



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The oral component of the Spanish examination consists of two sections. The Conversation (approximately seven minutes) is about the student's personal world; for example, school and home life, family and friends, and interests and aspirations.

The second section, the Discussion (approximately eight minutes), focuses on aspects of the language and culture of the Spanish-speaking world. During the course of the year, students must spend 15 hours of class time analysing and discussing a range of texts for the Detailed Study. The topics and sub-topics are selected in conjunction with teachers according to the *VCE Spanish Study Design*.

The majority of students demonstrated an understanding of the requirements of the examination. All students observed the appropriate greeting conventions when interacting with the assessors. However, some students introduced themselves by name, including their surname. This is not required and students should be reminded to avoid disclosing any such personal information and not to mention their school name.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

The overall performance in this section was good, and it was a pleasure to see how well prepared the students were. Students conversed fluently, discussing and commenting on issues that came up in the course of the conversation. They presented ideas, information and opinions while maintaining the flow of the communication. Students talked about their family members and occupations, and gave information about their free time activities. They also mentioned the subjects they studied at school and elaborated on why those subjects were chosen, what aspects were more relevant to further studies or their aspirations.

It is recommended that teachers emphasise the importance of maintaining a conversation when helping students prepare for the oral examination. This means that students need to maintain an appropriate exchange of ideas to demonstrate their capacity to link with the assessors. They also need to answer the questions rather than giving a well-prepared speech about themselves. It is equally important that students ask for clarification if they do not understand the question asked as there were instances where unrelated answers were provided.

Many students used accurate vocabulary and grammatical structures and very little English interference was noted. Most students conjugated verbs properly, however, when the subjunctive mood was required many students used it incorrectly. It is advisable to study verbs, moods and tenses during the academic year.

Students are required to advance the conversation and link with the assessors. In order to demonstrate their ability to meet the criteria, students should expand the conversation with comments and descriptions rather than, for example, just giving the number of people in their family. Assessors will often prompt the student with phrases such as 'Could you elaborate on...', 'Tell us...' or 'Comment on...' so that students realise that the ability to communicate with appropriate content and the correct use of language should be demonstrated in this section.

Future students should keep in mind that preparation is the key to this task. Students are advised to prepare a variety of topics related to their personal world. It is recommended that they practise conversing on such topics in class with teachers and with other students.

Section 2 – Discussion

The main focus of this section is to discuss and explore aspects of the sub-topic studied during the 15 hours spent on the Detailed Study. At the beginning of this section, students have one minute in which to indicate to assessors the sub-topic chosen and introduce the main focus of their sub-topic.

Teachers should ensure that students use at least two different text types, and careful attention should be paid to the requirements in the *VCE Spanish Study Design*. This part of the examination consists of a discussion, therefore it is



important to remind students that they must be prepared to express ideas and opinions about the texts analysed, not simply retell the content of the short story or the film. They need to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the texts studied. This year most students displayed readiness and confidence in undertaking this task.

Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

Students must ensure that they comment on their sub-topic rather than simply recite, for example, the film or poem studied. This may involve, for example, explaining how the issues in the text portrayed the topic they are discussing. The assessors are interested in the student's opinions and ideas about the texts studied.

Many students discussed their texts in detail, presented various points of view, making reference to the texts, and demonstrated that they had analysed these in depth. The students' ideas and opinions often made the discussions interesting and fruitful.

Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas

Overall, the majority of students demonstrated that they had spent time and effort preparing for this task and they achieved good results. Many students had chosen interesting texts, expressed their points of view in depth and were able to support their opinions with evidence from the texts studied. However, a few students were poorly prepared and simply described their texts. They were not able to discuss the texts in depth, present opinions or present analytical arguments.

A number of students discussed films; however, some students did not appear to have thought about the topic in depth. One appropriate area of discussion could be people's lives and how realistically they are portrayed in the film.

Students should read or study a text more than once and analyse the various aspects presented. For a film they might comment on the specific aspects that made the film memorable.

Some students studied festivals. They explained what the celebrations consisted of and who celebrated them, and elaborated on the significance of these festivals in people's lives. In general, students' comments and comparisons were rich and varied, and demonstrated an understanding of the cultural, religious and traditional aspects of these festivals.

Clarity of expression

Most students used a good range of vocabulary and grammatical structures. However, some students occasionally used an inappropriate style and register. Students are expected to comply with the cultural formalities of the language, such as the use of *usted* when addressing the assessors. Students who use inappropriate language do not comply with the criteria of the proper use of register and style and poor selection of language diminishes their chances of a high mark.