

# **National Qualifications 2006**

## **Senior Moderator Report**

**Subject: Spanish**

**Assessment Panel: Modern Languages**

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on moderation which has taken place within National Qualifications in this subject.

## COMPONENT / COURSEWORK IN NATIONAL COURSES

### COMPONENT/COURSEWORK MODERATED

#### Speaking assessment at Intermediate 1, 2 and Higher levels

### FEEDBACK TO CENTRES

#### General comments:

Moderators found clear evidence of the following across all three levels:

1. A good understanding by centres of the pegged marks and descriptors;
2. A wide range of topics covered in the discussion (Intermediate 2 and Higher) with appropriate vocabulary and structures being used;
3. Candidates being well prepared for the assessment;
4. Many interlocutors are supportive and encouraging of the candidates.

#### Advice on good practice and areas for further development:

##### General comments

The moderators were pleased with the high level of centres where candidates were engaged in spontaneous discussion that came across as natural. The skills of the interlocutor in such cases provided a supportive and encouraging environment in which the assessment was conducted. This does tend to bring out the best in the candidates.

Overall, it was felt that centres were accurate regarding the marks awarded to candidates. It is of great use for centres to listen again to the exemplar material sent out by SQA for Intermediate 2 and Higher levels, and it should be noted that moderators felt such materials should be produced for Intermediate 1.

At Higher level in particular, moderators were pleased with many examples of candidates' performances in which a wide range of topics was discussed. It was also noted that some candidates are able to use a high level of grammar in an accurate and sophisticated way.

### ***Intermediate 1***

Some assessments at this level were too basic and for a candidate to merit a “good” or a “very good” the responses should be more extended.

It would be useful for centres to include the instrument of assessment with the moderation sample.

### ***Intermediate 2***

The presentation at this level must cover one of the prescribed topics and the interlocutor should ensure that the follow-up discussion leads on from this.

The discussion at Intermediate 2 in some centres was either too short or too long. In the shorter discussions, candidates did not cover an appropriate range of topics and some of the answers given were almost “mini presentations”. This tendency for candidates to be over-prepared leads to a resultant lack of spontaneity, therefore centres should remember that the discussion should be a genuine interaction between the candidate and the interlocutor. In the longer discussions, it was apparent that the excessive duration did not assist the candidates in any way and in some instances the interlocutor provided little or no support to the candidate who was clearly struggling.

### ***Higher***

Centres are reminded of the nature of the discussion part of the speaking assessment. As highlighted in the Intermediate 2 section, it should be a genuine interaction between interlocutor and candidate. There were many examples where candidates in the same centre had been over-prepared in that the questions being asked did not differ from the previous candidate; the questions did not follow on from one another and the interlocutor did not take into account the previous response; and some candidates launched into a monologue of a topic that did not fit the question asked. It would be useful for centres to revise the guidelines on the nature of the speaking assessment and listen to the exemplar material.

### ***Further points across all three levels***

Centres should ensure that the recording of the speaking assessment is done in line with the guidelines on the conduct of the test. In particular, attention should be drawn to the following points:

- In some recordings, the quality was so poor the candidates’ responses were barely audible.
- New, blank tapes should always be used to avoid the echoing effect from tapes that have been used previously and an individual tape should be used for each candidate. If using CDs, a separate CD should be used for each individual candidate.
- The microphone should be positioned in accordance with the guidelines.
- Centres should check that the tapes being used are of appropriate length. They should not be stopped and the entire assessment should be on one side only.
- The name of each candidate should be clearly marked on the tape and the tape box and the interlocutor should state the candidate’s name and school at the beginning of the recording.

Regarding the Moderation Sample form, centres should complete the form as follows:

- The full mark for the speaking assessment for each candidate should be entered on the form under column A. (For Intermediate 1 and 2 a mark out of 30, and for Higher a mark out of 25).
- Column B is for the change of level code or “W” for withdrawn.

- On the Moderation Supplement form centres should ensure that the component marks are entered under the correct level.
- No NAB or Prelim material should be sent with the tapes at Intermediate 2 and Higher level. As previously mentioned, it would be helpful if each Intermediate 1 submission was accompanied by the instrument of assessment.