

**UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION**

SPANISH

MAY 2013

EXAMINERS' REPORT

**MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE
EXAMINATIONS' BOARD**

**SEC SPANISH
MAY 2013 SESSION
EXAMINERS' REPORT**

Three hundred and eleven (311) candidates registered for the SEC Spanish examination. The following Table outlines the distribution of grades obtained:

May 2013 results										
GRADE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	U	ABS	TOTAL
PAPER A	22	35	39	44	37			19	3	199
PAPER B				15	30	19	21	24	3	112
TOTAL	22	35	39	59	67	19	21	43	6	311
% OF TOTAL	7.07	11.25	12.54	18.97	21.54	6.11	6.75	13.83	1.93	100

The May 2013 session was the second time that one standard digital recording was used for the long and short listening comprehensions. Overall this again proved to be a success. Students generally did well in these comprehensions. As reported last year, the use of standard digital recordings removed the problem of inconsistencies between different readers.

With regard to the Listening comprehensions, most students did well with quite a good number (14 students in all) who got full marks. Some students seemed to have a problem understanding the words "bicho" (bug) and "ladrido" (barking) in the long comprehension.

Students also did quite well in the Grammar exercise of Paper 1 and the cultural component exercise. A common mistake made in the Grammar exercise was the use of "Como" (instead of "Cómo") when used in a question. Another common mistake dealt with the wrong conjugation of verbs. This was also apparent in many essays, where a substantial number of students were unable to conjugate verbs correctly. In the cultural component exercise, a substantial number of students were unable to associate the Fallas of San José with the city of Valencia.

Students did quite well in the Gap filling exercise and the Guided dialogue exercise. In the Guided Dialogue exercise, some students incorrectly used "Soy" instead of "Estoy" when answering the basic question "¿Qué tal?". With regard to the Reading Comprehension, a number of students consistently resorted to copying whole lines of text from the Reading Comprehension even for those questions where it was specified that they had to use their own words. When answering the questions of the Reading Comprehension, some students used the word "Inca" while others used "Incas" to refer to the plural form of the Incas. However, both these forms were considered to be correct since both forms were used in the given text.

As reported last year, there were two major kinds of mistakes in the essays. A substantial number of candidates 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. The second kind of mistake is the use of other languages, mostly Italian, but also to a lesser extent English, French and Maltese, for vocabulary and grammatical structures. Again there were essays which were written almost totally in Italian while others made heavy use of English words and grammar.

A substantial number of essays were also very poor in ideas and creative writing. In Paper IIB, most students chose title b, dealing with who they would like to be for a day. A good number of these essays were very superficial and repetitive. Most of these students could only write about their wish to become rich and famous, live in a villa, have a pool at home, a very fast car, and the like, without making any effort to talk about the reasons why they chose a particular person and/or what had impressed them in that person's character or profession.

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It is felt that preparation is needed to write about a wider range of topics; exposition to a wider range of vocabulary is also required. Further awareness is also needed of the importance of the correct use and conjugation of the tense as well as of the correct use of the gender/number of the article and/or the adjective when writing or talking in Spanish.

*Chairperson
2013 Examination Panel*