GCSE Examiners' Report (Legacy)

Spanish

GCSE (Legacy)

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.
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Executive Summary

Candidates have demonstrated that they are familiar with the format of all four units for the 2026 suite of assessments. The vast majority of candidates attempted all questions on all four units and good attempts were made at all question types. On the whole, it was evident that candidates were entered for the appropriate tier. A recurring area for improvement is knowledge of theme-specific vocabulary. Gaps in knowledge affected comprehension marks on the receptive skills of Listening and Reading and on occasion limited candidates' ability to extend their responses and reach the higher mark bands for Speaking and Writing.

Unit 1 - Speaking

Overall, the tests were conducted and administered in accordance with the instructions set by WJEC and we thank teacher-examiners for the smooth running of the tests. If there are any doubts about the management of speaking assessments, please follow the guidance provided on the WJEC website. There was a noticeable increase in poorer quality recordings and centres are asked to ensure an appropriate venue within the centre so that candidates can do their best in an environment free from distraction and background noise.

Candidates were well prepared for the role play section at both tiers and tended to respond well. The most challenging part for most candidates was forming a question to ask the teacher therefore practicing question formation and learning key words for formulating questions is recommended. At higher tier, responses must be free of error to gain full marks and so candidates should be reminded not to provide overly long responses as this often leads to error. For the photo card section, it was pleasing to see that most candidates for both Foundation and Higher Tier were well prepared by centres to describe the photo, with many using a range of verbs accurately and in a variety of tenses in their responses. In the conversation section, candidates approached this element of the examination with confidence and appeared comfortable discussing the chosen topic, as the content was more familiar to them. The flexibility afforded to teacher-examiners in adapting their questioning to the candidate's ability also enabled many candidates to demonstrate their speaking skills effectively.

Unit 2 – Listening

This year, it was encouraging to see candidates providing sufficient detail in their responses, unlike in previous series where a lack of detail created ambiguity and resulted in lost marks. However, a noticeable number of questions were left unanswered, mainly at Foundation Tier. There were also rubric errors where responses were provided in English rather than Spanish at Higher Tier were also frequent. This inevitably led to a loss of marks.

Unit 3 – Reading

Candidates seemed comfortable with the style and nature of the questions. It was pleasing to see that almost all questions were attempted by most students The translation question in unit 3 reading is an area that continues to need practice. A lack of knowledge of some basic vocabulary continues to cause problems for candidates.

Unit 4 – Writing

Candidates seemed generally well prepared for this unit overall, although there were still a minority of candidates this year at foundation tier level that did not attempt some parts of the assessment. Most candidates were able to satisfy the word count at both foundation and higher level. The question titles allowed candidates scope to produce interesting and imaginative work, particularly at the higher level. On the whole, it was evident that candidates were prepared well for the format of this unit of the assessment. To further improve, candidates should focus on acquiring a better knowledge of theme specific vocabulary and basic grammatical structures.

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UNIT 1

Overview of the Unit

This unit assesses candidates' spoken Spanish and their ability to communicate and interact effectively through a role play, a photo card discussion, and a conversation. The three sections of the examination cover the three broad themes of the specification. While the primary focus is on assessing speaking skills, candidates' listening and comprehension abilities are also evaluated, as they are required to understand and respond appropriately to the teacher's questions.

In general, candidates were well prepared and had been entered for the appropriate tier, with many demonstrating a pleasing standard of performance.

The majority of recordings adhered to the prescribed timings; however, a number exceeded the allocated time for individual tasks, particularly at Foundation Tier. In addition, the quality of some recordings was a cause for concern. Background noise with recordings taking place during lunch and break times were an issue for examiner and poor audio quality occasionally made it difficult to hear candidates clearly, which could affect the assessment of their performance.

Overall, the speaking tests were conducted and administered in accordance with WJEC guidelines. We would like to thank teacher-examiners for their professionalism and for ensuring the smooth administration of the assessments.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation and Higher Role Play

In general, candidates were well prepared for the Role Plays, and most completed them successfully, responding appropriately to the majority of the cues, even if only briefly. At Foundation Tier, candidates appeared to understand that a concise response containing an accurate verb was sufficient to achieve full marks. As a result, there were fewer instances than in previous years of unnecessarily extended responses leading to self-penalisation through verbal inaccuracies.

This remains an area for development at Higher Tier as many candidates showed a tendency to provide overly detailed responses, which often resulted in grammatical or verbal inaccuracies and, consequently, a loss of marks as grammatical structures need to be correct at Higher Tier in order for 3 marks to be awarded. In addition, it should be noted that consistently accurate pronunciation and intonation is needed for candidates to be able to have access to band 3 at Higher Tier. A particular issue this year was the accurate pronunciation of ‘me/mi’ which therefore impacted some candidates’ grammatical accuracy as well as their pronunciation.

As in previous years, formulating the question they were required to ask the teacher was a challenge for some candidates. Centres are therefore encouraged to provide regular practice in question formation and to ensure that candidates are familiar with common interrogatives and question stems such as *¿dónde? ¿cuándo?*, *¿te gusta?* and *¿a qué hora?*.

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During the Role Play, teacher-examiners should also ensure that they adhere strictly to the published script. Any rephrasing or reformulation of the prompts may disadvantage candidates and could result in a loss of marks.

Overview of the 2026 Foundation and Higher Tier Photo Cards:

It was pleasing to see that most candidates for both Foundation and Higher Tier were well prepared by centres to describe the photo, with many using a range of verbs accurately and in a variety of tenses in their responses ensuring that candidates could access band 5 for linguistic knowledge and accuracy.

In addition, most candidates for both Foundation and Higher Tier coped well with the seen questions with many being well prepared by centres to extend their answers with points of view and opinions which led to more extended responses. It should be noted here that candidates could be prompted to us a variety of tenses earlier within responses to access the higher bands more successfully.

The unseen questions remained the most challenging aspect of the photo card for both Foundation and Higher Tier candidates. Most candidates were able to respond to the seen questions to some extent, with many expressing an opinion supported by a simple justification. However, only a minority attempted to develop their responses beyond this.

Centres who exemplified best practice paused after candidates had responded to the initial question before asking *¿por qué?* Allowing candidates time to formulate their first response before being prompted to expand on their answer, often resulting in more developed and successful responses.

A recurring issue at both Foundation and Higher Tier was the addition of extra questions by teacher-examiners. This should be avoided as these additional questions cannot be considered during the marking process and do not contribute to candidates' marks.

Overview of the 2026 Foundation and Higher Conversation

In general, candidates approached this element of the examination with confidence and appeared comfortable discussing the chosen topic, as the content was more familiar to them. The flexibility afforded to teacher-examiners in adapting their questioning to the candidate's ability also enabled many candidates to demonstrate their speaking skills effectively. However there seemed to be more instances of teacher-examiners speaking for a prolonged period or interrupting candidates' mid-sentence, this should be avoided as conveying detailed responses is part of the requirements at Higher Tier.

Overall, most centres adhered successfully set for the conversation providing candidates with the opportunity to highlight their grammatical knowledge as well as a range of vocabulary. It should be noted that candidates initiating the first conversation remained an issue with many centres not adhering to this part of the guidance for teacher-examiners. It should also be noted that teacher-examiners should attempt to adhere to the theme selected as there seemed to be more examples of conversations going 'off-topic' this year.

A number of candidates produced some very pleasing language with a wide range of vocabulary produced but verbal accuracy remained an issue when using a variety of tenses. An additional issue this year was the use of the plural when answering questions about '*las vacaciones' or 'los moviles'*. As in previous years, the range of vocabulary used by some candidates was too limited to meet the expectations of the highest band for linguistic knowledge. Candidates would therefore benefit from broadening their vocabulary and

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incorporating a wider range of complex grammatical structures naturally and accurately into their responses. Centres who exemplified best practice had prepared candidates to use more complex structures when extending their responses.

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UNIT 2 - LISTENING

Overview of the Unit

This unit assesses candidates' ability to understand a variety of spoken texts in Spanish and answer questions in English/Welsh, as well as in the target language in Question 5 at Higher Tier. Overall, candidates found the paper accessible. It was encouraging to see that the question format did not present a barrier and that many candidates responded with confidence across both tiers.

However, a noticeable number of questions were left unanswered, mainly at Foundation Tier. Rubric errors—where responses were provided in English rather than Spanish at Higher Tier (Question 5)—were also frequent. This inevitably led to a significant loss of marks.

This year, it was encouraging to see candidates providing sufficient detail in their responses, unlike in previous series where a lack of detail created ambiguity and resulted in lost marks. There were few examples of one-word or overly brief answers that limited access to higher marks.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation Tier

Q.1 Question 1 was an accessible start to the paper. It was set within the sub-theme of *Identity and culture* and covered *Self & Relationships*. It involved non-verbal responses, with the majority of candidates achieving full marks. It was pleasing to see such success on the first question.

Q.2 Set within *Identity and culture* (*Food & drinks)*, this question involved non-verbal options. Most candidates answered all sections correctly. The most challenging parts were recognising the Spanish for bread (*pan*) in (b) and evening meal (*ceno*) in (c). Many candidates incorrectly linked having bread with break time.

Q.3 Set within *Identity and culture* (*Entertainment & Leisure)*, candidates were required to match names to pictures. Overall, performance was very good.

Q.4 Set within *Wales and the World* (*Travel & Transport*), this question involved multiple-choice options. The most challenging item was (d), where candidates often failed to identify *edad* (age), selecting *nacionalidad* instead due to the similar ending sound.

Q.5 Linked to *Wales and the World* (*Environment*), this task proved challenging and highlighted difficulties at the sentence level. It was the first task requiring verbal responses. In (a), many candidates failed to render *naturaleza* accurately, offering "environment," which was rejected as too general. 5(b) was answered more successfully. In (c), most candidates failed to gain two marks because they wrote a statement (e.g., "students use bikes/cars/buses") rather than noting that students should *avoid* or *not use* cars/buses. 5 (d) was generally well answered.

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Q.6 Set within *Current and Future study and employment* (*Employment*), Section 1 was mostly well answered. However, 6(b) in Section 2 (requiring English/Welsh) proved challenging. Many candidates failed to understand *siempre he querido* ("I have always wanted to") and gave answers such as "works with people / doesn't work from home" instead of "wants to work with people / does not want to work from home". Question 6 highlighted limited comprehension at the sentence level, with candidates relying on word-spotting rather than interpreting full sentences in context.

Foundation and Higher Tier Overlap Questions

Q.7 (FT) and 1 (HT): Set within *Current and Future study and employment* (*School/college studies*). This task required verbal responses. Foundation Tier candidates struggled to achieve high marks, particularly in (a) and (c). In (a), most failed to translate *necesario* and *suficiente*, capturing only *duerme*, *bebe*, and *agua*. This led to pre-assumed answers like "sleep well / drink a lot of water" rather than "sleep as much as necessary / drink enough water". In (c), there was widespread failure to recognize *repartir libros* (handing out books), with many Foundation candidates answering, "read books". Overall performance was better at Higher Tier, where candidates demonstrated stronger sentence-level understanding.

Q.8 (FT) and 2 (HT): Set within *Wales and the World* (*Local and regional features*). In (a), candidates at both tiers struggled to lift the complete detail, incorrectly writing "it carries cars" instead of noting that it *still* carries cars. 8/2(b) was accessible, with the vast majority answering correctly. Most candidates performed well in (c) and (d). 8/2 (e) proved more challenging at Foundation level, where candidates often guessed "productive transport" after hearing *transportar productos*.

Q.9 (FT) and 3 (HT): Set within *Current and Future study and employment* (*School/college life*). At Foundation level, candidates performed better here than in Question 8. The majority coped well with (a) and (b). In (d), many failed to give an unambiguous answer; responses needed to clarify that *students* should be allowed to use mobile phones. Vague answers such as "use the phone" were not credited. Overall performance was better at Higher Tier.

Higher Tier

Q.4 Set within *Identity and culture* (*Self & relationships*). Most candidates coped well, with only a minority failing to score full marks in (a) by giving one-word answers that did not fully convey the required meaning.

Q.5 Set within *Identity and culture* (*Food & drink*), candidates were required to complete a table in Spanish. This was answered reasonably well overall. The most challenging aspect was the spelling of *cocinero* and *variado* (the latter often misspelled as *bariado*). Some candidates failed to score because they answered in English instead of Spanish.

Q.6 Set within *Wales and the World* (*Social issues*), this question was in Spanish and required non-verbal responses. Most items were answered successfully, but (d) proved problematic: the vast majority failed to infer the charity's aim—*educar a la gente* (educate people)—and incorrectly chose *importar comida*.

Q.7 Set within *Wales and the World* (*Travel & transport*), requiring responses in English/Welsh. 7 (a), (b), and (c) were generally well answered. 7 (d) was problematic as many candidates did not understand *cambiar de camino* (change

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route), giving answers like "they walked". Additionally, many offered "they were late," which was rejected as it describes a consequence of the delay rather than the action taken.

Q.8 Set within *Identity and culture* (*Entertainment*). In (a), which asked what the singer wears, candidates often answered with what he *does not* wear, writing *sombrero* without recognizing the negative *no lleva* in the script. In (b), many stated that he has 2 million followers/subscribers instead of 2 million *likes* (“*me gusta”*). 8 (c) was also problematic; candidates missed the idea that fans could see/listen to him *live* (*en concierto*), writing instead that fans were looking forward to a new album. 8 (d) and (e) were better answered. Overall, this was a challenging question.

Q.9 Set within *Current and Future study and employment* (*Employment*). As for the final question, it proved challenging. 9 (a) was mostly well answered, although some candidates failed to use a past tense in their answer, which was rejected. In (b), many failed to recognize the double negative *ni empiezas... ni terminas*, leading to incorrect answers such as "she starts at 9 and finishes at 5". In (c), the text notes that listening to passengers speak different languages is what she enjoys, but candidates wrote that she likes "speaking/learning" different languages. In Section 2, (d) was difficult as candidates missed the concept of spending *quality* time at home, writing simply that she spends time with her children or she is "very stressed" capturing the word *estrés* from the text which seems to suggest they misunderstood the question. Finally, (e) was challenging; while many recognised the reference to an organisation for women pilots, most failed to capture its main goal—inspiring the next generation of women to become pilots—offering incorrect answers such as it is an organization which supports working women with children or it is the organisation the pilot belongs to.

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UNIT 3 - READING

Overview of the Unit

This unit requires learners to respond to a range of questions in English/Welsh and also in Spanish at higher tier. At foundation tier, question 1 required one non-verbal response, followed by four short verbal responses in English / Welsh; question 2-4 short verbal responses with numbers or letters; questions 5-9 short verbal answers in English / Welsh, and question 10 is a short translation from Spanish into English / Welsh. At higher tier, questions 1 and 2 were overlap questions with the foundation tier questions 8 & 9. Question 3 and 4 required non-verbal answers; question 5 required answers in Spanish; questions 6-8 were to be answered in English, and question 9 was a short translation from Spanish into English / Welsh.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Foundation Tier

Q.1 The first question was two short texts from two students giving their opinion about their school from the sub-theme of Current and future study and employability. It required one non-verbal response where candidates had to tick the correct answer out of the three options provided, followed by four short verbal answers. Candidates found this question highly accessible with all attempting it.

Q.2 This question again required non-verbal answers and treated the topic of Holidays and tourism from the Wider World sub-theme. Candidates were given short statements with information about excursions and holidays activities to read and match with short descriptions. Most candidates performed well on this question.

Q.3 Candidates were required to read the opinions of three students about their pastimes and match them up with pictures. This came from the sub-theme Lifestyle within the first broad sub theme of Identity and culture. This question proved to be a little more challenging.

Q.4 This was a grammar gap-fill exercise on the topic of Post-16 study falling under the sub-theme Enterprise, Employability and Future Plans. Unfortunately, at this level, many candidates were unable to use knowledge of grammar rules to fill the correct boxes. With just a basic application of grammar, i.e. with the knowledge that feminine nouns end in ‘a’, masculine nouns end in ‘o’ and plural nouns end in ‘s’ valuable extra marks could have been attained, and this can sometimes be the difference between two grades. This question was challenging.

Q.5 A longer text, an article from a Spanish magazine, with two paragraphs requiring responses in English. The text referred to New Year’s celebrations at home under Customs and traditions within the theme Identity and culture.

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(a) Some candidates gave the answer required in (b) here.

Q.6 This was the first literary extract from the sub-theme of Youth Culture and the topic Technology and social media. There were three short paragraphs. A good attempt was made on the questions.

(e) Many candidates did not understand the information in the text to answer correctly this question.

Q.7 Here we had an article about young people looking for jobs.

(b) There was some confusion between 'your parents' friends' and 'your friends' parents'.

(d) Some candidates misunderstood 'trabajar más de ocho horas diarias' answering 'working after 8 PM', which makes some sense as the texts states 'ni trabajar por la noche'.

Q.8 This was the first overlap question with the Higher Tier. It was a blog about teaching children to recycle.

(a) It posed few problems; 'making it easy and fun' was sometimes answered.

(b) Here some candidates missed the fact that the text says 'estarán más motivados'.

(c) It was well answered in general.

(d) This was one of the more challenging questions for foundation tier candidates. Often 'juguetes' was confused with 'games', and 'historias' with 'history'.

Q.9 A longer literary text on the theme of Identity and culture from the sub-theme Lifestyle. It posed some problems at both levels.

(e) Many candidates answered 'occupied' and 'working' / 'with work', and none of them were accepted.

(f) Many candidates missed the point that the bike was not big, but it was too big for Tomás.

Q.10 This was the translation question from Spanish into English / Welsh on the topic of Health and fitness.

(i) A good attempt by most candidates. Some candidates translated 'estar en forma' into 'to be in form'.

(iii) Many misunderstood 'hacemos' for 'tenemos' = 'we have'.

(iv) Issues with 'no es mucho' sometimes translated into 'it's not too much'.

(v) 'gym' was often translated into 'gymnastics'.

(vi) Issues with the use of future immediate which proved to be a challenge for many.

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Higher Tier

For Questions 1 & 2, see questions 8 & 9 from the foundation tier. As would be expected, these overlap questions had generally better responses at higher tier.

Q.3 This was a blog with three paragraphs about the topic Health and Fitness within the sub-theme Lifestyle. It was an exercise to tick boxes, and the candidates were required non-verbal responses with the rubric in Spanish, where they had to match some activities with a present, past or future time frame.

Q.4 From Youth culture, this was another non-verbal response question. The rubric was in Spanish and this was a gap-fill exercise.

Q.5 On the topic of Travel and tourism this exercise was well answered in general.

(c) Most of the candidates did not know how to say Escocia or Irlanda in Spanish.

Q.6 This was the first 8-mark question, it was a longer text from a Spanish website on the theme of Enterprise, Employability and Future Plans. This question was accessible to most students with many making good attempts at these questions and scoring marks.

(c) Some candidates answered ‘quiz’ which was not accepted.

(d) ‘Habilidades’ was sometimes translated into ‘qualities’.

Q.7 This was another 8-mark question: An article from a Spanish magazine about virtual parties.

(c) Most candidates scored some marks here, however many did not understand ‘música en vivo’. ‘Decorating’ appeared often, however, without specifying ‘the party space’.

(d) It was not that well answered.

Q.8 This was the third and last 8-mark question: A literary text with four paragraphs.

(b) ‘generan muchos gastos’ was sometimes understood as ‘the teenagers spent a lot’.

(c) ‘translado en el hospital’ was sometimes interpreted as if the main character worked as a translator in hospital.

Q.9 The translation was on the subject of Current and future study and employment. The challenges presented in this exercise were;
‘instalaciones’ translated sometimes as ‘installations’
‘tenemos suerte’ translated sometimes as ‘we have luck’
the concept of ‘pizarras interactvas’ was often missunderstood for ‘tablets’, ‘laptops’ and even ‘pizzas’
‘Según’ proved to be challenging for most of the candidates
‘Habrá’ was often mistranslated as ‘it will be’, and
‘mejor’ was often mistranslated as ‘best’.

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UNIT 4 - WRITING

Overview of the Unit

In the 2026 series of the examination, the overall performance and accessibility of the Unit 4 papers was very pleasing, producing the data and outcomes in line with expectations. Candidates seemed generally well prepared for this unit overall, although there were still a minority of candidates this year at foundation tier level that did not attempt some parts of the assessment.

Most candidates were able to satisfy the word count at both foundation and higher level. The question titles allowed candidates scope to produce interesting and imaginative work, particularly at the higher level. On the whole, it was evident that candidates were prepared well for the format of this unit of the assessment again this year.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Question 1

Overall, this question was accessible to the targeted ability range with some very competent answers rendered. Most students were able to produce language for each item, thus gleaning some points on this question. The main shortcomings were as follows:

- Many unable to express the time accurately, with some just producing figures
- or just the number written in Spanish.
- A significant few struggled to name a school facility and instead, described
- something they 'did' in school.
- For their favourite teacher, 'favorito' was often spelt incorrectly and also misplaced in the sentence.

Question 2

There were many successful answers to this question with the vast majority of candidates reaching the word count and using the present tense correctly. Please note the following issues below:

- Many misunderstood the question, focusing particularly on the word Peru, assuming they had to talk about Peru instead of 'tu región'.
- Many did not understand 'lo que' in the bullet points. It would be useful for teachers to practise understanding questions, especially as 'lo que' is very common in these essays.
- There was a particular overuse (in some centres) of mixing English into their Spanish sentences where the candidate did not know the appropriate word/phrase in Spanish. This was then commonplace throughout the essay.
- A huge number of students write far more than 50 words, even counting their words and noting the word count, showing they were very aware of how much they were writing. Unfortunately, this resulted in parts of the bullet points not being included in the relevant part of the essay – the first 50 words. This leads to quite a significant loss of marks, which is easy to avoid if teachers could reinforce the importance of sticking to the word count more closely.

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- The weather was only sometimes expressed accurately. Many confused this with comments about the environment and rubbish in their town.
- Some confused the last bullet point and did not include what they liked or disliked.
- A significant number of students in this tier could not say ‘no es’ but were writing ‘es no’ – a very basic error.

Question 3

Candidates responded well to the theme of ‘past times and hobbies’ and could express a variety of interests.

More than three-quarters of candidates used basic present tense sentences with the majority of these relying on basic terms such as ‘me gusta/no me gusta’.

Similarly, the majority of candidates could use ‘fui’ at least once to indicate one thing they did last weekend. However, in the foundation tier, those who tried to use more complicated or irregular past tense verbs struggled to do so successfully.

Approximately three-quarters of candidates were able to use ‘me gustaría’ successfully to describe something they would like to do, also including simple adjectives to justify their opinion. However, the following shortcomings were observed:

- Some students misunderstood the meaning of ‘libre’ in the question, confusing it with ‘libro’ and assuming that the question was asking about books and reading. Due to the close link with free time, this could often be considered relevant and could gain marks but ‘tiempo libre’ should be reasonably easy to understand even at foundation level.
- Not many students could use the preterite tense accurately and where they did include it, they would often only manage one example of a verb in that tense.
- The last bullet point was generally communicated well, although some did not include the infinitive after ‘me gustaría’ so communication broke down slightly here. Quite often, the other ideas expressed after this were not in the conditional tense and candidates would revert back to the present tense instead.
- Some did not even attempt this question.

Question 4 – Translation

Common errors for the translation sentences were as follows:

- Item 1: many struggled to use an infinitive after ‘me gusta’
- Item 2: the ‘to’ proved difficult with many producing ‘en’
- Item 3: expressing the weather proved very difficult with ‘es sol’ being a popular alternative.
- Item 4: The verb ‘nadar’ was very poorly produced. ‘En el mar’ was not very well recognised at all. Most wrote ‘en la playa’.
- Item 5: Quite well answered overall using the conditional tense. ‘Different countries’ proved the most difficult section.

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Higher Tier – Spanish Writing 2026

Question 1

Comments as per Q3 on foundation tier, except to say that higher candidates perform more confidently on this question.

- A significant number of candidates wrote excessive amounts for this question. Again, if over 100 words and then did not cover the required content within the first 100 words, meaning many marks were lost unnecessarily.
- Many wasted around 30 words writing an introductory paragraph for their essay, explaining that they were going to talk about what they do in their free time etc. These paragraphs did not gain candidates any marks at all because they did not answer the questions and meant that almost a third of the word count was wasted and often a bullet point not included as a result.
- Like in the Foundation Tier, some confused the requirements of the question and talked about Peru.
- Candidates sometimes did not understand the bullet points properly.
- Generally poor command of the preterite tense. Some included imperfect tense but it was used incorrectly.
- Some candidates wandered away from the topic of free time and wrote disproportionate amounts about other topics that they felt more comfortable expressing e.g. town or healthy living.

Question 2

This question produced some very creative pieces of writing from the more able candidates and there was an even mix of candidates choosing Q1 and Q2. The following common points were noted:

- Some excellent, interesting and detailed essays written by many candidates.
- A good variety of opinions expressed and some excellent sentences to justify opinions and with reasons given.
- Word count exceeded quite often with irrelevant content included at times.
- 'Preparing for an interview' caused difficulty to some candidates who interpreted this as preparing for an exam.
- Many candidates expressed opinions about school uniform, but struggled with vocab for clothing.

Question 3 - Translations

As per every year, this question challenges candidates both in terms of vocabulary recognition and grammar production. This particular translation was quite disappointing overall, with very few candidates scoring highly. Basic vocabulary such as 'transport/trains/buses/plane was very poorly recognised.Verbs such as 'improve' produced many versions of 'improvar'. Even 'dar' was rendered as 'donar/ayudar and givear' in many cases. Word order also caused a particular problem, producing 'el público transporte'. 'Más and muy' were also very often reversed. Please find below some of the most common errors:

- Many students were unable to recall the Spanish for 'improve', and most were unable to form the perfect tense.
- 'recently' was often spelled incorrectly.
- The word 'cleaner' presented difficulties.

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- Few students included the article in front of ‘trenes’. This was also rarely pluralised correctly or spelt correctly in some cases.
- ‘efficient’ was better translated.
- ‘buses’ was sometimes confused with ‘coches’
- ‘are not very frequent’ caused a lot of problems, although some student were able to communicate it in creative ways to get the message across, even if some errors were made.
- ‘last year’ was usually translated well.
- ‘I travelled’ was usually not translated correctly – preterite causing trouble again
- ‘by plane’ was usually ok but a surprising number did not know it.
- ‘three times’ caused a lot of difficulty – many ‘veces’ out altogether or using ‘tiempos’ to try and communicate the idea.
- ‘para’ was rarely included before ‘ir de vacaciones’ and most students wrote ‘ir EN vacaciones’, with the latter being spelt incorrectly very often.
- Not many could express ‘el gobierno’, often spelling it with a ‘v’.
- ‘debería’ was rarely translated accurately.
- ‘transporte público’ was often not spelled correctly and quite a number of candidates mixed up the order of these two words – using the English order and misplacing the adjective again

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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: GCSE Spanish (Legacy)

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/

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