PRINCIPAL COURSE SPANISH

Paper 9781/01 **Speaking**

Key comments

Candidates should:

● present their introduction "naturally", even if pre-learnt
● demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the topic
● provide evidence of research
● show interest in and personal engagement with the topic
● support opinions with evidence
● avoid sweeping statements.

Candidates should also expect to:

● be interrupted
● be asked to support statements
● be asked unexpected questions
● be asked about the sub-headings in a different order from that provided in the form
● give examples
● be stretched linguistically to their ceiling.

General comments

Candidates performed at a high standard overall in this paper and there were some truly outstanding candidates. There was the perception that candidates had dedicated a great amount of time and effort to research their chosen topics of discussion which gave them the necessary knowledge and confidence to take the lead in the discussion showing initiative and often demonstrating an impressive range of opinions. The discussion of the card theme provided a good amount of variety in the exam discussion as many candidates managed to produce very interesting insights into the given themes.

Specific comments

Topics

There was a wide choice of cards and all of them were chosen throughout the exam series but the cards on Food and drink, Law and order Sport and Human relationships were the preferred ones overall. Card 1 on Sport gave some interesting opinions on doping but this topic seems to have been more challenging for some than originally anticipated. Card 2 of Food and drink gave candidates the change to discuss their ideas on healthy diets but the higher achievers managed to bring discussion beyond to include aspects of organic food production and even soil pollution or other environmental aspects. Card 3 was a very popular choice that inevitably brought discussions on cyber-bullying to the table. Opinions and ideas were varied in content and quality but only the higher achievers managed to establish a link with adult society in the broader context. Card 4 seemed a comfortable choice for many but a few candidates struggled to discuss the legal aspects suggested by the article which perhaps highlights the importance of card selection at the start of the exam. Candidates should give as much importance to the theme as they do to the article itself. Highest achievers were able to take the initiative and discuss the issues with illegal downloads with confidence giving at times rather technical insights into the issue.

In the Topic section candidates were normally able to cope with the different questions that came up in the discussion giving credit to their preparation and skill. Topics that drive themselves more naturally to discussion seem to have produced more fluid conversations helping the candidate to achieve higher scores.

As in previous years, *que yo sepa* was perhaps a curious idiom to choose when setting out factual points on topics the candidates had spent the previous year researching, so it is perhaps best of avoid in this section of the exam.

The choice of Topics was very broad and we welcomed the inclusion of cultural topics of various fields. *La teología de la liberación, La revolución nicaraguense, the Argentinian economy, the Spanish Armada* or *Fujimori's Peru* were only some of the very interesting Topics chosen that ranged from history, to politics, arts or economy. Perhaps one of the most popular choices was *Pablo Escobar* but the range of knowledge on this topic varied broadly. Maybe its recent television success made it seem a more accessible topic.

Control of grammatical accuracy remained a challenge and a few candidates struggled with adjective agreements, which is a requirement to be able to rate one's performance in Spanish as accurate. Some candidates included set expressions containing subjunctives but many missed the use of both present and imperfect subjunctives specially when triggered by negative antecedents. Around once third the type 2 or type 3 *si* clauses attempted did not achieve the correct combination of tenses.

The use of idioms was overall very good, although at times not used in the correct context. As in previous years the use of the term *personas* was too frequent when a number of alternatives are available such as *consumidores, ciudadanos, alumnos, etc.*

This year there were several cases where the topic of choice was not linked to the culture of a country where the language is spoken, as defined by the Pre-U Syllabus. With that in mind, we could recommend candidates to anchor their Topic title to a specific country in those cases where it may not be obvious.

SPANISH (PRINCIPAL)

| **Paper 9781/02** |
| **Reading and Listening** |

Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

● focus only on the required information and communicate it precisely in their answers.
● pay particular attention to conveying the required information to the Examiner in unambiguous language.

General comments

This report will look at candidates' performance in this session, but will also concentrate on giving advice and guidance for future examinations.

This is a mixed-skills paper which allows candidates to show their Spanish-language skills in Reading and Listening. Candidates have 2 hours 15 minutes to complete the paper. They are advised to spend 1 hour 15 minutes on the Reading exercises and 1 hour on the Listening exercises. They may choose the order in which they prefer to tackle the exercises.

Comments on specific questions

Part I – Reading (30 marks)

There are two passages with a combined limit of 500–650 words. The first passage has reading comprehension questions in Spanish requiring answers in Spanish. Although these answers are not assessed for quality of language, candidates must not 'lift' phrases from the passage. The second passage has questions in English that require answers in English. The third exercise is a retranslation from English into Spanish of a paragraph of about 75 words based on the stimulus of the earlier second reading passage.

Reading Text 1 was a passage about *Mi Caleta*, a charity in Ecuador which looks after homeless street children. The test is marked positively and the objective is to communicate the correct response, but not to reproduce the original text word for word. It is important for candidates to use their own words. Full sentences are not required in the answers but the correct information must be conveyed successfully. Accent errors are only penalised if they affect meaning and slight spelling errors are accepted if the word is recognisable, but not if the spelling error leads to another word. **Question 1** was mostly answered correctly, although a few candidates failed to convey the sense of migration or movement of rural people to the city in order to qualify for the first mark in this question. **Question 2** caused very few problems. Only a handful lost the mark, usually because they did not refer the whole of Ecuador. Similarly, **Questions 3** and **4** generally caused few problems for candidates. A significant number of candidates wrongly wrote that the Project could avoid the abuse of street children for **Question 5** rather than child delinquency. Those that gave both options in their answer were not awarded the mark as the first answer invalidated the second. Some struggled to clearly explain the meaning of the phrase given in **Question 6**, but most scored at least one mark as, indeed, they did for **Question 7**. **Question 8** seemed to challenge a good number of candidates who clearly did not understand the meaning of *pedagogía*. However, many got around this by giving answers such as *quiere trabajar en el campo de la pedagogía*. This type of exercise can be demanding in places, but overall the Examiners found that the majority of candidates displayed a good understanding of the Spanish material and were able to write their answers with an appropriate standard of Spanish language.

Reading Text 2 was about underwater forests which scientists believe can be used to fight global warming. The material was generally understood by the candidates, who succeeded in answering the English

questions set on the passage in a fluent, comprehensible way. Many candidates scored high marks on this exercise. Most started well by gaining the marks for **Question 9**. Likewise, **Question 10** was generally answered well, though a lot of candidates did not convey *la misma superficie en la selva brasileña* for the second mark. **Question 11** was understood by most candidates, although some missed detail such as *annual* or *global* transport emissions. Both marks were often gained for **Question 12**, though some failed to equate the size of the area needed to be reforested with that of the Iberian Peninsula, thus only achieving one mark. **Question 13** caused few problems, though some candidates did not understand *arrasado* correctly, using words such as *damaged* or *harmed*. In a similar way, those who wrote that the forests are now completely restored missed out on the second mark for incorrectly conveying *prácticamente recuperado*.

Reading Text 3 was a paragraph in English based on the material in **Reading Text 2**. Candidates had to translate this into Spanish. The previous text contained words and phrases that could help them, but generally some manipulation of language was required. For marking purposes, the text is divided into 30 boxes and these are each awarded one mark or zero. The total score is converted to a final mark out of 10. The correct information should be communicated and suitable and accurate alternative renderings are accepted. Slight spelling errors are disregarded, but not if the meaning of the word is altered. The final mark scheme document gives a detailed list of versions that were accepted or not. Most candidates performed well in this exercise this year. Although slight errors are permitted, the Examiners point to several common errors. The most challenging section of the text for translation proved to be *facing our planet* with most candidates missing the initial preposition *con* or *al* before *que se enfrenta nuestro planeta*. Even if they had managed the preposition correctly, many then used the incorrect gender for *nuestro planeta.* Only about half of candidates knew *indivíduos* (as opposed to *individuales**(sic)). A great many candidates were not able to translate *both on land and in the sea* entirely correctly either, with many trying to use *ambos* in some way. A translation of *something*, also proved problematic for a surprising number of candidates who used expressions like *algún* or *cualquiera cosa**(sic). On the other hand a great many candidates successfully rendered sentences requiring the subjunctive such as *dudo que esto tenga mucho efecto* and *si nuestros gobiernos decidieran*.

Part II – Listening (30 marks)

Candidates have control of their own individual listening equipment. They may stop, rewind and replay the recording at will, and they may make notes and write their answers at any point. There are three passages with a combined limit of 700 to 850 words. The first has listening comprehension questions in Spanish requiring answers in Spanish, whereas questions for the second passage are in English and require answers in English. Answers in the target language are not assessed for quality of language but for communication. Candidates then listen to a third recording of about 250 words and summarise it in English using bullet points for guidance (maximum of 100 words).

The extract for **Listening Text 1** was an extract in which Gregorio García Álvarez and his daughter Yolanda talked about their *bodega*. The test is marked positively and the objective is to communicate the correct response, but not to reproduce the original text word for word. It is important for candidates to use their own words. Vocabulary items need to be understood but they should be conveyed in an answer that is a logical response to the question. Full sentences are not required in the answers but the correct information must be conveyed successfully. Accent errors are only penalised if they affect meaning and slight spelling errors are accepted if the word is recognisable, but not if the spelling error leads to another word. It would appear that candidates understood the material well and produced sound responses. Many candidates scored highly in this exercise, though one or two areas caused problems for some. In **Question 16**, for example, some candidates showed that they had not fully understood Yolanda's words by transcribing what they heard incorrectly with answers such as *pegar la tierra*. **Question 17** also caused difficulties for some candidates most of whom did not appear to understand *endeudarse*. Some also failed to score the mark for **Question 19** for not conveying the idea of Gregorio giving or passing on the *Bodega* to his daughters which was implied in the phrase in the question. A surprising number of candidates did not know the Spanish for Belgium to score the mark for **Question 20**, giving answers such as *Belgo, El país de belga* and *Belica.* Quite a few struggled in **Question 21**, misunderstanding *excelente* and giving answers such as *la estilente cosecha*.

Listening Text 2 was a news report about forest fires throughout Spain. Candidates appeared to understand the material well and produced some good, thoughtful answers. Occasionally, however, rather than weak comprehension of the Spanish material, a candidate might have lost marks because of failing to give full information. For example, in **Question 23** it was not sufficient to write *the risk level is highest*. It was necessary to make clear what kind of risk (the risk of a forest fire). Some candidates did not understand *campanas* for **Question 25** seemingly confusing it with *countryside*. Similarly, *las llamas* caused confusion in

Question 26, with many candidates responding with answers such as, *shouts at the gates of the town*. Generally, candidates gave good answers for **Questions 27** and **28** and many achieved high scores as a whole in this task.

Listening Text 3 was an extract in which César Pérez de Tudela, a well-known Spanish explorer, talked about the Lost City in Colombia. The test required a summary of his views in no more than 100 words in English. There were four bullet points of information to be covered. The full gist of the passage needs to be understood, there has to be detail and it needs to be well selected. The material should be expressed concisely, read well and be informative. The 10 marks available are awarded positively according to these criteria. Length is important. A summary with fewer than 80 words is likely to be self-penalising, as all the above criteria are unlikely to be met. On the other hand, candidates should beware of writing over-long summaries. It should be stressed that the Examiners operate a cut-off point and any material written beyond that point cannot be assessed, even if it is correct. Many candidates appeared to find the material accessible and there were some high marks awarded in this exercise. They appeared to be familiar with much of the vocabulary and concepts in the extract. Candidates were able to infer ideas and showed an ability to select key facts and to communicate this information concisely. Sometimes, however, candidates only used isolated phrases that they had heard in the text without attempting to make sense of them in coherent statements. Although continuous English prose is not required to answer this test and bullet points are acceptable, they must contain enough information with logical links and coherent statements. Otherwise, the marks cannot be awarded. This year some common errors included translating *hamacas* as *tents,* and *torrentes* as *storms*. The most challenging concept for candidates to grasp was *se ignora casi todo,* which most candidates took to mean *ignore* as opposed to *lack knowledge of.* Generally, however, most candidates produced a suitable summary and gained good marks.

Advice and Guidance to candidates

Listening and Reading Comprehension

What comprehension skills are required?

● The material for the texts may come from any of the Topic Areas in the Syllabus.
● The material could be factual or abstract.
● Inference – you have to work out the answers.
● Manipulation – you will be expected to manipulate the language.
● Explanation – you will need to explain.
● Synthesis – you may need to combine points of information.
● Full information is always required – answers may be long.
● A high level of Quality of Language is expected – accuracy and sophistication are needed.

Answering Spanish questions set on the texts

● Remember that full sentences are not required. However, the full information asked for must be given.
● Highlight the question words (¿quién?, ¿cómo?, ¿cuándo?, etc.), so that it is clear what information is needed.
● Note how many marks are awarded for each question, so that no essential information is omitted.
● Try to use your own words and do not reproduce the language of the texts word for word.
● Practise building a wide Spanish vocabulary, so that you are at ease using synonyms for words in the texts.
● Remember that your Spanish answers must make sense. If they do not, then there is something wrong.

Answering English questions set on the texts

● Write your answers in good English and check your spelling.
● Beware of 'false friends' (words that look alike in Spanish and English but have different meanings).
● Realise that some Spanish words can often have two meanings; choose the correct one.
● Find the appropriate English word, not necessarily one that looks similar to the Spanish word.
● Make sure your whole answer sounds like real English and makes sense to someone reading it.
● Make sure that you give the full information required; do not omit any essential information.

Retranslation for Reading Task 3
● Study the Spanish stimulus passage in Reading Task 2 carefully: it gives vocabulary and structures to be used and re-worked.
● Read the English passage and understand what is required.
● Study the setting, context and tone of the extracts.
● Use sensible and intelligent guesses where vocabulary is not known.
● Never leave gaps.
● Think carefully about the grammar of the sentence being translated; Examiners regularly point to the failure of candidates to translate tenses correctly, to spot adjectival agreements and to link pronouns with the nouns to which they refer.
● Beware of literal translation and poor/meaningless Spanish.
● Beware paraphrasing – do not stray too far away from the original.
● On the other hand, do not be afraid to change word order, parts of speech, etc.
● Remember that accuracy is more important than creativity.

Summary skills for Listening Text 3
What are summary skills?

● All the bullet points have been covered.
● The gist of the passage has been understood.
● There is detail and it is well selected.
● The material is expressed concisely.
● The material reads well and is informative.
● There is no incorrect information.

Advice on summary skills

Writing a good summary is a matter of regular practice and also of acquiring the correct technique. An unsuccessful attempt at a summary may be due to lack of understanding of the original text, but more often than not, it is the way the exercise has been tackled that is at fault.

● Listen to the passage until you have a good idea of what the whole text is about.
● Do not start summarising (or even translating) every sentence; you will not be discarding the less significant details and you will quickly run out of words.
● Make rough notes on the question paper; you are not likely to have time to write out a full version of the summary and then write out a clean copy.
● It is often not necessary to know the meaning of every word – do not panic if you do not understand something.
● Remember this is a summary – be selective – you cannot include every bit of information.
● Make sure that you cover all the bullet points.
● Spread the words: it is a common error to say too much about the first half of a passage and too little (or nothing at all) about the last parts.
● 'Prune' written summaries, removing unnecessary words without deleting the main points that you wish to convey.
● Absolutely stick within the word limit – do not exceed 100 words.
● Check the accuracy of everything you have written.

The Quality of your Spanish Language

● Remember that essential Spanish grammar knowledge is required; you should aim for responding in accurate language.
● Be confident in your use of all Spanish tenses, in particular the present, preterite, imperfect and conditional, both regular and irregular.
● Be able to use tenses with all persons, not just the first person.
● Be able to switch between the first and third persons with confidence, as this is often required in comprehension passages.
● Use pronouns with confidence, in particular *le* and *se*, and be able to switch from first person to third person pronouns and adjectives with ease (e.g. *mi* to *su* and *mío* to *suyo*, etc.).
● Use *gustar* and similar verbs properly in all tenses.
● Be strict when applying the correct articles and adjectival endings (e.g. un problema, cinco rosas rojas, etc.).
● Know when accents are important (e.g. *trabajo* or *trabajó*? *esta, esta or ésta?*).
● Be familiar with the subjunctive mood: know when and how to use it successfully.

SPANISH (PRINCIPAL)

> **Paper 9781/03**
> **Writing and Usage**

Key messages

In Paper 3 candidates are expected to demonstrate general knowledge of topics and to express an opinion on the essay title they have chosen. They show understanding of the implications of the task through their ideas, arguments, real live examples and a wide range of vocabulary. Candidates need also to show an understanding of how grammatical structures are applied accurately.

General comments

Generally speaking, candidates who did well in Part I were able to show deep knowledge of the topic area covered in the chosen essay question. They substantiated their arguments with an appropriate mixture of description, analysis and evaluation. The best candidates supported opinions with evidence and avoided sweeping statements.

Most candidates were well prepared and had something interesting to say about their chosen topic. Language, on the whole, was of a high standard and there were some very good examples of fluent, accurate essays with a natural use of Spanish idiom. However, occasionally, candidates used pre-learnt Spanish expressions inappropriately which spoilt, rather than enhanced, the impression of authenticity and fluency (such as *empero* instead of *pero* or *sin embargo, baladí* and *plétora*).

Overall, handwriting was clear and answers were well organised into paragraphs. However, there were a number of candidates whose presentation was untidy, often making their answers difficult to read. Some candidates didn't state clearly which essay title they were tackling and with generic and unclear introductions, it wasn't until the second paragraph that it became clear which essay they had chosen. Candidates are advised to cross out the essay plan so that it is clear where the essay starts.

About half of essays were significantly longer than the recommended word count. This usually resulted in a lot of repetition or superfluous information that did not add to the quality of the answer and, in some cases, detracted from it.

It is important to remember that relevant, real life examples that fit the question should be included to achieve a better essay and better marks.

In Part II, candidates were asked to manipulate sentences and complete a multiple choice task. Both tasks demand detailed knowledge of grammar and confidence in its application.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1 Discursive Essay

(a)   This was the second most popular essay question. Most candidates tackled the subject well, giving good, sometimes personal, examples of the effects of following diets. The overwhelming majority of answers showed a thorough understanding of the topic and displayed an ability to reference real life situations to back up their arguments. Some examples were more credible than others.

(b)   Answered by a relative few candidates, this essay question was not usually dealt with thoroughly. Some candidates struggled to find something of substance to say on this topic, presenting vague and stereotypical ideas about poverty and wealth with no real life examples to support their argument. Some candidates drifted a little from the question by writing about the importance of money in society in general without relating this to human relationships or comparing it with the importance we give to love. Many answers were vague and disjointed with few examples given to support hypotheses. There were some very good responses which gave coherent answers backed up by relevant examples.

(c)   This was the third most popular essay question. Only a few candidates managed to give enough relevant examples and details to support coherent responses. The majority of candidates only considered the search for habitable planets in their assessment of space exploration, whilst the best candidates looked at the wider benefits such as the use of satellites and experiments carried out from the international space station to evaluate climate change and other phenomena on Earth.

(d)   This was the most popular essay question this year. Candidates were able to draw on recent elections in this country and others such as the United States and France to give examples of how voting works and to assess the pros and cons of systems in these countries in order to come to some conclusions as to whether or not voting should be made compulsory. There were some very convincing essays but some, on the other hand, seemed to make up incorrect statistics which invalidated some of their arguments. Some examples were more verifiable than others.

(e)   This was the least popular essay question this year. However, there were some very good answers with some candidates able to draw on their own experiences of working with NGOs. The best answers recognised that NGOs work in a variety of contexts – not just helping the poor – referring to charities that work for the elderly, the environment, the mentally ill, etc.

Part II: Usage

This year, most candidates scored more highly in Exercise 2 than in Exercise 1. All candidates performed well in Exercise 3.

Exercise 1

2   Many candidates answered this question successfully, but others thought they needed the subjunctive form *hagan*.

3   Many candidates failed to spell *persiguió* correctly by either missing the *u* or omitting to change the second *e* to *i*.

4   The irregular past participle caused difficulty for many candidates as did the positioning of the pronoun *se*.

5   Many candidates missed out on a mark for this question by omitting to place the accent in the correct place or at all.

6   Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Exercise 2

7   Many candidates answered this question successfully. Those candidates who weren't successful wrote answers such as *tan cuido* [sic] or *mucho cuidado*.

8   Most candidates answered this question successfully. A number of candidates missed the mark because they chose the infinitive *concentrar*, such as *no concentrar* perhaps showing they did not understand *por falta*.

9   Many candidates answered this question successfully. Some candidates omitted *en*, invalidating their answers.

10   Many candidates had difficulty with this question. Some tried to write complicated responses such as *si hubiera hecho buen tiempo*.

11   Many candidates had difficulty with this question. Those who failed to score this mark usually did so because they were unsure of where to position the pronoun *me*.

Exercise 3

This exercise is based on a short article about culture in Spain. Candidates had to choose the right answer from a choice of four options. Most candidates scored highly in this exercise. Where mistakes were made, they usually occurred on Questions 12, 13, 15, 19, 20, 27 and 30.

PRINCIPAL COURSE SPANISH

**Paper 9781/04
Topics and Texts**

Key messages

To achieve high marks for content a focused, wholly relevant and analytical response to the question is required. Essays should keep to the recommended length of 350–500 words for **Part I** and 450–600 words for **Part II**.

General comments

This year's candidates answered questions on five of the eight Texts and four of the five Topics. The overall level of attainment remained good, with most candidates able to address their chosen questions and make valid critical judgements on the works they had studied.

Candidates seemed well prepared for the examination overall. Most used the texts/films effectively with judicious and accurate use of quotation and referral to scenes, dialogue and cinematographic/literary technique.

The length of answers varied widely. Some candidates did not write enough to include sufficient evidence to support their argument. There were instances of the final essay not covering points which had been in the plan. Others filled the time by writing at length on points of lesser relevance, to the detriment of the essay's overall quality. Essays of over 1500 words were produced by some candidates (almost three times the guideline length), but a number of these seemed muddled and/or rushed. It may be helpful for candidates to scrutinise their plans to eliminate any sections that may cause them to stray into narrative or that lack relevance to the essay title.

The best responses displayed a sound essay technique in both Spanish and English, exhibiting the necessary vocabulary to introduce paragraphs, present ideas, compare and contrast, analyse, consider use of language (where appropriate) and write effective introductions and conclusions. Candidates were generally well versed in how to construct an argument, link ideas and build a case. There was a welcome decline in the use of adverbs such as 'incredibly' to qualify adjectives.

A growing trend this year was for candidates to restate the question as the closing sentence of their introductory paragraph. As the examiner is aware of the question this does not seem to be necessary.

As in previous years, the 2017 results demonstrate that there are no 'easier' or 'harder' Topics or Texts, and that the 'difficulty' of a work does not correlate to its length. What matters is that centres study works that enthuse teachers and students alike and that provide them with enough challenging content to enable candidates to offer cogent analysis on the day of the exam.

Comments on Specific Questions

Part I: Cultural Topics

All candidates drew on at least two of the prescribed texts/films. The exam paper allows references to 'other sources', making it permissible to cite the third prescribed work (which may be helpful with film Topics) or, for example, interviews or articles expressing the author/director's views.

Most but not all candidates appeared attuned to the mark scheme for language and duly attempted complex sentence patterns in order to score a high mark for that element. Some candidates would have benefitted from paying closer attention to the key vocabulary needed in Spanish to discuss the Topic: there were instances where the candidate was referring to events in the text/film and could not express him/herself

accurately. Some Topic answers contained bulky, pre-learned Spanish phrases, but there was a countervailing trend to shorter, more effectively deployed linguistic flourishes that did not impede and at times enhanced the flow of the argument.

Question 1

(a)   High-scoring responses identified the change in Santi's relationship with his sister as he becomes a fatherly figure to her. They also commented on his urge to console Valentin after his father's death. Most candidates managed to identify Luisito's need to become a family leader towards the latter stages of the play. The symbolism of the bicycle that becomes a working tool for him was only perceived by a few candidates.

(b)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

Question 2

(a)   High-scoring responses contextualised the relevance of these stories' settings and gave insights into the characters' relationship with these locations.

(b)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

Question 3

(a)   Most candidates avoided the temptation to speculate about how Franco would have rendered the films had he been the director. A few erroneously attributed traditions such as cleaning graves and the *velatorio* to the dictatorship or offered claims about the degree of *solidaridad* in Spanish society under Franco. Others digressed on the Franco regime or the influence of the *movida madrileña* on these films. A number of candidates limited themselves to one aspect of the question, e.g. the portrayal of women. It was relatively unusual to read an essay which included comprehensive analysis of all the main points raised by the question. Writing on *Volver*, most candidates managed to establish a link between the representation of strong, independent women and the female stereotype of the Franco era. Most responses identified the subversion of identity in *Todo sobre mi madre* and its departure from traditional stereotypes (e.g. single-parent families, transexuality). For *Hable con ella* many candidates focussed on Benigno's personality: fewer identified the subversion of gender stereotypes and illustrated it with examples.

(b)   This year's candidates showed wider awareness of Almodóvar's published comments on these films, which was useful in interpreting his work and his depiction of *engaño* as a positive force.

Question 4

(a)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

(b)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

Question 5

(a)   It was helpful with this question to establish a clear definition of *destino*. Candidates were not always successful in illustrating *destino* in *Romancero Gitano*, perhaps because they chose poems in which that theme is less evident. A number of general points were made about Greek tragedy and characters' choices and pressures, but often these observations were not related to the question. Some candidates strayed from the question by writing about oppression or tragedy, with particular emphasis on the deaths of Juan and Adela, rather than destiny.

(b)   The *honor/honra* distinction was addressed by a number of candidates, with mixed success. The importance of the honour code to both Yerma and Juan was well discussed. Most candidates offered good analysis of the traditional values and the obsession with decency in *La casa de Bernalda Alba*, although some responses overlooked the range of possible motivations underlying the matriarch's emphasis on family honour. *La monja gitana* and *La casada infiel* offered useful insights on the honour theme from *Romancero Gitano*.

Part II: Texts

Candidates gain marks for both content and structure in this section of the paper, yet even some of the better responses missed out on the maximum structure mark because of the lack of a comprehensive introduction and conclusion.

Question 6

(a)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

(b)   Candidates generally knew the text in detail and used quotation and references well. Their essays often showed excellent awareness of the historical context and social mores.

(c)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

Question 7

(a)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

(b)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

(c)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

Question 8

(a)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

(b)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

(c)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

Question 9

(a)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

(b)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

(c)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

Question 10

(a)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

(b)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

(c)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

Question 11

(a)   Candidates readily identified the context and the key themes. It was impressive that the majority were able to identify the role reversal between Mosén Millán and Paco and to distinguish between the latter's Christian values and the priest's lack of compassion. It was less common for candidates to identify the fatalism of the priest's outlook. Observant candidates noted the way in which this passage conveys a child's (i.e. Paco's) perspective on the preceding scene in the caves. Some otherwise excellent answers fell short of top marks because they omitted a key aspect of the passage, e.g the portrayal of Paco's parents or the comparison between the *enfermo* and the *crucifijos abandonados*. Attempts to analyse stylistic elements of the passage proved challenging, given the conventional third-person narrative of this extract.

(b)   More successful answers to this question showed an understanding of the term 'stereotype'. Candidates who lacked a clear definition found the question challenging. Nonetheless, an interesting range of opinions was offered, though some candidates struggled to find appropriate evidence to support their case. Many correctly analysed the novel as *un esquema de toda la Guerra*.

(c)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

Question 12

Many candidates accurately analysed the themes targeted by the questions, though some essays included too much narrative. References to magical realism or Colombian history were sometimes illuminating, but at other times led to digressions. Likewise, information about *la violencia*, García Márquez and *la guerra de los mil días* was not always effective in addressing the question.

(a)   Some answers confused the Colonel's wait for the letter and his wait for Don Sabas. Many passed over the non-realist content of the passage, even though stylistically this is a recurrent and distinctive feature of the novel. Attempts to read inferences into the author's use of verb tenses often overlooked the possibility that he was simply following the usual rules of grammar. Some candidates successfully brought out the sense of isolation inherent in the passage, and of the Colonel having been left behind.

(b)   Responses tended to focus on the violence and oppression implied or evident in the text. Some answers overlooked Sabas' role as a foil to the Colonel in the economic power structure. The most common error was to portray Don Sabas or even the lawyer as government officials, missing the subtlety of their positions in the power structure. Some candidates wrote about corruption, hardship and Don Sabas' greed rather than about power structures. Perceptive answers included reference to the doctor as an authority figure outside the hierarchy, and to Agustin's friends forming a clandestine anti-regime power structure. Some included a reference to the relative power of the Colonel and his wife in their domestic environment.

(c)   Some candidates struggled to establish a connection between the Colonel not selling the cockerel and the political situation depicted in the novel. High-scoring responses linked the cockerel to Agustin's memory, his political activity and, by extension, the political dimension of *la gallera*. It was helpful in this question if candidates showed an accurate understanding of the discussions between the Colonel, Don Sabas and the doctor about whether the former should sell the bird and at what price. Most answers successfully identified the symbolic value of the rooster and its role as a symbol of hope for the *pueblo*.

Question 13

(a)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

(b)   This question was a popular choice, with most candidates identifying the irony that the reaction of the conventional family members to the Mario–Tía Julia relationship is more shocking than the relationship itself. The best answers alluded to the pathos of Tía Julia's situation, whereby she is perceived as inherently scandalous through no fault of her own, and to the scandal caused by the confusing of the *radioteatro* plots.

(c)   There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.