# 2018 Spanish (continuers) Subject Assessment Advice

## Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the previous year’s assessment cycle, gives an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

Teachers should refer to the subject outline for specifications on content and learning requirements, and to the subject operational information for operational matters and key dates.

# School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Folio

Interaction

The more successful responses commonly:

* provided extensive and non-predictable responses, demonstrating a range of accurate and sophisticated language and vocabulary
* included personal opinions and comparisons between lifestyles in Australia and Hispanic countries
* demonstrated spontaneous interaction, often facilitated by the interlocutor asking open-ended questions and changing the direction of the conversation
* demonstrated a genuine interest in the chosen topics through discussions that reflected a true conversation
* provided depth and breadth in the treatment of a variety of topics
* were consistently fluent and used an extensive vocabulary
* demonstrated the ability to be fluent in Spanish and to expand on their ideas, the teacher asked good questions with depth and reflection taking the conversation in interesting directions
* demonstrated clarity and coherent responses with a range of connectives used effectively tomove smoothly between ideas
* maintained the conversation by asking for clarification with confidence if needed.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked evidence of preparation - students struggled to elaborate on their answers, lacked confidence and were not clear in their responses
* relied on pre-prepared (often memorised) responses rather than spontaneous discussion
* demonstrated limited knowledge of appropriate Spanish grammar, spelling, and vocabulary to fulfil the demands of the tasks
* exhibited a lack of interest and variation in responses throughout the interaction
* were limited by the task design (for example: the interaction consisted of a presentation with only a few questions at the end, which did not allow achievement at the highest level)
* discussed very similar topics to those presented in the text production, often reproducing the same information
* were between two students (rather than a student and a teacher); in some instances, one student dominated the conversation, leaving the other student without an equal opportunity to converse enough to demonstrate their oral skills
* used poor sentence structure, omitted verbs or displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures, especially with the use of different verb tenses
* relied too heavily on prepared responses
* demonstrated no natural flow to the conversation with long pauses
* showed a lack of correct pronunciation and used wrong intonation or stress.

Text Production

The more successful responses commonly:

* were original, interesting and creative. For example: writing a CV, and applying for a job, giving a speech as ambassador of a Hispanic country or giving a speech as an exchange student encouraging other students to study Spanish.
* demonstrated complex grammatical features, like the use of subjunctive, conditional and formal language to write letters
* demonstrated depth, breadth, detailed content, a variety of expression and justification of opinions
* demonstrated a wide range of evidence in a variety of text types, including letters, emails, articles, diary entries, and blogs
* responded to well-designed tasks, which allowed students to articulate their understanding of texts, language features and show depth of ideas
* demonstrated complex variety of vocabulary, sentences and ideas
* demonstrated comprehensive evidence of planning.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked the use of connective devices to link paragraphs and add flow and cohesion to the piece
* demonstrated difficulty with subject–verb agreement, syntax, and adjective endings
* included a range of basic errors which may have been corrected through proofreading
* showed a lack of depth and breadth in the treatment of the topic. For example: the writing of diary entries sometimes limited students to only writing on personal reflections
* used simple ideas or opinions
* needed to provide detail and depth in the response
* needed to use supporting evidence from texts.

Text Analysis

The more successful responses commonly:

* when analysing films, demonstrated not only an in-depth understanding of the language used but also the themes, content and context of the film
* focused on the analysis of the linguistic, cultural, and structural features of the text
* clearly demonstrated an understanding of culture (for example, indigenous groups in South America) and were able to make comparisons with other cultures (for example, indigenous groups of Australia)
* provided detailed and appropriate use of evidence from the text(s) to support conclusions
* identified and explained the concepts, perspectives, and ideas of the text(s)
* were evident in tasks that had very clear guidelines and allowed for students to perform well against the performance standards
* showed that students could interpret meaning and draw conclusions about the purpose, style, and language of a text or texts effectively
* reflected and interpreted a range of content and textual features.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked reflection on, and interpretation of, content and textual features
* responded only to the content of the text(s)
* did not support responses with evidence from the text(s)
* were general rather than specific
* needed to provide examples to substantiate opinions or conclusions.

Assessment Type 2: In-depth Study

The more successful responses commonly:

* conveyed ideas clearly in a consistent and organised manner
* included not only a substantial amount of information about the topic of choice using a high standard of Spanish, but also showed a sound understanding of the influence, importance, and/or nature of the topic
* presented detailed information about aspects of the topic
* showed evidence through insightful and sophisticated reflection on how the in‑depth study contributed to the students’ understanding of themselves and their understanding of Spanish-speaking communities
* allowed for personal reflection and opinion
* analysed the researched information rather than simply describing it.

The less successful responses commonly:

* relied too much on notes (for the oral presentation), thus not demonstrating an ability to engage the audience
* demonstrated superficial treatment of well-known topics, e.g. Frida Kahlo’s biography, descriptions of La Alhambra, or celebrations for Mexican Día de los Muertos
* chose a topic for their in-depth study that limited opportunities for reflection and analysis, such as ‘My Family’, which does not lend itself to the prescribed themes from which a topic can be chosen — please refer to the subject outline for more information
* included limited personal reflection
* focused on the content of their research in the reflective response in English, rather than on their understanding of cultures and values, learning, beliefs, and ideas, and how these have changed or been enhanced through their learning
* contained limited, if any, reflection on cultures, values, beliefs, practices, and ideas
* focused primarily on the research process, not the impact of the research on self and others.

Assessment Type 3: Examination

The examination consists of two assessments: an oral examination and a written examination.

Oral Examination

The oral examination of 10–15 minutes comprises a general conversation and a discussion of the student’s in-depth study. In the conversation, students converse with the examiners about their personal world. Topics covered include life, family and friends, home, local environment, school, hobbies, interests, aspirations, and travel.

Section 1: Conversation

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated the ability to hold a conversation on a variety of topics and to interact and maintain a conversation
* provided extensive and non-predictable responses, demonstrating a range of accurate and sophisticated language and vocabulary
* were consistently relevant to the questions asked and topics discussed
* presented a very good range of information, opinions and ideas
* developed ideas on comments made by the examiners and used correct tenses and connectives to create an interesting conversation
* demonstrated outstanding mastery and knowledge of the basic tenses and were at ease using more complex structures such as the subjunctive
* understood and responded to all questions in a manner that was consistently relevant to context, purpose, and topic, including in depth and breadth
* demonstrated culturally appropriate behaviours, and used conventional greetings
* made a conscious effort to interact positively with the examiners providing appropriate details and information and, when appropriate, posed their own questions to the examiners
* showed evidence of preparation and confidence in interacting in Spanish
* presented very good communicative skills
* had prepared well and responded effectively to questions about their personal world
* scored highly using a wide range of vocabulary and were capable to answer questions spontaneously.

The less successful responses commonly:

* relied too much on prepared responses and this affected the natural flow of the interaction, especially when the answer required extra and/or more nuanced information
* lacked flexibility, including the ability to rephrase, and struggled to elaborate on their answers, indicating a lack of preparation
* generally included appropriate information but lacked depth
* regularly required the examiners to repeat a question before providing a response
* demonstrated difficulty structuring sentences and finding suitable vocabulary, particularly when using the masculine gender or plurals
* used a limited range of vocabulary and were often slow to respond
* relied too heavily on prepared responses
* had no natural flow while speaking especially when the answer requires extra information
* showed a lack of correct pronunciation and used wrong intonation or stress, but in general this did not interfere drastically with the conversation.

Section 2: Discussion

The topics discussed were very interesting and varied. For example: “Francisco Franco y su influencia en el país vasco”, “El impacto de la derrota de los aztecas”, “Los quechuas” “ Bailes tradicionales de Colombia”, “Los problemas medioambientales en España”, “La cultura del vino en los países hispanos”, “Homicidios en América Latina y su impacto en la economía y la sociedad”, “Diferentes tipos de matrimonios”, “La educación en Chile” and “La influencia de los medios sociales en la salud de los adolescentes”.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated that they were familiar with their topic and understood the content in depth
* demonstrated the ability to reflect and comment on significant learning that had been undertaken
* showed evidence that the students investigated a new perspective
* demonstrated an appreciation for what was learnt
* provided in-depth explanations about how the chosen topic impacted on the life and future of the student, showing an ability to make a personal connection with the in-depth study
* created interest and engaged the examiners
* demonstrated outstanding mastery and knowledge of the basic tenses and were at ease using technical and subject-specific vocabulary
* used photographs and other objects as support
* were presented with very interesting and detailed information, ideas and opinions with deep insight
* demonstrated that they had explored various resources in depth and understood well their chosen topic
* demonstrate higher order thinking to the best of their ability and gave opinions
* brought visual material to support their chosen sub-topic, which worked very well
* presented topics that were part of the student’s personal experience.

The less successful responses commonly:

* relied heavily on memorised responses and were not able to respond effectively when asked unexpected questions, particularly those that deviated from the examples available on the SACE website
* used structures that were based on word order derived from English when attempting to elaborate. For example: Yo tengo acaba de visitar
* were unable to express their in-depth knowledge on the topic for discussion
* were unable to provide personal opinions about the topics discussed or reflect upon the research
* were too brief and did not allow for the ideas and/or argument to develop in any depth or breadth, often resulting in a limited capacity for interpretation and reflection
* lacked evidence of research
* were inhibited by a limited vocabulary
* demonstrated incorrect pronunciation that impeded meaning on occasion
* did not bring the In-depth Study Outline for Oral Examination form (found on the SACE website)
* did not carry the conversation forward with spontaneity and provided one-sentence answers, expecting assessors to keep asking question
* were too challenging for the language skills of the students, they had a limited range of vocabulary and were unable to advance the discussion
* delivered a presentation and were unable to have and interaction assessors.

Written Examination

Section 1: Listening and Responding

There were four texts in Spanish, all of them varying in length and nature. For all texts, the questions and answers were in English.

Question 1

The more successful responses commonly:

* showed good interpretation of meaning of the text, identifying the relationship between the two girls as cousins
* provided a clear explanation of the customer’s final decision
* used evidence from the texts to support their answers.

The less successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated confusion why the costumer decided to buy a certain cake
* did not provide all the information required
* were ambiguous, often responding to an incorrect keyword in the text
* did not give enough information.

Question 2

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated a good understanding of the text and were able to identify and interpret the key ideas
* identified clearly the two challenges that a new student might face.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not provide evidence from the text to support the response
* did not provide enough information about the main facilities at the university.

Question 3

The more successful responses commonly:

* provided clear explanations of why Ruben Papaya is in Melbourne
* identified two reasons why many young people in Latin America do not develop a love of reading, and supports answers with comprehensive evidence from the text
* provided clear explanation of why the interviewer laughs.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided general responses unrelated to the specifics of each question part
* provided limited or no evidence from the text to support responses.

Question 4

The more successful responses commonly:

* identified the purpose of the podcast
* identified two of the main contributors to the problem in Santiago
* provided clear explanation of how people are being affected according to the text.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not identified the purpose of the podcast
* provided a partial explanation of the contributors to the problems in Santiago
* did not provide clear explanation of how people are being affected in Santiago.

Question 5

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated a thorough understanding of the information in the text
* provided a comprehensive explanation of the meaning of expressions in the text
* were able to draw appropriate information from the text to correctly respond to each specific question
* provided comprehensive explanation of the meaning of statements in the context of the text
* fully explained how Maria uses language to emphasise her opinions.

The less successful responses commonly:

* struggled to discriminate between relevant and irrelevant information
* did not include enough detail to provide complete responses to the questions
* lacked depth and detail
* provided limited evidence from the texts to support their answers.

For both texts, questions and answers were in English.

Question 6

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated a strong understanding of literary style and technique by providing an insightful comparison of the purpose and style of the two texts
* fully identified how Rosita compares her dream of knowing Barcelona with the construction of the basilica
* supported arguments and conclusions with appropriate evidence from the text.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were unable to clearly identify the purpose and style in the two texts
* struggled to make connections within and between Text 6 and Text
* lacked depth and detail
* provided limited evidence from the texts to support their answers.
* Section 2: Reading and Responding, Part A.

Question 7

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated comprehensive understanding of the issues raised in the text
* composed a coherent argument demonstrating comprehensive understanding of the text
* organised information and ideas logically and coherently to meet the requirements of the task.

The less successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated limited understanding of the text
* lacked depth, grammatical correctness, and detail
* demonstrates limited understanding of the requirements of the task
* demonstrated limited evidence of the ability to organise information

Section 3: Writing in Spanish

Three questions, Questions 8, 9, and 10, of varying nature were available for the students to choose from. Most students chose Questions 8 and 10.

The more successful responses commonly:

* discussed their own Spanish language learning journey, with fluency and creativity
* were able to demonstrate extensive knowledge and understanding of vocabulary and sentence structures, manipulate language authentically and creatively to meet the requirements of the task.
* demonstrated effective use of cohesive devices to connect ideas and paragraphs
* demonstrated proper organisation of a story - all stories were very descriptive and imaginative using the topic of family and relationships
* demonstrated a good command of syntax and a sound knowledge of the conventions for each text type
* conveyed information accurately by using different structures, such as subjunctives, comparatives, and connectors.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked depth and breadth (often well under the suggested word limit)
* used simple grammatical structures and vocabulary that was often incorrect
* reproduced lengthy sections of the stimulus text
* did not follow the correct conjugation for ‘tú’ and ‘usted’.

The less successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated variable accuracy, with some basic errors (for example: use of gerund instead of the infinitive, grammatical agreement between subject and adjective, conjugation of tú when yo is needed)
* demonstrated difficulty with some of the basic uses of Por and Para, direct and indirect object pronouns and the use of present tense and preterit tenses
* misunderstood the differences between an informative and a narrative text
* demonstrated a lack of control over the basic grammar of noun–adjective and subject–verb agreement
* demonstrated a degree of inconsistency in register and/or tone.