

External Assessment Report 2012  
Spanish Intermediate 1

There was a slight increase in the number of candidates, from 960 in 2011 to 1033 in 2012. 18 centres presented at Intermediate 1 for the first time

The mean marks for each component were as follows;

Paper 1 Reading 23.9 out of 35 (20.4 in 2011)

Paper 2 Listening 14.6 out of 20 (11.2 in 2011)

Paper 3 Writing 9.3 out of 15 (8.9 in 2011)

Speaking 25.2 out of 30 (25.0 in 2011)

Total 73.0% (65.5% in 2011)

- The results were by far the best ever at this level, with 59.8% of candidates achieving an A, 79.2% a B or better, and 91.9% passing the exam. 3.7% received a D and 4.3% a No Award. 10 candidates achieved 100% in the exam.
- Markers commented on the wording of questions, which was good, and the Marking Instructions, which were considered to be very fair to all candidates. The Pass mark for a C was set at 51%, a B 61%, an A 71% and an Upper A 86%.
- The two shorter **Reading** passages dealt with background information about life in Spain and the city of Bilbao, and the two longer ones about a website for students looking for part time work, and about some young people who had posted their profiles on the website.
- As is the case every year, the **Listening** paper contained five transactional and five personal/social language items, and this year contained vocabulary on numbers and ages, days of the week, family, free time, school subjects, holidays and camping, food and drink, sporting activities and clothing/possessions.

### PERFORMED WELL

- The overall response of candidates was very good and most candidates performed well in all four components. There was evidence that they had prepared well for the examination and that they had been well prepared by their teachers/lecturers.
- There were many excellent performances in **Writing** with a number of candidates going beyond the demands of the task in terms of language and structures and producing flawless, impressive performances.

### DEMANDING

- In **Reading**, candidates generally coped well with all four questions. There was little evidence of extraneous material. Candidates lost marks by not giving enough detail in their answers.
- **Listening** was done very well. However, there remain issues for many candidates.
- In **Writing** there were good attempts made of all four sections by most candidates.
- Inevitably, there were examples which contained confusion with genders and verbs, spelling, accents, and other tongue interference; and a few examples where candidates did not complete three sentences for each section, particularly in the third and fourth sections.

### ADVICE TO CENTRES FOR PREPARATION OF FUTURE CANDIDATES

- There is plenty of evidence that centres are preparing their candidates extremely well for all four components of the Intermediate 1 Spanish exam and that candidates are generally performing to a very high level.

External Assessment Report 2012  
Spanish Intermediate 1

**Reading and Listening**

- Candidates should learn vocabulary for key areas, such as time, numbers, weather, colours, sports and pastimes, food and drink, jobs and careers, places in town, directions, common adverbs, prepositions and adjectives.
- Complacency and lack of care can mean that marks are lost for simple things like easy Numbers and illegible handwriting.
- Candidates should carefully read the introductions and key question words such as **Who, When, What, Why** and so on.
- Candidates should always be careful and take their time with supported questions, which are not always necessarily easier.
- Candidates should be encouraged to give detail in their answers in both Reading and Listening. A study of 2012 Marking Instructions will show the type of detail required to gain the marks allocated.
- Please stress to candidates that they are not allowed to give alternative answers, for example by using an oblique or brackets, be it in **Reading** or **Listening**. If one of the answers is incorrect, they will lose the mark, even if the other one is correct.

**Writing**

- Please share and discuss the Extended Criteria for Writing with candidates.
- The writing exercise is an opportunity for candidates to score really high marks because the exercise does not change from year to year. It is important that they get plenty of practice in this part of the assessment and that they get good feedback on their attempts.
- Candidates have to be aware that they need three verbs in each of the four sections. If not, there is an automatic deduction of two marks for each incomplete section.
- Candidates should be advised to use the dictionary only to check for accuracy in spelling and accents — not to make up new sentences in Spanish.