



**National Qualifications 2012  
Internal Assessment Report  
SPANISH**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

# National Courses

Titles/levels of National Courses verified:

Spanish: Intermediate 1 — C063 10

Spanish: Intermediate 2 — C063 11

Spanish: Higher — C063 12

## General comments

Verifiers this year were, for the most part, in agreement with centres' application of National Standards in assessments in speaking at Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher levels. It is evident that most centres are familiar with applying National Standards. Verifiers also noted that most candidates were very well prepared, and that interlocutors in general brought out the best in their candidates.

## Course Arrangements, Unit specifications, instruments of assessment and exemplification materials

It was clear that this year centres had again understood Course Arrangements and recommendations as outlined in the document entitled *National Qualification Assessment of Speaking in Modern Languages*. Most centres were familiar with the categories, criteria and pegged marks as detailed in this document.

## Evidence requirements

The majority of centres are very familiar with the advice and instructions contained in the document *Instructions for Modern Languages Departments on the Conduct of the Recorded Speaking Assessment*. In terms of Evidence Requirements, all centres understood what was required of candidates. It would be useful for centres to include the assessment selected for Intermediate 1 assessments.

## Administration of assessments

Centres have displayed thorough knowledge of Course Arrangements, Unit specifications, and instruments of assessment. Verifiers noted that there were many examples of Very Good and Good performances, and in general centres had prepared their candidates well for the speaking assessments.

Most centres gave candidates the opportunity to cover a wide range of topics. In general the content of presentations and discussions was appropriate to the level (Intermediate 2 and Higher levels). At Intermediate 1 level, all candidates, almost without exception, used vocabulary and structures entirely appropriate for this level.

In some centres where there was more than one interlocutor it was clear that the interlocutors had had discussion about the marks awarded, and for the most part verifiers agreed with the decisions made.

## **Areas of good practice**

### **General comments**

For the most part, centres had prepared their candidates well to take part in discussions and to demonstrate knowledge of an appropriate range of vocabulary for their level. In addition, interlocutors were helpful, sympathetic and supportive to candidates and brought out the best in them. There were some examples of very good interactions between interlocutors and candidates especially at Intermediate 2 and Higher levels, where candidates were able to express opinions and reasons and give extended answers.

### **Intermediate 1**

The performances of candidates at this level were generally strong and it was pleasing to note that most candidates tried to go beyond the minimum required.

### **Intermediate 2**

There was evidence of many examples of good and very good presentations, where candidates had explored a topic or addressed a number of topics.

### **Higher**

Some centres had prepared pupils well for the speaking assessment, giving pupils ample opportunity to go beyond minimal responses and handle a wide range of structures and vocabulary. Generally there was evidence of a good range of topics and themes being covered in the candidates' performances.

## **Specific areas for improvement**

It was disappointing to note that this year there were more centres in the 'Not Accepted' group than in previous years. This was due to centres either being too generous or too severe in their marking. It is recommended that, where possible, centres participate in internal verification of their candidates' performances and also ensure that they have a good understanding of the criteria and pegged marks which they should then allocate to their candidates. In order to prepare thoroughly for conducting the assessment, it would be useful for centres to listen to and read the commentaries of the exemplar performances for Spanish available from SQA.

In the discussion part of the assessment at Intermediate 2 and Higher levels, centres should try to elicit opinions and ideas from candidates rather than factual statements to allow candidates to demonstrate a wider range of vocabulary and structures. At Higher level, centres should also ensure that the discussion begins from the original topic of the presentation and moves into one of the other prescribed themes. In some centres, it was clear that candidates had not been given enough practice in discussion techniques and this led to lower marks being awarded as candidates had limited opportunities to show a wide range of structures. Candidates should practise participating in discussions and learning good discussion techniques as part of the learning and teaching of the Intermediate 2 and Higher courses. Candidates should also be able to answer unexpected questions to ensure that the discussion is exactly that, and not a series of prepared mini presentations.

Again verifiers noted some examples of poor pronunciation by candidates which contributed to a lower mark being awarded. Some centres must spend time on pronunciation and intonation as part of the learning and teaching of Spanish at the three levels. There were also instances of candidates being unable to implement basic pronunciation and grammatical rules.