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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Spanish (4SP1 02)
Paper 2: Reading and Writing In Spanish

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There are three sections to this paper. Section A is reading comprehension, Section B is writing and Section C is a grammar exercise. The two opening questions of this paper are based on medium length texts, each with a complete-the-sentence format. Q03 is based on three short texts and a who-said-what grid to complete. Q04 is a note-taking exercise. Q05 is a long reading passage with questions and answers in Spanish. Q06 is a short writing task where candidates have to include 4 stimulus words. Centres are strongly advised to ensure that candidates are trained to use **all** of the words and to include them **verbatim**.

Q07 is a long writing question with three choices of essay, each requiring a different style of writing (eg a blog, an email, an article) and being based around four bullet points. The bullet points will encourage the use of a variety of tenses and an opinion. The grammar exercise is Q08. Candidates are given a text with ten gaps and a word (eg an infinitive or an adjective) that must be manipulated to fit correctly into each gap. One point is awarded for a word correctly modified.

Subject-verb agreement, two verb combinations, tenses and adjective agreement are all tested. The rubric reminds candidates that there may be words that do not need to be changed at all (eg where an infinitive is grammatically correct, or a masculine singular adjective form is required). There are grammatical items of different levels of complexity, so that the exercise is accessible to candidates of all abilities, but there is scope here for the most able to be stretched.

In this series, Q01 was a text with advice to parents on how to encourage their children to help around the home. Candidates had to select the correct sentence ending from a choice of 4. Most candidates scored near maximum marks.

Q02 was a speech by a headteacher about an award ceremony and candidates had to complete sentences summarising the text, by selecting from a bank of words. Candidates needed to consider not just meaning, but also grammar in order to make their selection. For example, when completing the sentence: "Los alumnos tienen...", many words could be ruled out as grammatically incompatible, leaving only "deberes" or "ambición" as possible answers. Most candidates scored highly here.

Q03 was based on statements by three people who had spent their holidays close to home. Candidates had to indicate which of the three had made each of the 7 statements. The instructions inform the candidates that some statements may refer to more than one person or to none of them. Candidates have to place 8 crosses in the appropriate boxes. Most candidates followed this instruction, although there were some who gave more than or fewer than 8. Where more than 8 are offered, only the first 8 are considered, clearly, if only 6 or 7 crosses are placed then some marks will be lost.

Q04 was from the Technology sub-topic and concerned a new app that can be used during a natural disaster. Ten items of information from the text were required in note form. These were a range of numbers, individual words and short phrases. The answers to Q04a and Q04b were sometimes mixed up and Q04c proved to be very challenging. Many candidates gave a misjudged lift from the text: "lugares como en el que vive la ingeniera" or suggested "lugares/países donde hay riesgo de terremotos/desastres naturales". In Q04d, examiners often saw answers like "donde están los centros de asistencia" and "leer mensajes". Sometimes a

mark could not be awarded because they had not given the full details e.g., “la seguridad” alone or “los servicios de emergencia” without “llegada”. Most candidates scored full marks on the rest of the items in Q04.

Q05 was a literary text taken from Fernando Fernán Gómez' play *Las bicicletas son para el verano*. A knowledge of the text was not necessary. Most candidates scored well on this very challenging question, although few were able to score full marks. Q05a, Q05b and Q05c were answered effectively in general. Q05d required inference and only the best candidates were able to explain why the boy was referring to his book. In Q05e, a high proportion of answers did not refer to the noises of the machine-gun, so only scored 1, rather than 2 marks. A surprisingly high number of candidates were unable to correctly give the number of different genres of novel referred to in the text in Q05f. Those who listed the genres, rather than offering a number, were credited if they had identified three. Q05g was answered well.

The short writing task in Q06 was about going to the doctor. The 4 stimulus words were generally included, although “dormir” was sometimes conjugated and “dolor” was seen used as “duele”. Candidates are unlikely to score full Marks for Content and Communication if they do not use the 4 words or phrases verbatim. Some candidates once again overlooked the title and wrote about being ill with no reference to going to the doctor. Teachers should reinforce the importance of reading the instructions and the title carefully. There were very few candidates who did not score full marks for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy. However, sometimes full marks for Communication and Content were not available to candidates because they had missed reference to one of the 4 prescribed words. The longer writing tasks in Q07 produced many interesting essays. Q07a (about working with animals) was the most popular of the three options and Q07c (about children), the least. Q07b was about receiving a bicycle.

In Q07a, the most successful responses were those which were structured into 4 paragraphs, each addressing one of the required bullet points. It was sometimes clear that candidates had not fully understood the required bullet point e.g., in bullet point 2 candidates did not always focus on the idea of “work” when discussing their work experience. Those who stated that they had not had any previous experience of work were considered to have covered the requirements of the bullet point. Bullet point 3 was not always interpreted as a general opinion about voluntary work but rather an opinion about the work experience. Responses where this was seen were credited.

In Q07b, very few candidates addressed bullet point 1 fully. There were lots of mentions of receiving a bike last week or last year but nothing specific about the actual day, which was disappointing. Bullet point 2 was very well done with lots of different ideas given about the benefits of riding a bike. Sometimes in bullet point 3, facts about public transport were given but no opinion was expressed.

Q07c was generally well done by the few candidates who chose this option. Bullet point 2 was the only one where there was occasional lack of clarity. A reference to a specific “incident” (an opportunity for candidates to use a past tense) was not always given.

In terms of Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy, it is worth noting that some candidates, amongst them a good number of native speakers, did not include reference to 3 clear tenses/time frames. It is important to remember that there are mark limitations if certain criteria are not met. They failed to pick up on the clues offered by the bullet points which indicated the time frame to be used.

The grammar test in Q08 was based on a text about life in the countryside and the city. This question was answered better than in the previous series. The hardest elements appeared to be the use of the future tense in Q08g and Q08j and the present continuous in Q08h. It appeared that some candidates did not realise that there was anything on the paper after the Q07 essay. A few candidates who scored well in all other questions did not offer any answers to Q08, perhaps because they did not realise it was there. Teachers need to ensure that students are aware that the final question is Q08.

Given the performance in this exam, students are offered the following advice:

- Check the order of the answers you give in Q04 and Q05.
- Use grammar rules to narrow down your choices in Q03.
- Use all 4 stimulus words exactly as they are printed in Q06.
- Include examples of three timeframes in Q07.
- Complete all questions, including Q08.

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