



GCE AS EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**SPANISH
AS**

SUMMER 2023

Introduction

Our Principal examiners' reports offer valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. They are written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and detail how candidates have performed.

This report offers an overall summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It goes on to look in detail at each question/section of each component, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.ⁱ

The information found in this report can provide invaluable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	Edugas offers an extensive annual programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.edugas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 6 months after the examination.	www.wjecservices.co.uk or on the Edugas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the overall subject, rather than for each component/unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results and Grade Boundaries (edugas.co.uk)

Exam Results Analysis	WJEC Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	www.wjecservices.co.uk
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	www.wjecservices.co.uk or on the Eduqas subject page.
Become an examiner with Eduqas.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with invaluable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Exam Marking jobs Examiner & Moderator Vacancies From Eduqas

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Subject Officer's Executive Summary

This qualification had a low volume entry. Candidates were generally well prepared for the speaking, with candidates also showing strengths on the Listening, Reading and Translation paper. On the Critical Response in Writing paper, it was pleasing to see so many successful responses on a range of works offered at this level. Many candidates had a good appreciation and understanding of the work and of what the director or author was aiming to do. In addition, many candidates were able to produce a good level of language which allowed them to express their ideas clearly and this is very encouraging.

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Useful tips and observations from the principal examiners on the summer series		Examiners' Report on Summer 23 series

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COMPONENT 1 - SPEAKING

Overview of the Component

The majority of assessments were carried out by visiting examiners, with a small number of centres administering their own tests, which were then externally marked. Candidates were generally well prepared, and the different cards differentiated well and proved accessible to candidates.

Comments on individual questions/sections

The best candidates were able to answer both prepared and supplementary questions on the cards by providing detailed responses which were well supported by specific reference to the text, as set out in the mark scheme under AO2. Many were also able to demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of Spanish culture and society as set out in the mark scheme under AO4. Understandably, accuracy and pronunciation, as set out under AO3, were generally better in responses to the prepared question than in those to the supplementary one. Weaker candidates tended to struggle when the examiner asked a question in the past or future tense. The main language errors were adjectival agreements, the use of “gustar” and subject/verb agreements. The best candidates were able to support their views or contradict the examiner by providing detailed responses which were well supported by evidence and specific examples, details, facts, or statistics.

In preparing future candidates, it would be advisable to get them not only to make specific reference to the text (AO2 assessment objective) but to provide further evidence or examples, facts, details, statistics of their own (AO4 assessment objective).

It would also be worth reminding candidates before the examination that time passes very quickly during the test itself, and that they may not necessarily cover all the material they have prepared because other issues raised may be discussed. It should also be remembered that the conversation is meant to be interactive and spontaneous.

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COMPONENT 2 – LISTENING, READING AND TRANSLATION

Overview of the Component

This component assesses candidates' proficiency in Listening, Reading and Translations and includes AO1 (15%) AO2 (25%) and AO3 (10%).

During this series candidates were assessed on content from the two themes:

1. Being a young person in Spanish-speaking society
Sub-themes:
 - Families and citizenship – Changing family structures
 - Youth trends and personal identity – trends in fashion; relationships with others
 - Education and employment opportunities – The education system and student issues
2. Understanding the Spanish-speaking world
Sub-themes:
 - Regional culture and heritage, in Spain, Spanish-speaking countries and communities – Festivals; customs and traditions
 - Media, art, film and music in the Spanish-speaking world – Trends in art; music in the lives of young people

This is a low volume entry subject, but it was pleasing to note that overall candidates did well on this component and that there appears to be a return to pre-pandemic levels of performance. Most candidates did well on the comprehension questions, even if some weaker candidates found the translation into Spanish more challenging where AO3 is assessed. This section of the paper continues to highlight the greatest disparity in marks between stronger and weaker candidates.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Overview of the Component

This component assesses candidates' proficiency in Listening, Reading and Translations and includes AO1 (15%) AO2 (25%) and AO3 (10%).

During this series candidates were assessed on content from the two themes:

3. Being a young person in Spanish-speaking society
Sub-themes:
 - Families and citizenship – Changing family structures
 - Youth trends and personal identity – trends in fashion; relationships with others
 - Education and employment opportunities – The education system and student issues
4. Understanding the Spanish-speaking world
Sub-themes:
 - Regional culture and heritage, in Spain, Spanish-speaking countries and communities – Festivals; customs and traditions
 - Media, art, film and music in the Spanish-speaking world – Trends in art; music in the lives of young people

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Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A – Listening

This section proved accessible for most candidates. In question 2A some candidates failed to make the necessary correction when judging the statement to be false and should be reminded that this is a requirement in order to be awarded the mark. ‘Chelo’ proved problematic in 2A (c) and candidates would benefit from remembering the phonetic spelling of lexical items in Spanish. Many lost the mark because of possible confusion with other lexical items such as ‘celos’ when communicating the message.

It was pleasing to see an improvement in the way candidates handled questions 3A and 3B both of which required a response in Spanish. Targeted lifts were, on the whole, used well.

Section B – Reading

Again, this section was done successfully by many. Weaker candidates were let down by poor Spanish and should be reminded that although AO3 is not being assessed here they will lose marks if they fail to communicate the message.

Section C – Translations

The translation into English was done well by many candidates. Once again, however, candidates should make sure they read back through what they have written to ensure it makes sense and think carefully about context. Some lexical items continue to catch out some candidates such as ‘adolescentes’ which should be translated as ‘teenagers’ or ‘adolescents’ rather than ‘young people’ which could include those in their twenties. Also, candidates would do well to consider the tense being used; several lost marks in this regard when failing to recognise the future tense in section 20.

The translation into Spanish continues to be the biggest discriminator between more able and weaker candidates. Some targeted phrases still prove difficult such as ‘another’ – one word in English and one word in Spanish; many still insist on including the indefinite article. ‘Due to’ is also a phrase that continues to cause problems and has been regularly targeted at AS. On a positive note it was pleasing to see that a good number of candidates recognised the need for a subjunctive after ‘es importante que’.

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COMPONENT 3 - CRITICAL RESPONSE IN WRITING

Overview of the Component

In this component, learners:

- are expected to demonstrate their ability to show knowledge of aspects of the culture and society of the Spanish-speaking world as reflected in the literary work or film that they have studied (AO4)
- must respond critically in writing, showing a detailed understanding of their chosen work within its cultural and social context
- in 2023 produced essays that were similar in style and content to previous series, the paper having performed as expected.

In the 2023 paper, learners chose to write essays on all of the prescribed texts except one. The most popular choice was again the film *El laberinto del fauno* by Guillermo del Toro but also popular this year was Joshua Marston's *María, llena eres de gracia*. This year, it was noticeable that, in this low volume entry paper, more than 90% of the candidates chose to offer a response to a film and there were only a small number of entries on Lorca's *La casa de Bernarda Alba* and Esquivel's *Como agua para chocolate*. It was pleasing to see an essay this year focusing on Almodóvar's *Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios*.

Comments on individual questions/sections

In this paper, the most successful responses are those that are carefully planned, respond critically to the question and offer evidence from the film or work to support points of view.

In **Question 1**, option (a) was the most popular and this required a critical appraisal of how and to what effect Lorca uses symbolism in his work.

Question 2 was not attempted by any candidates in this series.

In **Question 3**, the most popular choice was (b); candidates were required to examine the relationship between Tita and Mamá Elena. This relationship has far-reaching consequences in the novel and, to produce a comprehensive response, candidates could have considered Tita's childhood and her closeness to Nacha as opposed to her mother, Mamá Elena's determination that Tita will not marry and will stay at home to care for her and the subsequent repercussions this has on Tita's life and how she feels about her mother as a consequence. Candidates should aim to consider various aspects of the novel in order to produce their essay and should guard against giving a superficial answer which does not attempt to offer a critical response.

Both options were popular in **Question 4**. Candidates appeared to have a good knowledge of the film and many were able to offer a critical appreciation supported by evidence. Less successful responses tended to be repetitive and sometimes were rather superficial. Good planning is essential as this helps to avoid repetition. In addition, candidates' language needs to be accurate enough for the message to be clearly conveyed and candidates must have knowledge of appropriate vocabulary which they will need to allow them to discuss the work. Many candidates recognised the link between *El Fauno* and the natural world and his apparent father-figure role in Ofelia's life. In option (b), many were able to identify Carmen's representation of oppressed women in post-war Spain and Ofelia's growing closeness to Mercedes as a mother-figure, taking the place of Carmen. When writing the response, candidates should keep in mind the need to make their point, offer evidence from the work and explain what that shows the audience or what the director is trying to do.

In **Question 5**, the popular choice was option (a) which focuses on the theme of obsession in this film. There is a wealth of material for the candidate to discuss and a successful response will offer evidence from the film as well as the candidate's ideas about what this shows the audience about the characters and Spanish-speaking society.

All candidates who answered **Question 6** chose option (a) and considered whether or not María is determined to improve her life. Some answers to this question were very successful, with candidates considering María's home and work life in Colombia, her relationship with Juan and her pregnancy and her friendship with Carla in the USA. Less successful were those which adopted a more narrow focus. Some candidates who chose this option produced essays which did not communicate well due to inaccuracies in the language; Centres are reminded that the message must be clear for the candidate to be able to score highly in the AO4 category.

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To produce a successful response at this level, candidates should:

- produce a detailed, critical appreciation of the literary work or film that they have studied
- offer points of view which are justified and supported by evidence from the literary work or film
- show the ability to accurately manipulate the language
- use a good range of structures and lexis
- use a register that is appropriate to a literary essay.

It is recommended that candidates should:

- plan their work carefully before writing to avoid repetition of the same points
- for each idea follow the structure "point – evidence – comment"
- ensure that they have a wide range of vocabulary that is needed to discuss their particular literary work or film
- remember the importance of AO4 (knowledge and understanding of the culture and society) in the context of their chosen literary work or film.

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team are on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 029 2240 4296

Email: languages@edugas.co.uk

Qualification webpage: https://www.edugas.co.uk/qualifications/spanish-as-a-level/#tab_contacts

See other useful contacts here: [Useful Contacts | Edugas](#)

CPD Training / Professional Learning

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: <https://www.edugas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/>

Regional Rep Team

Our regional team covers all areas of England and can provide face-to-face and online advice at a time which is convenient to you.

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ⁱ Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.