Generalitat de Catalunya
Consell Interuniversitari de Catalunya
Oficina d'Accés a la Universitat

2026

Proves d'accés a la universitat

Llengua estrangera
Anglès

Sèrie 2 - A

Espai per a la correcció

Qualificació	
Comprensió oral	
Comprensió escrita	
Expressió escrita	
Suma de notes parcials	
Qualificació final	

Espai per a la revisió

Comprovació	2a correcció

Etiqueta de qualificació

Etiqueta de correcció

Etiqueta de l'estudiant

Ubicació del tribunal .....

Número del tribunal .....

The exam consists of THREE mandatory parts.

In the first part, listening comprehension is assessed through 8 multiple choice questions. It is worth 3 points.

In the second part, reading comprehension is assessed through 6 open-ended questions. It is worth 3 points.

In the third part, written expression is assessed. Here, you may choose ONE of the two given options. It is worth 4 points.

Part 1: Listening comprehension

THE WORLD OF CENOTES

In this podcast you are going to hear some new words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

limestone: pedra calcària / piedra caliza
coral reef: escull de coral / arrecife de coral

Ready?

Now read the questions on the following page. Read them carefully before listening to the podcast.

[Now listen to the interview.]

QUESTIONS

Choose the best answer according to the recording. Only ONE answer is correct.

[3 points: 0.375 points for each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.125 points. There is no penalty for unanswered questions.]

	Espai per a la correcció		
	Correcta	Incorrecta	No contestada
1. How does Alison Zicari explain the natural event that gives rise to a cenote? ☐ A river slowly dries up over time. ☐ A cave ceiling collapses and reveals hidden water. ☐ Rainfall digs a hole directly into the ground. ☐ Earthquakes open giant cracks in the soil.	☐	☐	☐
2. Why does the Yucatán Peninsula contain such a high concentration of cenotes? ☐ It was once part of a flat desert that eroded quickly over time. ☐ It is built of giant old volcanic rocks. ☐ It used to be a coral formation that became exposed. ☐ It receives more rain than any other area in Mexico.	☐	☐	☐
3. According to Alison Zicari, the underground rivers below the Yucatán Peninsula are formed by ☐ rapidly melting ice. ☐ water travelling through rock beneath the surface. ☐ lakes draining into deep reservoirs. ☐ ocean waves carving inland tunnels.	☐	☐	☐
4. What have researchers gained from studying cenotes and their connected caves? ☐ Maps of modern underwater cave systems. ☐ Evidence of ancient life, both human and animal. ☐ New species of plants that grew during the Ice Age. ☐ Proof that the Maya invented scuba diving.	☐	☐	☐
5. Why did the Maya place many of their structures so close to cenotes? ☐ They believed these places gave them good luck in the underworld. ☐ The land around cenotes was the most valuable. ☐ Cenotes provided water and were seen as spiritual gateways. ☐ They wanted to protect the cenotes from outsiders.	☐	☐	☐
6. What do the offerings found in sacred cenotes suggest about Maya culture? ☐ All remains found there were human sacrifices. ☐ They valued precious items for religious ceremonies. ☐ They did not understand how metals were made. ☐ They believed there was no life after death.	☐	☐	☐
7. What link does Alison Zicari make between cenotes and the dinosaur-killing asteroid? ☐ The asteroid dried out the cenotes completely. ☐ Water flows around the impact crater made a circular chain of cenotes. ☐ Cenotes were created by lava after the impact. ☐ Dinosaurs lived in the cenotes before they disappeared.	☐	☐	☐
8. Why do animals like manatees sometimes enter cenotes? ☐ They look for protection and need a quiet shelter. ☐ Cenotes contain algae that grow only in underwater caves. ☐ The water in cenotes is warmer than the ocean. ☐ They are disturbed by tourists and go there to get some peace.	☐	☐	☐

	Correctes	Incorrectes	No contestades
Recompte de les respostes			

Nota de comprensió oral

Part 2: Reading comprehension

YOU MIGHT BE A LATE BLOOMER

Today we live in a society structured to promote early bloomers. Our school system has sorted people by the time they are 18, using grades and university entrance exam scores. Some of these people zoom to prestigious academic trajectories while others get left behind. Many of our most prominent models of success made it big while young—Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, Taylor Swift, Michael Jordan. Magazines publish lists to glamorize youthful superstars on the rise. Age discrimination is a fact of life. But for many people, the talents that bloom later in life are more consequential than the ones that bloom early. Even brilliant people apparently need at least a couple of decades to master their field.

Successful late bloomers are all around us. Morgan Freeman had his first key roles in *Street Smart* and *Driving Miss Daisy* in his early 50s. Colonel Harland Sanders started Kentucky Fried Chicken in his 60s. Isak Dinesen published the book that established her literary reputation, *Out of Africa*, at 52. Morris Chang founded Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing, the world's leading chipmaker, at 55. If Samuel Johnson had died at 40, few would remember him, but now he is considered one of the greatest writers in the history of the English language. Copernicus came up with his theory of planetary motion in his 60s.

Why do some people **hit their peak** later than others? In his book *Late Bloomers*, the journalist Rich Karlgaard points out that late bloomers are not simply early bloomers on a delayed timetable—they didn't just do the things early bloomers did but at a later age. Late bloomers tend to be *qualitatively* different. They possess a different set of abilities that are mostly invisible to or discouraged by our current education system. They usually have to invent their own paths. Late bloomers "fulfill their potential frequently in novel and unexpected ways," Karlgaard writes, "surprising even those closest to them."

If you survey history, a taxonomy of achievement emerges. In the first category are the "early bloomers," the precocious geniuses. These are people like Picasso or Fitzgerald who succeeded young. As the University of Chicago economist David Galenson has pointed out, these high achievers usually made a conceptual **breakthrough**. They came up with a new idea and then executed it. Then there are the "second-mountain people," exemplified by, say, Albert Schweitzer. First, they conquer their career mountain; Schweitzer, for instance, was an accomplished musician and scholar. But these people find their career success unsatisfying, so they leave their career mountain to serve humanity—their whole motivational structure shifts from acquisition to altruism. Schweitzer became a doctor in the poorest parts of Africa, and won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in 1952. Finally, there are the people Galenson calls "the masters." These are people like Cézanne or Alfred Hitchcock or Charles Darwin, who were not all that successful—and in some cases just not even very good at what they did—when they were young. This could have been discouraging, but they just kept improving.

Late bloomers don't do as much advance planning as the conceptual geniuses, but they regard their entire lives as experiments. They try something and learn, and then they try something else and learn more. Their focus is not on their finished work, which they often throw away **haphazardly**. Their focus is on the process of learning itself, which they enjoy. They live their lives as a long period of trial and error, trying this and trying that, a slow process of accumulation and elaboration, so the quality of their work peaks late in life. They are the ugly ducklings of human achievement, who, over the decades, turn themselves into swans. Slow at the start, late bloomers are still sprinting during that final lap—they do not slow down as age brings its decay. They are seeking. They are striving. They are in it with all their heart.

Text adapted from an article by
David Brooks. *The Atlantic* [online] (June 26, 2024)

hit their peak: assolir el cim / alcanzar la cima
breakthrough: descobriment / descubrimiento
haphazardly: de qualsevol manera / de cualquier manera

QUESTIONS

Answer the questions below using complete sentences. You may use fragments from the text unless specified not to do so.

[3 points: 0.5 points for each correct answer. Up to 0.3 points might be deducted from the total mark for lack of intelligibility in the answers provided.]

1. What evidence does the author of the text use to claim that our society is structured to promote early bloomers? Mention ONE piece of evidence.

2. Explain what the examples of late bloomers in the second paragraph have in common (besides being well-known figures).

3. Explain IN YOUR OWN WORDS the consequence of late bloomers' invisibility to the current education system.

4. What is meant by the term *second-mountain people* (line 27)?

5. Rewrite the following sentence: "They possess a different set of abilities that are mostly invisible to or discouraged by our current education system" (lines 19-20). You may keep grammatical words (i.e. articles, pronouns, conjunctions, etc.) and the word *education*.

6. Mention TWO characteristics of late bloomers.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
Deduction for lack of intelligibility (up to 0.3 points)	
Reading comprehension score	

Part 3: Writing

Choose ONE topic. Your answer should be 125-150 words in length. There is no specific penalty for exceeding 150 words in length.

[4 points: 1 point for grammar, 1 point for vocabulary and spelling, 1 point for cohesion, and 1 point for adequacy and coherence]

1. During your school's Communication Week, students will take part in a debate about the growing impact that social media influencers have on teenagers' behaviour, lifestyle choices, and opinions. You have been asked to write a **for and against essay** discussing both the positive and negative effects that influencers may have on young people. In your text, you should consider aspects such as the promotion of healthy or unhealthy habits, the reliability of sponsored content, and the pressure to conform to certain beauty or success standards.

2. Imagine working in your ideal job. **Write a description** of a full day at work in detail, beginning with how you commute to your workplace and what your morning routine is like. Explain your exact daily tasks and responsibilities, the people you work with, and the type of environment you work in. Include information about your colleagues, your interactions with them, and how you collaborate. Finally, explain whether you enjoy this job or not, giving clear reasons for your satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Grammar	
Vocabulary and spelling	
Cohesion	
Adequacy and coherence	
Writing score	

Comprovació i 2a correcció:

3a correcció:

Etiqueta de l'estudiant

IEC
Institut d'Estudis Catalans

L'Institut d'Estudis Catalans ha tingut cura de la correcció lingüística i de l'edició d'aquesta prova d'accés.

SÈRIE 2

I. Listening comprehension (3 points)

THE WORLD OF CENOTES

In this podcast you are going to hear some new words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

limestone: pedra calcària/caliza

coral reef: escull de coral/arrecife de coral

jade: jade/jade

manatee: manatí/manatí

Ready? Now read the questions on the following page. Read them carefully before listening to the podcast. [Now listen to the interview.]

Journalist: Ms. Zicari, thank you for joining us today. You're known as one of the top experts on cenotes. To begin, could you explain to our listeners what a cenote actually is?

Alison Zicari: Thank you for having me. A cenote is a natural hole in the ground. It forms when the roof of an underground cave collapses and allows us to see the water inside. The word "cenote" usually describes an underground chamber filled with permanent water.

Journalist: Where can people find these cenotes?

AZ: You can find cenotes in several parts of the world, but the best-known and largest concentration is in Mexico, especially on the Yucatán Peninsula. This whole peninsula is made from **limestone**, which used to be a huge **coral reef** millions of years ago. When the sea level dropped, the reef was exposed, and over time, it became full of caves, tunnels, and holes. Today, the land's almost completely flat, but underneath it's a giant network of underground rivers filled with rainwater that travels through cracks in the limestone filling caves which sometimes collapse creating cenotes. Scientists estimate that there're more than 7,000 cenotes in the Yucatán.

Journalist: That number is incredible. Can you tell us more about the cave systems connected to cenotes?

AZ: Yes, the Yucatán is home to some of the world's longest underwater cave systems. One of the most famous is Sistema Sac Actun, located in the Riviera Maya. It stretches about 350 kilometers and reaches a depth of around 119 meters. Explorers and archaeologists have found many important remains inside these caves, including 9,000-year-old human bones and the bones of animals that lived during the ice age. These discoveries tell us that humans have been exploring or using these caves for thousands of years.

Journalist: Speaking of humans, cenotes played a very important role in the Maya civilization, didn't they?

AZ: They certainly did. For the Maya, cenotes were not just a source of fresh water, though that alone made them extremely valuable. They also believed cenotes were the entrance to the underworld. According to Maya beliefs, spirits and gods visited cenotes, especially Chaac, the god of rain, thunder, and lightning. Because of this, the Maya built many of their temples and villages near cenotes. In fact, new research shows that some important Maya cities—such as Chichén Itzá—were actually built directly on top of cenotes.

Journalist: Were these cenotes used for ceremonies?

AZ: Yes. Some cenotes became sacred places for rituals and offerings. Archaeologists have found items such as jade, gold, silver, and incense at the bottom of these cenotes. They have also discovered human remains. At places like the Sacred Cenote at Chichén Itzá, many of the bodies show wounds that suggest human sacrifice. However, other cenotes contain human remains without signs of violence, so these may have been peaceful burials, perhaps to prepare people for the next life.

Journalist: And today, people visit cenotes for very different reasons, right?

AZ: That's right. Today cenotes are still important for water, but they're also major tourist attractions. Millions of visitors come every year to swim, dive, snorkel, and explore. Some cenotes offer cultural experiences where visitors can watch modern Maya ceremonies. These ceremonies aren't dangerous—of course, no one's sacrificed—but they still include symbolic offerings like resin, cacao, seeds, corn, flower petals, and sugar.

Journalist: There's also a surprising connection between cenotes and the asteroid that killed the dinosaurs. Can you explain that?

AZ: Yes, it's a fascinating story. About 66 million years ago, an asteroid about 10 to 15 kilometers wide crashed on the Yucatán Peninsula. The explosion released as much energy as 100 trillion tons of TNT. This event caused huge fires, tsunamis, and climate changes that led to the extinction of many species, including the dinosaurs. The impact also changed the structure of the limestone underground. It made the rock weaker and

easier to erode. Over millions of years, groundwater moved in special patterns around the edge of the impact crater. This process created the "Ring of Cenotes." The crater itself is buried under layers of ground and ocean, so we cannot see it with our eyes, but the ring of cenotes is still visible from space. The city of Mérida is right in the middle of this ancient crater.

Journalist: Besides history and geology, cenotes also have interesting wildlife. Can you tell us about that?

AZ: Yes, cenotes are important habitats for many animals. Because they're protected from the open ocean, they offer calm, safe spaces. Manatees, for example, sometimes travel from the Caribbean Sea into cenotes through underwater caves. They rest there and even nurse their young. Crocodiles also live in some cenotes. They're part of the natural ecosystem, and tourists need to keep a respectful distance. They're usually calm, but like all wild animals, they should never be disturbed.

Journalist: All of this makes cenotes sound like truly remarkable places. Any final thoughts for our audience?

AZ: Yes. I think cenotes are some of the most unique natural wonders in the world. They combine geology, history, culture, wildlife, and adventure in one place. They've been important for thousands of years—from the time of the Maya to the present day—and they're still full of discoveries waiting to be made. Anyone who visits the Yucatán should explore at least one cenote. It's an experience you'll never forget.

Adapted from:

https://cenotefinder.com/what-are-cenotes/#google_vignette
https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20240628-the-hidden-wonders-of-mexicos-sacred-underwater-world

Choose the best answer according to the text. Only ONE answer is correct.

[3 points: 0.375 points for each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.125 points. There is no penalty for unanswered questions].

1. A cave ceiling collapses and reveals hidden water
2. It used to be a coral formation that became exposed.
3. water traveling through rock beneath the Surface
4. Evidence of ancient life, both human and animal
5. Cenotes provided water and were seen as spiritual gateways
6. They valued precious items for religious ceremonies
7. Water flows around the impact crater made a circular chain of cenotes.
8. They look for protection and need a quiet shelter

II. Reading Comprehension (3 points)

YOU MIGHT BE A LATE BLOOMER

Answer the questions below using complete sentences. Each question is worth 0.5 points with a total of 3 points. Up to 0.3 points might be deducted from the total mark for lack of intelligibility in the answers provided. You may use fragments from the text unless specified not to do so.

1.

The are 3 options (ONLY ONE IS NEEDED and any of the 3 is fine):

- Our school system sorts people by the time they are 18.
- Many models of success became successful when they were young.
- Magazines publish lists of young superstars.

(If they mention more than one, 0.25)

2.

They are all people who became successful late in life.

3.

Late bloomers accomplish success/live their lives/succeed in life/make progress (…) in ways that are different from the usual ones.

4.

Second-mountain people conquer their career mountain first/succeed early in life but find their success unsatisfying and they leave their careers to serve humanity.

5.

They have distinct characteristics that are not considered/seen/taken into account/encouraged by the present-day education authorities/laws.

(among other options)

6.

Any TWO of the following:

- Late bloomers do not plan ahead.
- They regard their lives as experiments.
- They focus on the process of learning.
- They enjoy the process of learning.
- They live their lives as a long period of trial and error.
- They are slow at the start but fast as they age.

(If they mention one, 0.25. If they mention more than two, 0.25).

III. Writing (4 points)

Choose ONE topic. Your answer should be 125-150 words in length. There is no specific penalty for exceeding 150 words in length. Extra points are not given for exceeding 150 words.

Including a title is optional.