



## **General Certificate of Secondary Education**

# **Spanish 3691 Full Course** *Specification A*

**3691/WC Coursework**

## **Report on the Examination**

*2007 examination - June series*

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## Coursework

Moderators reported positively this year on the general standard of candidates' work. The majority of the work was appropriate, adhering to the titles and addressing them with relevant content. Teachers are in general at ease with the specification, understand what is expected and advise their candidates accordingly. Work covered the range of marks and although few candidates produced absolutely outstanding work, a healthy number did enough to score full marks at this level. At the other end of the mark range, the least able candidates wrote very little of note, often following a template or failing to use verbs other than in the infinitive. However, perhaps because of the changes in language provision in many schools, moderators reported that there were fewer candidates than usual scoring marks below 30. A few of these less able candidates had used a dictionary indiscriminately, the result being a confused text making little sense in Spanish and assessed accordingly by the moderators. Centres are reminded that internet translation packages are not allowed. Most candidates apart from the least able were able to demonstrate the use of more than one time frame, a number using structures which implied the future, such as *me gustaría*, *espero* and *quiero*. Some teachers, marking harshly, failed to recognise the validity of this and awarded less than 4 for Range/Complexity because the candidate "did not use more than one time frame". The use of specialised vocabulary when required was generally good but few students used complex structures or subordinate clauses adventurously and there was an over-reliance on simple conjunctions such as *porque* and *cuando*.

Moderators were also able to report positively on centres' application of the assessment criteria. Most marking fell within the AQA agreed standard. Where marks fell outside the standard, sometimes centres marked too harshly and moderators were able to increase the centre's marks. More often, however, high marks were awarded for Communication when there was little evidence of full descriptions and narration of events and justification of opinions. A few centres seemed to equate quantity with quality and failed to realise that language which fails to communicate the candidate's message fully cannot be awarded high marks for Communication. Moreover, candidates who write far more than the recommended amounts tend to penalise themselves by including much irrelevant content and making more frequent mistakes. With regard to Quality of Language marks, a few centres gave 6 for Accuracy where there were clearly a number of major errors and verb forms were not secure. Most centres, however, seem to have understood the need for use of subordinating conjunctions and different time frames if high Range/Complexity marks are to be awarded.

At the bottom end of the scale, some centres appeared to be unaware that where a mark is awarded for Communication, marks must also be given for Quality of Language, so combinations such as 2/1/0 or 1/0/0 are impossible. Centres should also be aware that where a template or writing frame is used, the maximum mark that can be awarded is 2/1/1. Whilst such use is perfectly permissible, it is clearly, therefore, only in the interests of the least able candidates. One or two schools used a template with candidates who appeared to have the potential to score far more than the limited marks available.

There was still a small minority of centres where internal standardisation had not been carried out satisfactorily and in some cases, centres were asked to remark some of their work. Teachers are reminded that guidance and material is available from AQA to assist in the standardisation process.

As usual, the range of titles seen by moderators was narrow with teachers, perhaps understandably, relying on the tried and tested favourites. Comments on individual titles follow.

- 1.1** Generally well done, though a few candidates misunderstood the title to include someone they knew and admired and one or two even chose an animal.
- 1.2** Candidates did not always stick to one activity, so marks were affected because they wrote a too general account of their leisure time as a whole.
- 1.3, 1.5** Well done in general, though less able candidates sometimes had difficulty in finding opportunities to use time frames other than the present. Some candidates forgot that they were supposed to be *advertising* their area or school and wrote accounts that were either too personal or too negative.
- 1.6, 1.7** Less able candidates tended to get the balance wrong, spending too much time writing about the present or the past rather than concentrating on the future or the ideal.
- 2.2** Still very popular for obvious reasons and usually well done, though here again the balance was sometimes wrong with too much time being spent on a description of where the candidate usually goes or would like to go in the future at the expense of the account of a particular holiday in the past. Moderators saw very few other titles from theme 2.
- 3.1** Generally offered by less able candidates, where it tends to degenerate into a list of foods.
- 3.2** This title is growing in popularity and offers a wide range of different treatments. It was generally well done though some candidates failed to gain Communication marks because they neglected to explain why the meal, trip, etc. which they were describing was a special occasion.
- 3.3** This was a popular title which was generally well done by more able candidates who understood the need to address the dual elements of “fit” and “healthy”. As with 3.1, it sometimes became a list of foods.
- 3.4** Another popular title which was well done by the majority of candidates, though less able candidates sometimes spent too much time writing about subjects studied and plans for future jobs, etc. rather than concentrating on the subject in the title.
- 3.6** Well done by the most able candidates but less able candidates often produced very superficial accounts and found it difficult to develop or justify their opinions.
- 3.8** This, again, is a title which is growing in popularity. While able candidates produced some inventive and imaginative accounts less able candidates found it difficult and often did not have the necessary vocabulary to describe the disasters which befell them.
- 4.2, 4.3** These titles were relatively rarely tackled but gave some able candidates the scope to show what they could do.
- 4.4** Well done on the whole but, as with other similar titles, candidates need to ensure that the balance is maintained and that they spend the bulk of the piece writing about their ideal job.

**4.6, 4.7** Again, these titles were relatively rarely offered but gave able candidates the chance to extend themselves and thus they produced some excellent pieces.

As in previous years, administrative errors or omissions on the part of centres caused the greatest number of problems for moderators. These included the following:

1. Submission of inappropriate titles, rather than ones taken from the bank in the specification. This only applied to a handful of centres but in some cases had a seriously detrimental effect on their candidates' results.
2. Submission of more than one title from the same theme.
3. Failure to submit marks and/or samples by the specified deadlines.
4. Failure to include both pink and yellow copies of the Centre Mark Form. Sometimes also Centre Declaration Sheet was not included with the sample or alternatively was sent unsigned.
5. Failure to send the work of all candidates with the Centre Mark Forms when there are 20 or fewer candidates.
6. Failure to complete the Candidate Record Forms properly: omission of the candidate's signature, breakdown of marks, assignment codes, or an indication of whether work was completed under controlled conditions or not. In some cases, marks on the Candidate Record Form were totalled incorrectly.
7. Incorrect transfer of marks to the Centre Mark Form or illegible marks on the bottom copies of the form.
8. Failure to arrange the candidate's assignments in the order they were entered on the Candidate Record Sheet or to fasten each candidate's portfolio together (preferably with a treasury tag).
9. Marks written on candidates' work.
10. Sometimes, even though a Comments Sheet had been included, the draft of the controlled conditions piece was omitted or, in some cases, where a draft was provided, the centre had not distinguished between the draft and the final piece.
11. Insufficient information on source materials, websites and teacher worksheets included.

It must be stressed, however, that it is only a minority of centres which fail to inform themselves about or adhere to the regulations. The work from most centres is assessed according to the agreed standard and promptly and helpfully submitted, with the relevant paperwork correctly completed.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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

## Appendix – Coursework Administration Good Practice

1. Centres with more than 20 candidates should send the top copy of the Centre Mark Form to AQA and the second (pink) and third (yellow) copies to be received by the moderator **by 5 May**.

The yellow copy is returned to the centre, indicating which candidates' work has been chosen as a sample. Those centres using EDI are required to send one copy of the printout to AQA and two copies to the moderator. The moderator will then return one copy to the centre, showing the candidates chosen as the sample.

2. Centres with 20 or fewer candidates should send the work of all candidates, together with Candidate Record Forms, a Centre Declaration Sheet and the pink and yellow copies of the Centre Mark Sheet to their moderator to be received **by 5 May**.

3. When the centre receives notification of the sample chosen, the following should be sent to the moderator **within five working days**:

- The complete work of candidates identified by 'S' on the yellow copy or EDI printout. These should be original copies and there should be no marks or annotations on the assignments themselves
- The fully completed and signed Record Form, attached to the work of each candidate.
- The completed and signed Centre Declaration sheet
- The work of any candidates flagged by the centre as 'PAR', 'PRI' or 'EDE'.

This material should be sent by first-class post and a Certificate of Posting obtained.

### 4. Completion of the Centre Declaration Sheet

**One** form is required per centre and this must be signed by all of the teachers who have submitted coursework marks (not simply those whose candidates have been chosen as a sample). In addition, all centres must indicate which one of the two procedures they have adopted for Internal Standardisation and the teacher responsible for this must sign again. Finally, all centres are required to provide the signature of the Head of Centre or their nominee. Centres are reminded that this is a requirement of the Code of Practice and without the appropriate forms results cannot be issued.

### 5. Presentation of portfolios

All of the work of each candidate **MUST** be attached securely by means of a treasury tag or string **IN THE ORDER** in which it is entered on the Candidate Record Form. Candidates should also ensure that each sheet that they use bears their own name. **PLASTIC WALLETS MUST NOT BE USED** as their use only adds time and an additional unnecessary task for moderators.

Individual portfolios should be presented in the following order:

#### 1. Candidate Record Form

##### a) Page 1:

- The top right hand corner should give the total mark
- Section 3 should give precise information relating to sources. A reference to, for example, 'Tricolore', 'Viel Erfolg' or 'Mucha Suerte' is not of help to the moderator. Information of the type 'Encore Tricolore 4, Unit 1' is of much greater use. If the

candidate refers to work sheets, and has used these extensively in the preparation of assignments, the teacher should supply a copy of these to the Moderator. Where the internet has been used, website addresses must be provided

- The candidate must sign the declaration.

b) On the reverse of the form:

- The assignment codes (e.g. 3.1, 1.2, etc) should be given and NOT 1, 2, 3, representing the order in which the assignments have been written
- Teachers should indicate the piece(s) produced under controlled conditions by ticking the boxes on the right hand side of the form
- Under Teacher's supporting statement, it is recommended that the teacher explain why individual marks have been awarded, especially in the case of borderline judgements. If no comments are made and the marks seem severe, moderators will generally assume that the teacher has a good reason for awarding such marks and may not adjust the centre's marks. If no drafts have been prepared this should be indicated under Teacher's supporting statement
- Under 'Concluding comments' teachers could include here information about source materials. However, if all candidates within a group have used the same materials, teachers may wish to list these on a separate sheet of paper, to be sent with the sample. The box entitled 'Concluding comments' should be used if teachers wish to draw the attention of the moderator to any assessment issue (e.g. if the mark for the controlled piece is significantly lower than the marks for the other pieces and there is a reason for this.) Comments about candidates' personal qualities are not appropriate.
- Centres are advised to check arithmetical additions carefully and also to ensure total marks are correctly transferred to the Centre Mark Sheets.

## 2. **First assignment**

The same as the first one shown on the Candidate Record Form. In the case of a controlled assignment, and if a draft has been produced, this first assignment should be labelled 'Final version'.

## 3. **Coursework Comments sheet**

If a draft has been produced, centres are reminded that feedback on drafts can only be made by ticking the boxes on the Coursework Comments Sheet. Any extra guidance offered by teachers constitutes malpractice and will be referred to AQA.

## 4. **Draft version of first assignment (if a controlled piece)**

Where a draft has been produced, it should be clearly labelled 'Draft'. If the assignment is a non-controlled piece, the draft should not be submitted to the moderator.

## 5. **Second assignment**

The same as the second one shown on the Candidate Record Form.

## 6. **Coursework Comments sheet**

If a draft has been produced, this should be enclosed.

## 7. **Draft version of second assignment, if a controlled piece**

As explained above.

8. **Third assignment**

The same as the third one shown on the Candidate Record Form.

9. **Coursework Comments sheet**

If a draft has been produced, this should be enclosed.

10. **Draft version of third assignment, if a controlled piece**

As explained above.

New centres, those that require guidance and those that have received adverse comments on the feedback forms issued at the time of results are reminded that AQA provides considerable assistance and support for the Coursework option.

- Marked exemplar candidate portfolios can be obtained via the MFL Department, AQA Harrogate – Tel: 01423 840015
- regional coursework teacher support meetings are held in the Autumn and Spring terms (details available from the MFL Department)
- Each registered centre has been allocated a Coursework Adviser, whose telephone number or e-mail address is available within the centre or from the MFL Department. These Advisers are senior Coursework Moderators, who can assist you with queries.