

2021 VCE Spanish oral external assessment report

General comments

The 2021 Spanish examination assessed the *VCE Spanish Study Design* and examination specifications. It is important that students and teachers familiarise themselves with the specifications for oral examinations, available on the [VCE Spanish examinations webpage](#). Students and teachers are also reminded that a [series of videos](#) has been produced to help with preparation for the oral examinations.

It should be noted that during the oral examination:

- students may be asked a variety of questions of varying levels of difficulty. Questions may also be asked in a different order from the one that students anticipate
- assessors may interrupt students to ask questions during either section of the examination; this should be regarded as a normal process in a discussion
- assessors may also repeat or rephrase questions
- normal variation in assessor body language is acceptable.

Overall, students completed the oral exam with confidence and a good level of preparation. It is recommended that students often have discussions in class on a variety of subtopics, including their personal world.

At the beginning of the examination students read their student number, introduced the subtopic of their discussion and presented their image. This was the initial introduction before proceeding with the first part of the examination, the conversation.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Section 1 of the examination involved a general conversation between the student and the two assessors about the student's personal world and their interactions with the Spanish language and culture as learners. It is an organic conversation about the student's personal world.

Students were asked questions about their personal world such as school life, free time activities, family, career plans, travelling and so on. The assessors linked these subtopics to the Spanish-speaking world and culture, asking a variety of questions to allow students to demonstrate their ability to maintain a conversation in Spanish. Students were well prepared for this section of the examination and were able to adequately respond to the assessors' questions. Students were asked about their experiences as learners of the Spanish language and culture. Some students spoke about their interactions with the Spanish-speaking community; others mentioned cultural activities such as festivals, dancing classes, singing groups, family parties and so on. Students seemed to enjoy their experiences using their Spanish language skills, and engaging with Spanish and Latin American food, music, reading and art.

Section 2 – Discussion

Following the conversation, the student was required to discuss their chosen subtopic and the supporting visual material that they brought with them.

The specifications require the student to explore aspects of the subtopic, including information, opinions and ideas. It is important to carefully consider the choice of subtopic and supporting image when preparing for this section of the examination. Images that included rich information provided more opportunity for students to be able to offer a greater depth and range of information, ideas, opinions and reflections about the subtopic. While the quality of the visual stimulus was not assessed, students who selected images that were easy to share with the assessors found it easier to communicate their ideas.

Students are reminded that it is not the image that is being assessed, it is the quality of the discussion. Students should therefore select an image that adequately enables them to integrate that image into a discussion about their selected subtopic.

Students presented a variety of subtopics including culinary contributions of Hispanic migrants, cultural festivals, women, Marta's plan, identity crisis experienced by migrants, Barranquilla's festival, Oruro's carnival, Frida Kahlo, cultural identity of children of Hispanic migrants, the Day of the Dead and La Tomatina. Most students were well prepared. They were able to maintain a discussion about their chosen subtopic and interacted with ease with the assessors. They used the images as a good starting point to support their discussion. There is a vast range of culture-related subtopics that students can explore. Spain and Latin America are historically and culturally very rich and present a great opportunity to learn and discover many aspects of the Spanish-speaking world.

Students who scored highly used their image creatively; they were able to point out its significance to the subtopic, add something unusual or unexpected, and use it to move to other aspects of the subtopic. They were also able to demonstrate interest and depth throughout the discussion.

Most students were able to recognise when they had made a mistake and used appropriate repair strategies. Common speaking errors included:

- *la tema* instead of *el tema*, *un clínica* instead of *una clínica* (lack of agreement between article and noun)
- *quiero voy a Chile* instead of *quiero ir a Chile* (verb conjugation)
- *cuando yo vivo en USA* instead of *cuando viva en USA* (lack of subjunctive)
- some confusion in the use of *ser* y *estar* (e.g. *estoy divertido* instead of *soy divertido*).