by the teachers' questions to achieve the highest marks. Some native speakers and very competent Spanish speakers did not score as highly as they might because they did not appear to have been taught to give fully developed answers to questions and to use a variety of time frames.

Sometimes the teacher examiner asked too many closed questions and it was not easy for students to develop a full answer, for example: 'What time do you get up?' or 'How do you get to school?' is very restrictive in terms of the response a candidate can give. However, 'tell me about your morning routine' gives candidates much more scope for development of their ideas.

### **Administration of the Examination**

The administration of this examination was generally completed efficiently and professionally by most centres. A correctly completed cover sheet, signed by both the teacher and the candidate must be included along with the picture/photo used for the presentation in section A.

Centres are reminded that CDs/USBs must be labelled appropriately and packaged carefully. Attaching a clearly visible identifying label to the memory stick is also good practice. Centres should ensure that each recording is audible and working before being despatched to the examiner. As in previous years, some blank CDs were received. Please remember to check that the files have been burned on to the CD before sending and that these are clearly labelled with the candidate name and number to enable the examiner to easily locate the correct candidate.

2018 was the final year of assessment with the current specification. The new specification has been available for first teaching since September 2017 and the first examination for the new specification will take place in May 2019. There are changes to the topics/sub-topics and the format of the examination. Centres are advised to ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements for the new examination. The specification and accompanying support materials including sample assessment materials are available on the Edexcel website.

**Grade Boundaries**

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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