GCE Examiners' Report

Spanish

GCE AS and A Level

Summer 2026

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Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each unit.

This report opens with a 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 then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.[1]

The information found in this report provides valuable 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	WJEC offers an extensive 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.wjec.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 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC 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 subject, rather than for each unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results, Grade Boundaries and PRS (wjec.co.uk)

[1] ***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.***

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Exam Results Analysis	WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
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.wjec.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.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page.
Become an examiner with WJEC.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Become an Examiner | WJEC

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Executive Summary

Candidates were well prepared for the 2026 suite of examinations, on the whole.

Unit 1 and 3 assessments in Wales are in the fourth year of being teacher-examiner conducted. There is useful guidance for centres available on the website to aid in conducting assessments, as well as a training resource from spring 2024 to further support centres. There will be further training materials available from autumn 2026. The Principal Examiner offers the following key observations and recommendations for improvement in the conduct of the assessment; candidates should be encouraged to engage in interactive dialogue rather than monologues to demonstrate their ability to sustain interaction throughout the conversation and candidates should be steered away from generic discussions which are not related to the Spanish speaking world. From an administrative perspective, centres are advised to use timers to ensure that the timings of the tests are accurate. Centres are also reminded of the importance of clearly recorded tests and it is advised that sound checks are carried out before the assessment begins.

For Unit 1 specifically, the Principal Examiner offers the following advice. In task 1, candidates should use the language of argument and debate. In task 2, candidates should answer the first three questions by referring to the text before any further question are asked. In both tasks, candidates must show their knowledge and understanding of the Sanish-speaking world to evidence their arguments, this is essential in order to access the marks for AO4.

In Unit 3 this year, it was pleasing to see that some candidates had selected engaging and original topics which allowed for more thoughtful discussion and a more analytical response. Successful candidates engage well with the teacher-examiner in the discussion, offer clear answers, develop their ideas and offer points of view backed up with evidence taken from their research. The topic must be firmly rooted in Spanish-speaking society or culture and should allow the candidate to analyse or evaluate. Topics that are too wide in approach should be avoided as they will inevitably lead to a superficial piece of work. Centres are reminded that they can contact the WJEC if they are in doubt about a choice of topic for the Independent Research Project (IRP). All sources referenced on the IRP form must be in Spanish and timings for the test must be accurate.

In Unit 2, sections A & B, the listening and reading comprehensions were completed well on the whole. An improvement has been seen in the way the translation task has been dealt with; to further improve, candidates are strongly urged to read over their completed translations to ensure that it reads well in English/Welsh. Most candidates produced critical responses demonstrating clear planning and extensive knowledge, but a lack of accuracy impacted the quality of the response as a whole, as mentioned in previous reports. The best essays were within the word limit, addressed the question in the title and made good use of the *puntos de partida.*

The Unit 4 paper functioned as expected and differentiation was produced appropriately. In questions that required open response, candidates sometimes struggled to answer succinctly. The responses that candidates write need to be seen as reliable evidence of comprehension. In this sense, extended lifts from texts may not provide that reliable evidence of comprehension as they are simply copying what they see or hear. This is a good message for candidates in future series. It is, also, not necessary to write in full sentences. Question 4 requires grammar and vocabulary knowledge and challenged all but the most able candidates. One further point to make about the open response questions is that where two marks are available, candidates should as far as possible aim to give two distinct and separate ideas from the audio or text, rather than connect them in a single sentence. The translation passage in Question 7 differentiated well and used some

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vocabulary that built on the Wales and the World topic area from GCSE. As GCSE evolves in Wales over the coming series, we shall make every effort to build on the vocabulary base most appropriate to the series but teachers should be aware that the unitised nature of A Level means that this transition may be progressive.

The Unit 5 paper functioned exactly as expected. All questions were attempted by at least some candidates but those focused on characters and themes proved more popular than those focused on style or technique. However, where the style or technique questions were answered, they were done very well. The specification gives guidance as to the scope of study for the works and teachers should build what they teach around that. The best essays had a clear focus on the artistic purpose of the writer and candidates were able to explain the reasons why the writer made certain characters do certain things, the relevance of certain themes and the means of literary presentation. The best essays had impressive elements like reference to the stage directions of a play, the style of narration in first or third person or the use of internal monologues where we see inside the thought of the character. The quality of language was often in line with the quality of the content of the essay but candidates should always consider allowing time for proof-reading. The best practice approach is to plan the content, write the essay and then check the language. This has time management implications that candidates can usefully be trained to apply. Thanks go to teachers for some excellent preparation of candidates for this paper, seen in the depth and perceptiveness of many essays.

Areas for improvement	**Classroom resources**	**Brief description of resource**
Questioning techniques for Unit 1 and Unit 3 assessments.	Guidance for conducting speaking assessments. OER (Online Exam Review) Training Resource Spring 2024. New training available autumn 2026, keep updated via the website.	Documents with administrative information on conducting the test and guidance on questioning technique for Units 1 & 3 (NEA section of the website) Exemplar material. In the on-demand courses section of the Training tab of the website
Accuracy when producing Spanish. Translation support.	Past Papers Mark Schemes OER (Online Exam Review) CPD material Exam Walkthroughs	Previous responses from candidates / mark schemes. Show the benefits of using the text as context for the translation task.

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Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.
Tel: 029 2040 4296
Email: languages@wjec.co.uk
Qualification webpage: GCE Spanish

See other useful contacts here: Useful Contacts | WJEC

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.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/

WJEC Qualifications

As Wales' largest awarding body, WJEC supports its education community by providing trusted bilingual qualifications, specialist support, and reliable assessment to schools and colleges across the country. This allows our learners to reach their full potential.

With more than 70 years' experience, we are also amongst the leading providers in both England and Northern Ireland.

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