

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE

SEC

SPANISH

May 2012

EXAMINERS' REPORT

**MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE
EXAMINATIONS BOARD**

**SEC SPANISH LANGUAGE
MAY 2012 SESSION
EXAMINERS' REPORT**

Overall Performance

Grades awarded were distributed as indicated in the Table below:

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	U	Abs	Total
1& 11 A	19	29	34	36	29	-	-	14	7	168
1 & 11 B	-	-	-	12	24	16	15	17	5	89
TOTAL N	19	29	34	48	53	16	15	31	12	257
TOTAL (%)	7.4	11.3	13.2	18.7	20.6	6.2	5.8	12.1	4.7	100.0

The May 2012 session was the first time that one standard digital recording was used for the long and short listening comprehensions. Overall this proved to be a success. There were no problems reported. The quality of the sound was clear and easily understandable. Students in general did well in these comprehensions. The use of standard digital recordings clearly eliminated the problem of inconsistencies between readers and is thus highly recommended for future sessions.

Students in general also did well in the Grammar exercise of Paper 1 and the Cultural component exercise. The most common mistakes registered in the Grammar exercise were wrong conjugation of verbs and wrong identification of articles and adjectives with regard to gender and number. This was also very much apparent in the essays, where a substantial number of students were clearly unable to conjugate verbs properly and to use the correct forms of articles and adjectives.

Students did quite well in the Gap filling exercise and in the Guided dialogue exercise. In both Paper 2A and Paper 2B, some students were unable to use their own words to answer the questions of the Reading Comprehension. A few students even went so far as to copy whole lines from the given text. Others even used these lines directly in the essay.

As in previous years, there were two major categories of mistakes in the essays. A substantial number cannot distinguish and/or use the correct tense of the verb, the correct conjugation as well as the gender/number of the article and/or adjective. Sometimes essays were almost unreadable due to the extent of mistakes made.

The second category of mistakes involved the reliance on other languages, notably Italian, but also to a lesser extent English and Maltese, for vocabulary and grammatical structures. One essay in particular was written almost totally in Italian, another was mostly written in English. One candidate even came up with 'mistidintos' instead of 'invitados', having relied on the Maltese 'mistednin'.

Other problems in the essays were an inability to understand the question/essay title as well as a general lack of vocabulary and idiomatic expression. All these problems point to a lack of reading and practice in essay writing during the preparation phase.

The Chairperson
Board of Examiners

June 2012