



Learner Guide

Cambridge IGCSE™ / Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Spanish 0530 / 7160

For examination from 2021

Español

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About this guide

This guide explains what you need to know about your Cambridge IGCSE Spanish course and examinations. You should use this guide alongside the support of your teacher.

It will help you to:

- ✓ understand what skills you should develop by taking this Cambridge IGCSE course
- ✓ understand how you will be assessed
- ✓ understand what we are looking for in the answers you write
- ✓ plan your revision programme
- ✓ revise, by providing revision tips and an interactive revision checklist (Section 5).

Studying Cambridge IGCSE Spanish will help you to develop the skills you will need:

- to understand and communicate in everyday situations in Spanish
- to develop your own cultural awareness of Spain and other countries and communities where Spanish is spoken
- to develop essential linguistic skills which will help you in your future studies or in employment.

Section 1: Syllabus content

Find out what topics you will be learning about. Your teacher can give you more detail.

Section 2: How you will be assessed

Find out

- how many examinations you will take
- how long each examination lasts
- what different question types the examination will contain
- how to approach each examination.

Section 3: What skills will be assessed

Find out what areas of knowledge, understanding and skills you will need to demonstrate throughout the course and in your examinations.

Section 4: Example candidate responses

Take a look at an example question and answer from a specimen examination paper. Find out:

- how to interpret the question
- how to avoid common mistakes
- how to improve your exam technique.

Section 5: Revision

Discover:

- ways to help you plan your revision
- some basic revision skills
- some 'top revision tips'
- a revision checklist for each topic.

Section 6: Useful websites

Find out about useful resources to help you study for your Cambridge IGCSE Spanish course.

Section 1: Syllabus content – what you need to know about

This section gives you an outline of the syllabus subject content for this course.

Language skills

During your Cambridge IGCSE Spanish course you will need to:

- develop your ability to communicate clearly and effectively when speaking and writing
- develop your ability to understand written and spoken texts
- learn how to use a wide range of vocabulary, correct grammar and spelling.

You can think of your Cambridge IGCSE Spanish course as having **four main areas of skills** and understanding which will be tested at the end of your course.

- **Listening**
- **Reading**
- **Speaking**
- **Writing**

See Section 3 for more information about these four language skills which you will be developing while studying the topics listed below.

Topics for study

The content of what you will need to learn is organised in five broad **topic areas** (A–E) below. When you study these topics you will get an insight into the country and communities where Spanish is spoken. You will also develop your skills of Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing through the study of these topic areas.

Here are **five main topic areas** which you will study during your course:

A Everyday activities

B Personal and social life

C The world around us

D The world of work

E The international world

These **topic areas** may be studied in any order. Your teacher will decide when it is best to study each topic area. You may already have done some work on these topic areas before but these will be developed during your course and you will also meet new topic areas. These five main topic areas will be divided into several **sub-topics** by your teacher. The list below shows examples of possible sub-topics which your teacher may choose to focus on during the course.

A Everyday activities

- Time expressions
- Food and drink
- The human body and health
- Travel and transport

B Personal and social life

- Self, family and friends
- In the home
- Colours
- Clothes and accessories
- Leisure time

C The world around us

- People and places
- The natural world, the environment, the climate and the weather
- Communications and technology
- The built environment
- Measurements
- Materials

D The world of work

- Education
- Work

E The international world

- Countries, nationalities and languages
- Culture, customs, faiths and celebrations

Ask your teacher for more detail about the topic areas. You can also find more detail in the Revision checklists of this guide.

During your course you will have the opportunity to develop and apply a range of language skills in each of the above five main topic areas.

You will be expected to read and understand a variety of written and spoken texts taken from the above five main topic areas. When you read or hear a text you will need to show that you can understand the main ideas, opinions and attitudes. You will also be expected to select and extract details and occasionally work out the meaning of unknown words from familiar language you know in texts in the above topic areas.

You should be able to write on familiar, everyday topics and show you can speak the language by taking part in everyday conversations.

More details about language skills can be found in Section 3.

Vocabulary list

There is a list of vocabulary in the syllabus which covers the essential vocabulary for the five topic areas. During your course, you will need to learn vocabulary regularly as you meet new topics. This will make sure that you know the essential words and have a good foundation to acquire new vocabulary. You will already know some of the words on the Vocabulary list from your earlier study of Spanish but others will be new. Your teacher will be aware of this list and will introduce new vocabulary as required when new topic areas are introduced. **You will also need to learn other vocabulary in addition to this list.**

The Vocabulary list can be found in the syllabus.

Grammar and structures

There is a list in the syllabus of grammar and structures which you will need to cover and can expect to meet in your Cambridge IGCSE assessments. This list covers, for example, which nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs (tenses) you will need to know. Your teacher will again be aware of this list and will introduce new structures as the course progresses.

Make sure that you always check the latest syllabus, which is available at www.cambridgeinternational.org

Section 2: How you will be assessed

You will be assessed at the end of the course using four compulsory components (examinations):

- Paper 1 Listening
- Paper 2 Reading
- Paper 3 Speaking
- Paper 4 Writing

All candidates sit the same four papers. Grades A* to G are available on these four papers for Cambridge IGCSE and grades 9 to 1 are available for Cambridge IGCSE (9–1).

Papers 1, 2 and 4 are written components. Paper 3 is a Speaking test. The Speaking test takes place before the written components. Your teacher will give you precise details about when this component will take place.

Components at a glance

This table summarises the key information about each examination. You can find details and advice on how to approach each component in the 'About each paper and component' sub-section below.

Component	Time and marks	Skills assessed	Details	Percentage of qualification
Paper 1	45 minutes 40 marks	Listening	You will listen to a number of recordings and answer multiple-choice and matching questions.	25%
Paper 2	1 hour 45 marks	Reading	You will read a number of texts and answer multiple-choice and matching questions as well as questions requiring short answers in Spanish.	25%
Paper 3	About 10 minutes 40 marks	Speaking	You will complete one role play and conversations on two topics.	25%
Paper 4	1 hour 45 marks	Writing	You will complete one form-filling task, one directed writing task and one task in the format of an email/letter or article/blog.	25%

Remember, you must take all four papers. You should attempt **all sections** of the written papers.

About each component

Below are further details about each component.

Paper 1 Listening

Dictionaries are not allowed in the examination.

General points to note:

- There are multiple-choice and matching questions. Each question tests your understanding of a recorded text.
- The questions at the beginning are easier and gradually get more difficult as the examination progresses.
- The earlier texts that you will hear are shorter than the later texts.
- You will hear each recorded text twice.
- You should try to answer all of the questions.
- Questions can come from any topic listed in the five topic areas mentioned in Section 1.
- You are not required to write any answers in Spanish. You will need to answer all questions by choosing the correct option(s).
- A thorough knowledge of the **Vocabulary list** is essential for this examination.

Description of question groups

Exercise 1

Task	You will hear short texts and answer eight multiple-choice questions, each with four options.
Text types	Short monologues, e.g. announcements, phone messages, news items, or dialogues
Total marks	8

Exercise 2

Task	You will hear a monologue or dialogue containing factual information and answer six multiple-choice questions, each with four options.
Text types	Short monologues or dialogues
Total marks	6

Exercise 3

Task	You will hear a conversation and match the names of people, places, items or activities with the correct statements.
Text types	Informal conversation
Total marks	5

Exercise 4

Task	You will hear a dialogue (conversation, discussion or interview) or two shorter dialogues (each with a different person, on a common theme), and answer nine multiple-choice questions, each with three options.
Text types	Conversation, discussion or interview
Total marks	9

Exercise 5

Task	You will hear a dialogue (conversation, discussion or interview) and answer six multiple-choice questions, each with four options.
Text types	Conversation, discussion or interview
Total marks	6

Exercise 6

Task	You will hear a dialogue (conversation, discussion or interview). In each question there are five options and you must select the two options which are true.
Text types	Conversation, discussion or interview
Total marks	6

Paper 2 Reading

Dictionaries are not allowed in the examination.

General points to note:

- The questions at the beginning are easier and gradually get more difficult as the examination progresses.
- The earlier texts are shorter than the later texts.
- Each exercise contains multiple-choice questions, matching questions or questions with short answers **in Spanish**.
- You should try to answer all of the questions.
- Questions can come from any topic listed in the five topic areas mentioned above in Section 1.
- When you answer questions in Spanish, try not to copy large sections of the text as this will not show the examiner that you have understood precisely.
- When answering in Spanish, your answer will be marked for communicating the correct message. If there is inaccuracy in the Spanish it will be accepted provided that the message of your answer is clear.
- A thorough knowledge of the **Vocabulary list** is essential for this examination.

Description of question groups

Exercise 1

Task	You will match a series of short statements with the correct pictures.
Text types	Simple descriptions
Total marks	5

Exercise 2

Task	You will match a series of short notices or signs commonly found in public places with an explanatory statement. The texts are all taken from the same context.
Text types	Signs, notices, instructions, messages, advertisements
Total marks	5

Exercise 3

Task	You will answer multiple-choice questions, each with three options, on a short text.
Text types	Email, message, postcard or letter
Total marks	7

Exercise 4

Task	You will answer questions on a longer text which require short responses in Spanish.
Text types	Email, message, letter or blog
Total marks	12

Exercise 5

Task	You will match a series of descriptions of the requirements, interests or skills of different people with the correct description of places, events, services or activities, etc. All texts are on a common theme.
Text types	Short descriptions, advertisements, etc.
Total marks	5

Exercise 6

Task	You will answer questions on a longer text which require short responses in Spanish.
Text types	Articles, etc.
Total marks	11

Paper 3 Speaking

Dictionaries are not allowed in the examination.

General points to note:

- The Speaking test lasts for approximately 10 minutes.
- You will have 10 minutes of preparation time before the test. During this time you will be given the setting (scenario) of the role play task to think about. You are not allowed to make notes.
- In the test, there will be a brief warm-up of about 30 seconds. The warm-up is not assessed.
- You will have to complete one role play situation with five questions (approximately two minutes).
- The role plays will be on familiar topics, e.g. transactions in shops, using public transport, directions and ordering food and drinks.
- You will then respond to questions on two different conversation topics (approximately four minutes on each topic).
- The conversation topics will come from the areas listed in Section 1.
- The **first** conversation topic will come from topic area A (Everyday activities) or B (Personal and Social life).
- The **second** conversation topic will come from topic area C (The world around us), D (The world of work), or E (The international world).
- Each conversation topic will have questions which give you the opportunity to show that you can use past, present and future tenses.
- Each conversation topic will have questions for you to show that you can share views, opinions and your experiences.
- The role play and the topic conversations will be set in everyday, familiar contexts. They will all be based on the topics listed in Section 1 of this guide.
- A thorough knowledge of the **Vocabulary list** is essential for this examination.

Description of the Speaking test

Each Speaking test lasts approximately 10 minutes, and is structured as follows:

One role play	
A warm-up section which is not assessed	approximately 30 seconds
One role play – candidates respond to five transactional questions to, for example, accomplish a task or obtain goods or services	approximately two minutes
Total role play marks (5 questions x 2 marks) = 10 marks	

Two conversation topics	
Two conversation topics – candidates respond to questions on each topic to share views, opinions and experiences	approximately four minutes for each conversation
Total marks for both conversations marked together = 30 marks (15 for Communication and 15 for Quality of Language)	

Mark scheme for the Speaking test

Below is the mark scheme that your examiner will use to assess your Speaking test.

Role play (5 questions x 2 marks)

Each of the five role play questions is assessed using the mark scheme below:

2	The information is communicated. Language is appropriate to the situation and is accurate. Minor errors (adjective endings, use of prepositions, etc.) are allowed.
1	The information is partly communicated and/or the meaning is ambiguous. Errors impede communication.
0	No creditable response.

Topic conversations

Both the conversations are assessed **together**. There is one mark for Communication, out of 15 and one mark for Quality of Language (also out of 15). Total 30 marks.

Communication

Mark	Level	Descriptor
13–15	Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds confidently to questions; may occasionally need repetition of words or phrases. • Communicates information which is consistently relevant to the questions. • Frequently develops ideas and opinions. • Justifies and explains some answers.
10–12	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds well to questions; requires occasional rephrasing. • Communicates information which is almost always relevant to the questions. • Sometimes develops ideas and opinions. • Gives reasons or explanations for some answers.
7–9	Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds satisfactorily to questions; frequently requires rephrasing. • Communicates most of the required information; may occasionally give irrelevant information. • Conveys simple, straightforward opinions.
4–6	Weak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has difficulty with many questions but still attempts an answer. • Communicates some simple information relevant to the questions.
1–3	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently has difficulty understanding the questions and has great difficulty in replying. • Communicates one or two basic pieces of information relevant to the questions.
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No creditable response.

Quality of Language

Mark	Level	Descriptor
13–15	Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate use of a wide range of the structures listed in the syllabus with occasional errors in more complex language. • Accurate use of a wide range of vocabulary with occasional errors. • Very good pronunciation, fluency, intonation and expression; occasional mistakes or hesitation.
10–12	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good use of a range of the structures listed in the syllabus, with some errors. • Good use of a range of vocabulary with some errors. • Good pronunciation and fluency despite some errors or hesitation; a good attempt at correct intonation and expression.
7–9	Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory use of some of the structures listed in the syllabus, with frequent errors. • Satisfactory use of vocabulary with frequent errors. • Satisfactory pronunciation and fluency despite frequent errors and hesitation; some attempt at intonation and expression.
4–6	Weak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited range of structures and vocabulary, rarely accurate and/or complete; frequent ambiguity. • Pronunciation can be understood with some effort; very noticeable hesitations and stilted delivery.
1–3	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited range of structures and vocabulary, almost always inaccurate. • Poor pronunciation, rarely comprehensible; many serious errors.
0		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No creditable response.

Paper 4 Writing

Dictionaries are not allowed in the examination.

General points to note:

- You will need to answer three questions.
- The Writing paper starts with an easier, short question, Question 1, which you can answer with single words or phrases.
- For Question 2, you will need to write 80–90 words. Make sure that you complete **all** of the set tasks.
- In Question 3, you will have the choice between two questions, 3(a) **or** 3(b). One will be an email or letter and the other will be an article or blog.
- For Question 3, you will need to write 130–140 words. Make sure that you complete **all** of the set tasks.
- When you write, you should aim to be as accurate as possible and to use a variety of structures, tenses and vocabulary.
- You need to plan your time carefully.
- A thorough knowledge of the **Vocabulary list** is essential for this examination.

Description of questions

The Writing paper has a form-filling task, a directed writing task and an extended writing task.

Question 1

Task	You will fill in a form with single words or short phrases in response to a given context.
Total marks	5

Question 2

Task	You will complete a directed writing task in 80–90 words on a familiar, everyday topic.
Total marks	12

Question 3

Task	You will choose between two tasks (an email/letter or an article/blog) and complete one of these in 130–140 words.
Total marks	28

More detail about the Writing paper can be found in Section 4 of this guide.

Section 3: What skills will be assessed

The areas of knowledge, understanding and skills that you will be assessed on are called **assessment objectives** (AOs).

You can think of your Cambridge IGCSE Spanish course as having four main areas of skills and understanding:

- Listening
- Reading
- Speaking
- Writing

Here is an outline of the four skills that you should aim to have developed by the end of your course.

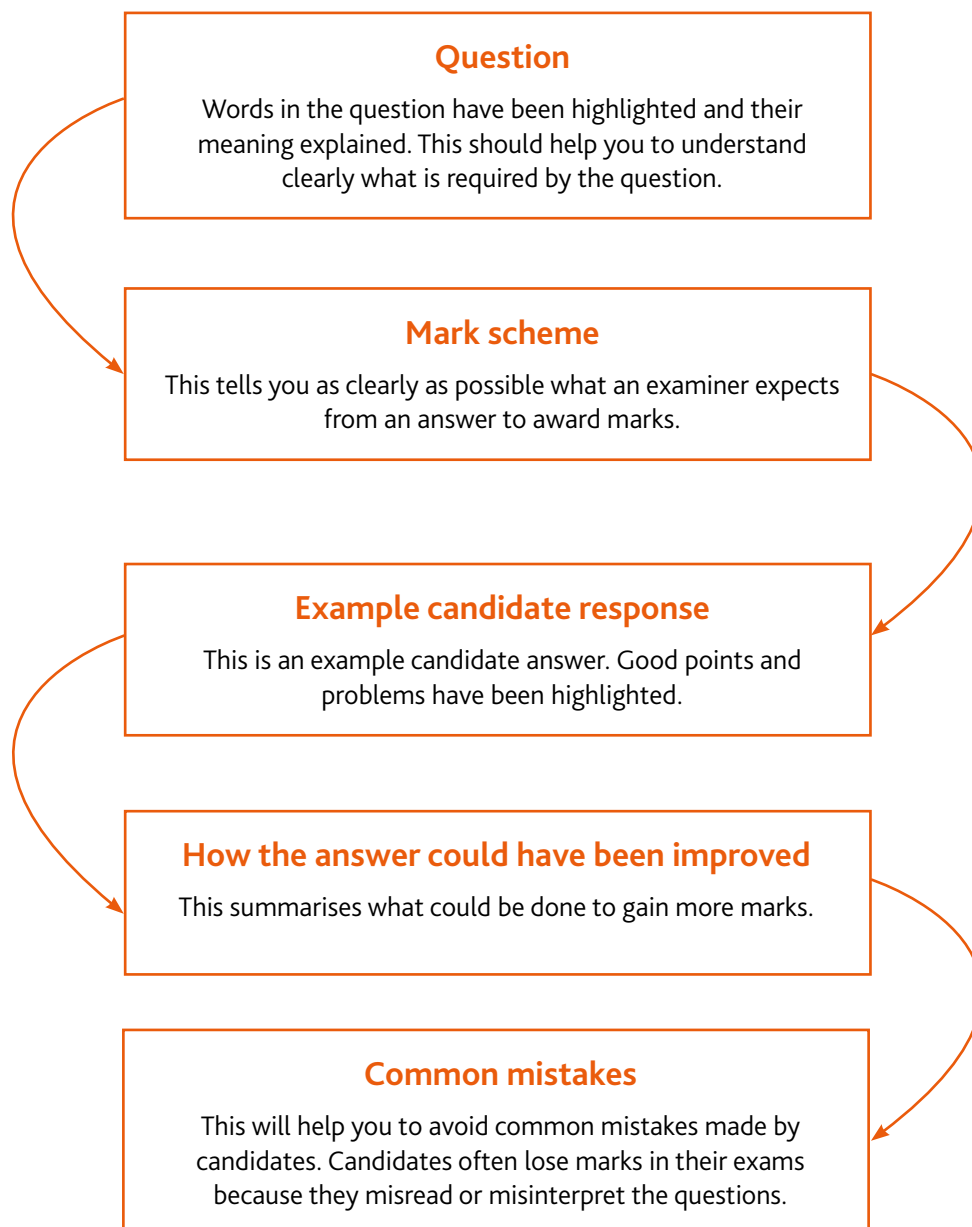
Assessment objectives (AO)	What does the AO mean?	What do you need to be able to do?
AO1 Listening	This is the part of the course where your ability to understand recordings of spoken Spanish is assessed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the main points and key information in simple everyday material • understand clear speech on a range of familiar topics • understand the description of events and expression of ideas, opinions and attitudes in simple texts • identify and select relevant information in predictable texts.
AO2 Reading	This is the part of the course where your ability to understand different kinds of written Spanish will be assessed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the main points and key information in simple everyday material • understand authentic factual texts on a range of familiar topics • understand the description of events and expression of ideas, opinions and attitudes in simple texts • identify and select relevant information in predictable texts.
AO3 Speaking	This is the part of the course where your ability to speak Spanish will be assessed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate clearly and effectively in a range of predictable everyday situations • engage in conversations on familiar topics, expressing opinions and feelings • use a range of structures and vocabulary with reasonable accuracy • demonstrate some ability to maintain interaction • show some control of pronunciation and intonation.
AO4 Writing	This is the part of the course where your ability to write in Spanish will be assessed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate simple factual information clearly for everyday purposes • write simple phrases and sentences on a familiar topic • write simple connected texts describing events, experiences, opinions and hopes and ambitions • use a range of simple vocabulary and language structures reasonably accurately.

Section 4: Example candidate response

This section takes you through an example question and answer from a Cambridge IGCSE Spanish specimen paper. It will help you to see how to identify words within questions and to understand what is required in your response. A command word or phrase is the part of the question that tells you what you need to do with your knowledge. For example, you might need to describe something, give information, give an opinion and say why you have this opinion.

All information and advice in this section is specific to the example response being demonstrated. It should give you an idea of how your responses might be viewed by an examiner but it is not a list of what to do in all questions. In your own examination, you will need to pay careful attention to what each question is asking you to do.

This section is separated as follows:



Question 3(b)

Escribe 130–140 palabras **en español**.

Los viajes

Escribe un artículo para tu revista escolar sobre tus viajes.

- ¿Dónde pasas las vacaciones normalmente?
- Explica con quién prefieres viajar.
- ¿Cuál es tu opinión de las vacaciones de esquí?
- Describe dónde te alojaste la última vez que fuiste de viaje.
- Cuenta unas vacaciones en las que tuviste problemas.

Escribe un artículo. This tells you that you are required to write an article. You could give the article a title.

¿Dónde pasas...? The verb *pasas* is **present tense** and the adverb *normalmente* reinforces this. You need to write about a **typical** holiday and you must mention **where** you **usually** go.

Explica con quién. You need to say **who** you prefer to travel with. The **present tense** is required. The command word *Explica* indicates that you need to give some reasons or justifications for your preference (which might include using other tenses).

Cuenta. This command word, together with the verb *tuviste*, indicates that you need to recount events in the **past tense**.

¿Cuál es tu opinión...? You need to give your **opinion** of skiing holidays. The **present tense** would be appropriate for giving your opinion, although you might want to give some justifications or reasons for your opinion and you could use other tenses when giving your justifications/reasons. Note that this task is **not** asking you to tell the story of a skiing holiday that you have been on.

Describe. You need to **describe** and give some information about the accommodation that you stayed in the last time that you went away. The word *fuiste* indicates that the **past tense** is required here.

Mark scheme

This is part of the mark scheme that shows the maximum marks that you can get for each question. The complete mark scheme can be found in the syllabus.

Bullet point completion (9–10 marks out of 10)

- Completes all bullet points.
- Gives detailed information, opinions/ reactions and explanations.
- The writing is focused and wholly relevant.
- You need to show that you can address each of the bullet points given in the question.
- You should add as much relevant information as clearly as you can which refers to the set bullet points.
- You should make sure that in the bullet points asking for explanations and opinions that you add these in. Do not add something which is not needed to answer the bullet points.

Range (9–10 marks out of 10)

- Uses extended well-linked sentences frequently.
- Uses a wide range of simple and complex structures listed in the syllabus to produce sentences of varying length.
- Uses a wide range of vocabulary appropriate to the bullet point(s).
- You need to show that you can write longer sentences which are linked by joining words (e.g. *sin embargo, además, más tarde, al contrario*).
- You should be able to use a variety of more complex structures rather than just short, simple sentences containing a straightforward subject and verb. You should aim to use a range of tenses.
- You should show that you can use as wide a range of vocabulary as possible.

Accuracy (7–8 marks out of 8)

- Accurate spelling and grammar; not necessarily faultless.
- Occasional errors in spelling and grammar do not impede communication.
- Your language should be highly accurate. However, note that your writing does not have to be 100% accurate in order to score in this mark range. You should **check** your work very carefully as you write it and allow time for checking again when you have finished.
- If you occasionally make a mistake in spelling or grammar then you will still be able to score in this mark range, provided that the mistake you have made does not prevent the reader from understanding what you have written.

Example candidate response

Normalmente paso las vacaciones ^① en un camping cerca de la playa. Mi ^② quedo dos semana ^③ . Prefieres ^④ viajar con mi familia ^⑤ Me gusta juego ^⑥ el tennis ^⑦ con mi hermana, y nosotros ^⑧ gusta ir a la playa y nadar en el mer ^⑨ . Lo bueno es que mi ^⑩ padres tiene ^⑪ mucho dinero.

Las vacaciones ^⑫ de esquí no me gustan mucho. No me gusta el frío y creo que el esquí es muy difícil ^⑬ . Fuí ^⑭ con mi colegio el año pasado, pero no voy a ir el año proximo ^⑮ .

El verano pasado me aloje ^⑯ en un camping en el ^⑰ costa. Está ^⑱ muy grande con muchos ^⑲ tiendas y caravanas. Los servicios son bastante limpio ^⑳ . En el restaurante comí una paella delicioso ^㉑ .

Hace dos años, voy ^㉒ a Londres. El hotel es muy expensivo ^㉓ y llueve ^㉔ todos el ^㉕ días. Perdido ^㉖ mi telefono ^㉗ móvil. Sin embargo, me gustaria ^㉘ vuelvo ^㉙ un día para practicar mi inglés.

Examiner comment

This is typical of a response that would get a middle-range mark. The writing is relevant to the set tasks and some extra details and descriptions are included. There are several expressions of opinion, with some variety in the use of opinion phrases (e.g. *creo que, lo bueno es que*) and supporting reasons are sometimes added. The vocabulary is generally straightforward and although there are frequent inaccuracies, they do not usually obscure the intended meaning. Time phrases are used well (e.g. *normalmente, el año pasado, hace dos años*). A greater range and variety of language structures could have been attempted and there are a number of mistakes/ inaccuracies in the spellings of nouns, adjectival agreements and verb endings.

How the answer could have been improved

Task completion

This candidate has attempted to address all of the set tasks (the five bullet points), although there are ambiguities and verb errors (4), (6), (8), (11), (22), (24), (26), (28), (29) when dealing with the second and fifth bullet points which mean that full marks for Task completion cannot be awarded. However, the writing is generally relevant and the candidate does give some opinions, sometimes supported by reasons. You may find it helpful to write a new paragraph for each bullet point – here, the responses to the first and second bullet points have been combined in one paragraph.

Range

Throughout the response, the candidate produces simple sentences/constructions and there are no successful attempts at complex sentences. The candidate could, for example, have used relative pronouns (*el hotel donde me alojé..., el camping que visitamos el año pasado..., comí una paella que fue deliciosa...*). The candidate could have linked sentences with linking words (conjunctions) (e.g. *prefiero viajar con mi familia porque me gusta jugar al tenis con mi hermana..., el primer día, perdí mi teléfono móvil...*). You should try to avoid repetition of commonly used vocabulary like *me gusta* and *no me gusta*; instead, you can use expressions such as *me encanta..., me interesa..., odio...*, etc. The candidate uses only one verb + infinitive construction correctly (*voy a ir*). The construction *para* + infinitive is used successfully in the last sentence but a greater variety of infinitive constructions could raise the level of the language. There was some successful use of linking words (*pero, hace dos años, el año pasado, sin embargo*) and a couple of correct opinion phrases (*lo bueno es que..., creo que...*).

Accuracy

There are errors of detail throughout the response, seen in spellings and accents (1), (5), (7), (9), (12), (13), (15), (27), gender (17), verb endings (4), (6), (11), (14), (16), (24), (29), adjectival agreements (10), (19), (20), (21), plurals (3), (25) and accents (14), (15), (16), (27), (28). See the 'Common mistakes' section below for more examples. The verbs *ser* and *estar* are confused in response to the fourth bullet point (18). Overall, the candidate does not use verbs and tenses consistently, and demonstrates uncertainty about how to use *me gusta* (6), (8). There is only one correct use of the preterite tense (*comí*) and the response to the fifth bullet point suggests that the candidate is unfamiliar with the imperfect tense. The word *perdido* (26) is either an unsuccessful attempt at a perfect tense or a confusion of the perfect and preterite tenses. However, the candidate does produce a correct future tense (*voy a ir*) and attempts a common conditional tense (*me gustaría*). Overall, the candidate's intended meaning is generally clear.

Common mistakes

Verb tenses. It is essential that you are able to use regular verbs and common irregulars in a range of tenses (see the list of grammar and structures in the syllabus booklet). Take extra care with reflexive verbs (2). A good strategy is to identify the tense used in the bullet point, decide which tense(s) you could and should use in your answer and note down some relevant verbs with the correct endings. Then construct sentences around those verbs.

Check your work methodically, word by word. Errors such as *dos semana* (3), *mi padres* (10), *el costa* (17) and *muchos tiendas* (19) might have been avoided if the candidate had checked the response more carefully. Make sure that you allow time at the end of the examination to do your checks.

Pay attention to accents. In the example candidate response above, the phrases *me aloje* (16) and *me gustaria* (28) are not completely accurate because of missing accents; in contrast, the word *fui* (14) should not have an accent.

Be clear about how *gustar* and *encantar* are used. It is very important to know how the pronoun before them is used. (In

the example candidate response above, the candidate wrote *nosotros gusta* (8) rather than *nos gusta*.) You also need to know when to use the singular/plural endings.

Don't just guess. In the example candidate response above, the candidate guessed what the Spanish word for 'expensive' might be and got it wrong (23). If you are not sure of a word, it is better to find an alternative that you are more confident about. Here, the candidate could have said *no fue barato* or used a different adjective altogether (e.g. *ruidoso*, *sucio* or *horrible*).

Know how to express opinions, reactions and explanations. Question 3 often requires you to express opinions, reactions and explanations. A good strategy is to learn a selection of suitable adjectives (*sorprendido/a*, *triste*, *contento/a*, *preocupado/a*, etc.) and know which verbs can introduce them (e.g. *me sentí...*, *estuve...*).

General advice

Make sure that you write something in response to each of the bullet points.

Plan your answer. You may find it useful to write brief notes in Spanish. While planning, one possible strategy is to think about how you could write a minimum of two sentences in response to each bullet point, and work out for which of the bullet points you will be able to write more extensively.

Stay relevant. Everything that you write should be relevant to one of the bullet points in the question. If you are asked to describe *un día en el colegio*, then everyday, routine tasks such as getting up and having breakfast are not relevant to your day at school.

Watch out for plurals in the bullet point. If the bullet point asks you to give *tus reacciones*, you will need to mention at least two reactions. If the bullet point asks you to mention *¿Qué actividades...?*, you will need to write about at least two activities.

Revise and learn the common uses of *por* and *para*. They are frequently confused.

Check your adjectives. If an adjective describes a noun, check whether that noun is masculine or feminine, singular or plural, and make any necessary agreements with the adjective accordingly.

Section 5: Revision

This advice will help you to revise and prepare for the examinations. It is divided into general advice for all papers and more specific advice for each of the papers.

Use the tick boxes to keep a record of what you have done, what you plan to do or what you understand.

For more advice on revision, see the [Cambridge Learner Revision Guide](#) on our website.

General advice

Before the examinations

Find out when the examinations are and plan your revision so that you have time to revise. Create a revision timetable and divide it into sections to cover each topic. Start revising for your Speaking test before revising for the other papers as this test will take place before the written papers.

Find out how long each paper is, how many questions you have to answer and how many marks there are for each question.

Learn the meaning of the words used in questions and how to apply them to the information given. Look at past examination papers and specimen papers and highlight the words in the questions and check what they mean. Make sure that you learn common question words such as *¿quién?*, *¿dónde?*, *¿cómo?*, *¿por qué?*, *¿cuándo?*.

Make revision notes on each topic area. Try different styles of notes.

Work for short periods, then have a break. Revise small sections of the syllabus at a time.

Make lists of positive and negative opinions/feelings which you can use in lots of different situations.

Make sure that you learn the most common verbs thoroughly. Try writing out verbs in different tenses (e.g. past, present, future, conditional) by using spider diagrams and word maps.

Test yourself by writing out key vocabulary for each topic that you study. Divide the words to be learnt into short lists. Try using different coloured pens to highlight masculine and feminine words.

Try drawing an item or symbol for key vocabulary. Sometimes you can learn better using visual aids.

Learning at least all of the vocabulary on the Vocabulary list is essential. You can find it in the syllabus or ask your teacher for a copy. Tick off items as you learn them during the course.

Learn how to express disappointment, how to be pleased about something, how to be in agreement with somebody, how to give an apology and how to give positive and negative opinions and preferences. These will be expressions that you can use in a variety of settings and topics.

Remember that you can't leave all of your revision until shortly before the exams. You need to revise 'little and often' throughout the course and revisit vocabulary and structures regularly.

Keep a checklist of words and structures which you know you often spell or use incorrectly. Look at the list frequently and tick the words when you know and can spell them.

Time yourself on past and specimen papers so that you become aware of how to plan your time during the real examination. Try to get as much practice as you can on past and specimen papers so that you know what to expect.

Look at mark schemes to help you to understand how the marks are awarded for each question. Refer to the syllabus.

How to learn/revise vocabulary and grammar

Start learning vocabulary very early. It is very difficult to memorise long lists of words just before the exam. You may find it easier to learn words by topic, rather than alphabetically, as this can help to reinforce meaning and connections between words.

During your course, make sure that you learn all new vocabulary and revise previously met vocabulary as often as you can.

It is probably best to focus on learning 20–25 words per day. Test yourself as you go.

Learning vocabulary can be done with a partner, but don't forget to do the memorising before you test each other. Agree on a section of vocabulary, spend 10 minutes in silence working on it and then test each other for 5 minutes.

You may like to annotate and use a highlighter on your vocabulary revision lists. Tick off the words that you know and concentrate on the ones that you still need to learn.

You may find it helpful to start your revision session by reviewing the words that you learnt last time. You could end your revision session by creating a vocabulary test for you to do at the start of your next session.

ANKI is an app for creating flashcards and testing yourself. You won't have time to input all the Cambridge IGCSE Spanish vocabulary but you can download 'shared decks' (i.e. sets of flashcards) that other people have created. *Quizlet* is a similar app and has lots of sets of flashcards aimed at Cambridge IGCSE Spanish level.

Make a list of words that are particularly relevant for talking about your own life and interests. For example, if you love playing basketball, look up and learn the key words that you might need in order to talk or write about this activity.

Sometimes a word just doesn't seem to stay in your memory, so try to say it in a sentence that means something to you. Giving it a context like this can help it to stay in your mind.

Visual associations work for some people. Picturing in your mind a letter z as a long nose may help you to remember that *nariz* means 'nose'. You can't do this for every word but it can help with some tricky ones.

A good tactic might be to learn adjectives in pairs of opposites – *grande/pequeño, alto/bajo, inteligente/estúpido, cercano/lejano*, etc. This can work for adverbs too: *rápidamente/lentamente, bien/mal*, etc.

Mind maps work for many people. By making a mind map you are thinking about and processing the words, noticing connections and grouping them in ways that are meaningful to you. A mind map on *El colegio* would have sub-sections on *Las asignaturas, Los profesores, Los edificios y las instalaciones, La rutina diaria, Mis opiniones*, etc. Try to find 10 words to go in each section.

Be aware of synonyms (two ways of saying the same thing), which are often key to answering questions in the Listening and Reading papers. For instance, *voy a la cama* can mean much the same as *me acuesto*. Here are some other examples, but you could start your own list:

<i>nadar</i>	<i>bañarse</i>
<i>oír música</i>	<i>escuchar un CD</i>
<i>tranquilo</i>	<i>silencioso</i>
<i>alegre</i>	<i>animado</i>
<i>soy hablador y sociable</i>	<i>me gusta charlar con la gente</i>
<i>quiero ir a</i>	<i>me gustaría visitar</i>
<i>hacer deporte</i>	<i>hacer ejercicio</i>
<i>la semana que viene</i>	<i>la semana próxima</i>
<i>no como carne</i>	<i>soy vegetariano</i>

Start with the regular forms of verbs, then learn the irregulars. Test yourself. See if you can write out the full set of endings for a given verb and tense. Don't forget to check which endings have accents.

When learning, some people find that saying (or singing) the verbs out loud works well. Why not try it!

The Cambridge IGCSE Spanish syllabus has a list of grammar points to revise. Look them up in your grammar notes or textbook and tick them when you know them.

During the examinations

Read the instructions carefully and try to answer all of the questions on the Listening and Reading papers. On the Writing paper answer Question 1, Question 2 and **either** Question 3(a) **or** 3(b).

Do not answer more questions than are needed as this will not gain you more marks.

Do not leave out questions or parts of questions. Remember, no answer means no mark.

Read each question carefully.

- Identify the key words in questions – you could underline or circle them.
- Identify other key vocabulary and perhaps underline or circle that too.
- Make sure that you identify the question words such as *¿Quién?*, *¿Dónde?*, *¿Cuánto?*, *¿Por qué?*, *¿Cuándo?*, *¿Cómo?*

Read all parts of a question before starting your answer. Think carefully about what is needed for each part.

Only write what is relevant and needed to answer the question.

Remember to cross out clearly any incorrect answer that you do not want the examiner to consider.

Always start your answer on the given line and not above it or below it.

For multiple-choice and box-ticking questions make sure that you tick the correct number of boxes. If you tick too many you will not get the mark. If you tick too many boxes by mistake, cross out the incorrect one(s) clearly.

On the written papers, remember to write clearly in black or blue pen. Do not write first in pencil and then write over the top in pen. If an examiner can't see an answer clearly you will not get the mark.

Make sure that your writing is clear and easy to read.

Check your spelling and grammar very carefully.

Paper 1 Listening advice

Remember that there are six types of exercises in this paper. The recordings that you hear at the beginning of the paper are shorter than the later recordings. The questions gradually get more difficult.

When you read the instructions for each exercise, think about the topic area, the setting, who is talking and about what. Think about the kind of vocabulary that you are likely to hear.

Think about the kind of information that you are being asked for in the questions. This will give you an indication of what to listen out for.

Follow the instructions carefully and make sure that you know how many answers to choose. Most questions will require you to indicate just one answer but on the last exercise, you will need to choose two answers for each question.

Try to answer all of the questions. If you are unsure, make an intelligent deduction.

The texts may contain words that you don't know, but you should be able to work out the meaning of them from the context or other clues given in the texts.

In questions which are based on longer recorded texts, do not decide on an answer too quickly before the speaker has finished what s/he is saying.

If you do miss an answer, try not to panic. Instead, continue concentrating and focus on the next part of the recording and the next question so that you do not lose your place.

Paper 2 Reading advice

Start from the beginning of the paper and work your way through. The texts that you read will get longer as the examination progresses.

The later exercises have longer texts and more complex questions. Make sure that you allow enough time to answer them.

For multiple-choice questions, choose one option only.

In questions requiring you to answer in Spanish, keep your answers as brief as possible. Many of the questions will not require you to answer in a full sentence.

Select the correct material carefully and do not add extra detail which does not answer the question as this may mean that you do not get the mark because you have not shown that you have understood the text and/or the question.

Answers in Spanish will be marked for communication rather than for accuracy. Inaccuracies will be tolerated by the examiner provided that the message of your answer is clear.

The matching questions require careful study. You may need to check two or three details within each description in order to identify the correct answer.

If the reading passage has a title, make sure that you read it as it will give you a clue about the content of the text.

The texts may contain words that you don't know, but you should be able to work out the meaning of them from the context or other clues given in the texts.

Check that you know and understand the question words (e.g. *¿Qué?*, *¿Cómo?*, *¿Dónde?*, *¿Quién?*, *¿Cuándo?*, *¿Por qué?*).

If two marks are allocated to a question, remember to give two answers, one on each answer line.

Try to answer all of the questions. If you are unsure, make an intelligent deduction.

Make sure that you allow enough time to check all of your answers carefully.

Paper 3 Speaking advice

Learn all new structures and points of grammar carefully and practise using them when you are speaking.

Ask your teacher if s/he can make a recording of useful questions which you could try to answer at home.

It is essential that you learn all question words (such as *¿Quién?*, *¿Dónde?*, *¿Cómo?*, *¿Por qué?*, *¿Cuándo?*, *¿A qué hora?* and *¿Cómo?*) carefully so that you know what you are being asked by the examiner.

Learn numbers and quantities carefully. This will be useful for the role plays.

In the 10 minutes of preparation time before your speaking test, think about where the role play takes place and the vocabulary and phrases in the target language that might be useful.

You may find it helpful to

- think about questions you might be asked in the role play and plan some answers
- think about your own experiences and prepare what you could say
- if you don't have relevant experience, use your imagination to prepare what you could say.

Try to stay calm – we want you to do well and the test gives you the opportunity to demonstrate what you know.

Learn how to ask for things to be repeated or to indicate that you have not heard something.

Practise answering questions about yourself or people/places that you know. Be aware of how you pronounce the words and how quickly you talk. Practise answering questions about a topic of interest, focusing on the accuracy of your grammar and your sentences and giving as much detail as possible. It can be helpful to record what you say so that you can listen to your answers again and identify where you could improve.

For each of the two conversation topics that you are asked questions on during your Speaking test, try to give answers which are as detailed as possible. The aim is to answer the questions with a short paragraph of speech. Extend your answers by adding examples and extra details (when, where, who with, why, etc.). Give your opinions and support them with reasons and explanations.

If your teacher/examiner wants you to try to give a longer answer, they may say something like *¿Puedes decirme algo más (sobre eso)?* (Can you tell me a bit more about that?). If your teacher/examiner asks you to elaborate, try to do so.

Try to practise speaking Spanish as much as possible. Revising with a friend can help.

Speak clearly and try not to rush.

Paper 4 Writing advice

Learn all new structures and points of grammar carefully and practise using them in your writing.

Learn how to spell and write accurately expressions for ideas such as how to express disappointment, how to be pleased about something, how to be in agreement with somebody, how to give an apology and how to give positive and negative opinions and preferences.

Some learners find it helpful to use the AVOCADO mnemonic to improve their writing skills. It can be a useful reminder when tackling Questions 2 and 3.

A = Adjectives (include some, and make them agree)

V = Verbs (check them and remember to use a variety)

O = Opinions (know and use your opinion phrases, e.g. *creo que...*)

C = Connectives (linking words/phrases, e.g. *sin embargo, por eso, luego, al contrario*)

A = Adverbs (include some, e.g. *rápidamente, en seguida*)

D = Description (in a past tense narrative, this is a chance to use imperfect tenses – *había, era*)

O = Originality (try to use less common vocabulary and avoid repeating yourself).

Learn a set of more complex sentence structures to use when writing. Comparatives and superlatives can be good ways of expressing opinions. Make sure that you can use object pronouns. Try to find a way to use interesting negatives (e.g. *nada, nadie, ninguno/a/os/as, tampoco, ni ... ni...*).

Practise writing about a person who you know well. Then re-write your description, making any simple sentences into more detailed ones.

Work out which grammar mistakes you make when writing. Practise writing on different topics, making sure that you review your work and correct your grammar mistakes afterwards.

Make sure that you practise writing answers to past and specimen questions so that you know how long to spend on each question.

When reading through a question paper for the first time, you may find it helpful to underline or circle the question words so that you know precisely what you are being asked.

In Question 2, think about which tense each bullet point is asking you to write in.

In Question 3, think about whether each bullet point is asking you to write about things in the past, present or future.

In Questions 2 and 3, try to include a good range of structures which will show that you can use a wide variety of language.

In the exam, plan your time carefully. You may find it useful to write a brief plan for each question that you answer. In your plan, you may wish to write down relevant key verbs in the appropriate tenses. Draw a line through your plan after you have finished with it.

Try to stick to the word limits in Questions 2 and 3. What you write **must be relevant** to the set bullet points. Irrelevant material will not gain you credit.

Make sure that you allow enough time to check all of your answers carefully. Ensure that you have covered all of the set bullet points. You could then check that the verbs that you have written are correct, and you could also check other things such as adverbs and the spelling and agreement of adjectives and nouns.

Revision checklists

In the next part of this guide we have provided some revision checklists. These include information from the syllabus that you should revise. They don't contain all the detailed knowledge you need to know, just an overview. For more detail see the syllabus and talk to your teacher.

The table headings are explained below:

Question	You should be able to	R	A	G	Comments
For each of the examination papers for Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing, there is a list of questions.	These are the key skills and understanding you need to answer these types of questions.	<p>You can use the tick boxes to show when you have revised an item and how confident you feel about it.</p> <p>R = RED means you are really unsure and lack confidence; you might want to focus your revision here and possibly talk to your teacher for help</p> <p>A = AMBER means you are reasonably confident but need some extra practice</p> <p>G = GREEN means you are very confident.</p> <p>As your revision progresses, you can concentrate on the RED and AMBER items in order to turn them into GREEN items. You might find it helpful to highlight each topic in red, orange or green to help you prioritise.</p>			<p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> add further information of your own, such as useful structures/points of grammar to check, refer to the list of grammar and structures in the syllabus add key vocabulary areas and phrases to check from the Topic Areas and Vocabulary list in the syllabus pinpoint areas of difficulty you need to check further with your teacher or textbooks include reference to useful websites and other resources

Note: the tables below cannot contain absolutely everything you need to know, but it uses examples wherever it can.

Paper 1 Listening

Question	You should be able to	R	A	G	Comments
Exercises 1 and 2	<p>Understand the main points and key information in 8 short recordings, and one short recording (a monologue or dialogue), dealing with everyday needs, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple transactions in shops • Simple directions or instructions <p>Understand (straightforward) factual information and (simple) ideas from a range of sources, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcements • Phone messages • Dialogues <p>Understand material on a range of familiar topics, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure activities • Tourist information • Accommodation • Transport • Weather • Meals • Prices <p>Identify and select main points and specific information on the above kinds of topics.</p>				
Exercises 3 and 4	<p>Understand (straightforward) factual information and (simple) ideas and opinions in a short informal conversation and a dialogue or two shorter dialogues on a range of familiar, everyday topics, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and family information • Food and drink • Travel and transport • Shopping • Local area 				

Question	You should be able to	R	A	G	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • School • Leisure activities • Countries and nationalities • Languages • Celebrations • Customs <p>Understand descriptions of events, opinions, emotions and ambitions (future intentions) in simple texts.</p> <p>Identify and select main points, specific information, and details on the above kinds of topics.</p>				
Exercises 5 and 6	<p>Understand descriptions of events, opinions, emotions and ambitions in two longer conversations, discussions or interviews.</p> <p>Identify and select specific information, (factual information) and details.</p> <p>Identify and select main points, themes, opinions, ideas, emotions and attitudes in predictable texts.</p> <p>Work out the meaning of occasional unknown words and expressions from the context.</p>				

Paper 2 Reading

Question	You should be able to	R	A	G	Comments
Exercises 1 and 2	<p>Understand the main points and key information in short simple texts, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signs and notices in public places (restaurants, and bus/railway stations and airports) <p>Identify specific information and details in short simple descriptions and texts, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverts • Brochures • Timetables • Instructions • Messages 				
Exercises 3 and 4	<p>Understand two short factual texts (e.g. emails, messages, blogs, or letters) on a range of familiar, everyday topics and situations, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and family information • Travel and transport • Food and drink • Shopping • Local area • Employment • School • Leisure activities • Countries and nationalities • Languages • Celebrations • Customs <p>These two texts will be longer than in exercises 1 and 2.</p> <p>Identify and select main points, specific information and details in simple predictable texts.</p>				

Paper 3 Speaking

Question	You should be able to	R	A	G	Comments
Role play	<p>Take part in one short role play situation with five transactional tasks, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To obtain goods or services • To give information • To arrange to go out • To change a hotel room <p>Communicate on familiar topics to meet simple needs, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and drink • Shopping • Transport • Directions • Tourist requirements <p>Communicate using a range of structures, tenses (past, present and future) and vocabulary relevant to the given situation.</p> <p>Pronounce clearly so that the message is clear.</p>				
Topic conversations 1 and 2	<p>Take part in two unprepared conversations on familiar topics, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family • Friends • Life at home • Clothes • Food and drink • Travel and transport • Languages • Celebrations • Customs • Technology • Hobbies and interests • Education • Work <p>(The maximum time is four minutes for each conversation).</p>				

Question	You should be able to	R	A	G	Comments
	<p>Describe past events and experiences, opinions, hopes and ambitions.</p> <p>Give brief reasons for opinions and plans.</p> <p>Communicate with reasonable accuracy, using a range of structures, tenses (past, present and future) and vocabulary relevant to the given situation.</p> <p>Link shorter sentences into one connected sequence of points.</p> <p>Use ways to keep the conversation going (e.g. ask for repetitions or if more detail is required).</p> <p>Pronounce and use speech patterns clearly so that the message is clear.</p> <p>Say as much as you can in response to each question and develop your answers.</p>				

Paper 4 Writing

Question	You should be able to	R	A	G	Comments
Question 1	<p>Communicate simple factual information by filling in a form providing simple details on a given topic, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal details • Jobs • Hobbies 				
Question 2	<p>Write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple linking words (e.g. and, but, because, then), on one familiar everyday topic, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home life • School • Holidays • Leisure activities and interests <p>Write 80–90 words</p> <p>Use a range of simple vocabulary and language structures with reasonable accuracy.</p>				

Question	You should be able to	R	A	G	Comments
Question 3 (a) or Question 3 (b)	<p>Write one simple connected text (a connected sequence of points) (e.g. email/ letter or article/blog) on familiar topics, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans and arrangements • Celebrations • Customs • The environment • Communications and technology • Hobbies and interests • Education • Health • Work • Travel <p>Write 130–140 words</p> <p>Describe past events and experiences, opinions, hopes and ambitions.</p> <p>Give brief reasons for opinions and plans.</p> <p>Communicate with reasonable accuracy using a range of structures, tenses/time frames and vocabulary relevant to the given situation.</p>				

Section 6: Useful websites

The websites listed below are useful resources to help you study for your Cambridge IGCSE Spanish course.

www.linguascope.com

The Intermediate level is aimed at GCSE/IGCSE students. It needs a school subscription but, if your school is subscribed, you can also access the site from home. Ask your teacher.

<https://www.babbel.com/>

This website contains various Spanish activities. Focus on the 'Advanced' level rather than on the 'Beginner' level.

www.languagesonline.org.uk

This site is free and has games, activities and revision materials on vocabulary, grammar and topics. It follows the textbook *Caminos*, which may not be the one that you use but *Caminos 3* is aimed at the GCSE/IGCSE language level and many of the activities will be suitable for your course.

<https://getrevising.co.uk>

This has lots of revision activities, sets of flashcards, and more.

<https://quizlet.com/>

This is a site that allows you to create flashcards but it also has lots of prepared sets of cards. There are plenty available that focus on Cambridge IGCSE-level vocabulary. You have to register in order to use this website.

<https://apps.ankiweb.net>

This is similar to <https://quizlet.com/>.

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