

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel GCE
in Italian (6IN03) Paper 1

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GCE – Italian 6IN03 – Summer 2014

General Introduction

This unit requires candidates to use the language of **debate** and **argument** to discuss the issue of their choice; to defend their views and sustain discussion as the teacher-examiner **moves the conversation away** from their chosen issue covering **two unpredictable** areas of discussion. The topic of debate does not have to relate to the General Topic Area listed in the specification for AS or A2. This unit assess advanced level understanding as well as speaking skills.

Assessment Principles

A maximum of **50** marks will be awarded using the assessment criteria for each of the following categories:

Response (20 marks)

There are three descriptors in this box:

Spontaneity: a genuine, spontaneous conversation will have minimal hesitations, allowing time to think, and then explain.

Range of lexis: a good range of lexis and sentence structures pertinent to the issues discussed.

Abstract language: a discussion about ideas not purely narrative or descriptive.

Quality of Language (7 marks)

Communicating effectively and frequent basic errors should not interfere as to be a distraction.

Reading and Research (7 marks)

An absolute requirement is evidence that the candidate has read extensively and in some depth.

Comprehension and Development (16 marks)

There are two descriptors in this box:

Comprehension: understand all the implications of the questions.

Listening skills are tested in the unit and this does have a significant impact on the way in which questions are formulated and asked.

Development: respond, demonstrating understanding, taking the initiative and moving the discussion forward.

Assessment information

Format

Candidates are required to choose and prepare an issue, on which they must adopt a stance. They must complete the oral chosen issue form with a brief statement of the issue to debate, in Italian. It is therefore advisable to choose a confrontational issue, to which a stance can be taken.

The first section is a debate and requires candidates to present and take a clear stance on any issue of their choice. The examiner then plays the role of devil's advocate, expressing views contrary to those of the candidate, being careful to avoid an aggressive or confrontational tone.

Candidates may select any viable issue to debate.

Timing is crucial

It is difficult for candidates to access the highest marks if the correct timing is not adhered to.

The test begins with the candidate outlining their stance for about **1** minute. The teacher-examiner then challenges it and the candidate must defend it, in discussion, for **3-4** minutes. For the remaining **8** minutes, the teacher-examiner initiates a spontaneous discussion on two further issues, moving away from the chosen one, onto unpredictable areas.

It is very helpful if the TE clearly indicates a move to the second part of the exam by saying: "**ora passiamo a un altro argomento**". If this is not mentioned, the candidate may lose marks by continuing to elaborate on the initial issue.

Candidates are expected to express and justify opinions, argue a case, discuss problems or current controversies as they arise naturally, in spontaneous conversation.

It is possible for candidates to gain high marks in the first part of the test, because they are on familiar ground. Candidates should be aware that the topic chosen should be suitable for debate. **Teacher-examiners should verify in advance that the topic is an appropriate one**; otherwise, marks can be lost unnecessarily.

The following are examples of unsuitable issues with which to develop a debate:

- *La tecnologia e i giovani*
- *Problemi degli stranieri nel mondo*
- *La cultura italiana*
- *La storia dell'immigrazione italiana*

The unpredictable areas are more complex; these should be **genuinely unforeseen** topics. Rehearsed and recited quantities of material cannot gain high marks. The difference between well prepared material and recited material is easy to detect often from speed, reaction and intonation.

The second part of the test should be a spontaneous discussion, not just a question and answer session, covering too many topics, asking too many factual questions and/or a general chat.

Some examples of inappropriate questions for this Unit:

"In Italia c'è sempre il sole che cosa fanno i giovani? Di che cosa vuoi parlare? Quale materia preferisci a scuola? Quale paese vorresti visitare? Che lavoro vuoi fare? Che cosa ne pensi delle bevande frizzanti? Immagina di avere un amico obeso. Immaginiamo di organizzargli una vacanza. Quali attività potrebbe fare al mare? Me lo puoi spiegare?(throughout the exam) Cosa farai l'anno prossimo? Tu hai facebook? quanto lo usi? Dove vai in vacanza in Italia? "

The two unpredictable areas for the second part of the exam can be chosen from the General Topic Areas for A2 but also from the General Topic Area for AS.

Candidates' Responses

In this summer examination, the majority of candidates were thoroughly prepared and TEs followed scrupulously the guidelines for conducting the oral tests.

There was clear evidence that well-planned questions led to debates that were interesting and engaging. When questions were far too generic, the debate did not progress. In a minority of cases this led to reverting back to the original stance to attempt to add detail.

In a minority of cases teacher examiners tried to explore far too many topics, limiting questions for each topic and quickly moving on. This strategy did not allow candidates to demonstrate their skills and perform at their best. Similarly, some teachers did not interrupt their students and by doing this, the second part of the examination consisted mainly of a monologue.

In a small number of cases teacher examiners:

- let the candidates speak for 4/5 minutes to outline the issue instead of 1 minute and the test did not move away from initial issue
- conducted the exam without initial debate
- did not challenge the candidate on his/her stance in the first part of test
- asked factual questions not designed to elicit opinions
- did not initiate a spontaneous discussion in the second part
- covered only one unpredictable area in the discussion or no unpredictable areas were discussed

To recap:

- As and A2 type of questions merged
- questions were repetitive or ended up to be too personal
- occasionally too much time was spent on the chosen issue and consequently there was no evidence of further unpredictable areas being explored
- the variety of questions was at times limited, especially when many candidates chose the same stance
- some teachers talked too much and insisted on voicing opinions
- sometimes candidates were asked fewer questions bringing the exam to an earlier close, resulting in a loss of marks.
- In a small but significant number of cases, the teacher appeared unprepared and questioning was too generic and restrictive. (Ex.: *Dimmi un po' di Mussolini, perchè il fascismo? Certa gente l'amavano (!!!) Parliamo un po' di più di Rita (Levi Montalcini)*)

Teacher-examiners must conduct the test in accordance with the guidelines that are set in the Oral Training Guide. Misinterpretation in conducting the

exam, for example, timings of the test, lack of administration of the exam and insufficient questioning can disadvantage candidates even when they are prepared.

Teachers are advised to prepare a wide variety of topics, so that each candidate has something different to debate. If there are only few topics used for the discussion, it can appear as if these have been well prepared in advance and are not precisely unpredictable.

In contrast to this, most teacher-examiners were excellent in opposing the candidates' views and eliciting good debate throughout the exam.

Many candidates' responses showed extensive reading of newspaper articles on current affairs within topic areas like politics, environmental issues, emigration, euthanasia, nuclear power.

Some interesting stances on the following topics were:

- *A favore del voto obbligatorio*
- *Contro l'aiuto economico ai paesi stranieri*
- *Contro l'uso delle telecamere di sorveglianza*
- *Contro la cattività dei cetacei*
- *Sono a favore del carcere che abilita i prigionieri*
- *Sono a favore dell'eguaglianza delle donne nell'esercito*
- *Il potere delle agenzie di sicurezza deve essere ridotto*
- *I governi occidentali non promuovono l'ecosostenibilità*
- *Si dovrebbe abbassare l'età in cui i minori possono essere perseguibili*
- *Il giornalismo partecipativo è più democratico di quello tradizionale proposto dai media tradizionali*
- *I cartoni animati sono uno strumento utile per l'apprendimento*
- *I zombie esistono*
- *I gruppi terroristici sudamericani come Sendero Luminoso sono poco conosciuti e sottovalutati*
- *L'erboristeria dovrebbe aver un ruolo più importante nella nostra cultura*
- *Gli artisti di graffiti dovrebbero avere la possibilità di esprimere la loro arte*
- *Il governo dovrebbe avere più fondi per proteggere il patrimonio artistico*
- *Sono a favore degli OGM*
- *Sono a favore dei matrimoni e delle adozioni da parte di coppie omosessuali*
- *Gli sport estremi dovrebbero essere vietati*
- *La tv italiana ostacola l'emancipazione della donna*
- *Non si possono negare i vantaggi della globalizzazione*
- *Non facciamo abbastanza volontariato ed i governi dovrebbero promuoverlo*
- *La dottrina della Chiesa cattolica è arretrata*
- *Sono contro negozi come Primark e Gap*
- *La debolezza della legge italiana crea problemi sociali*

- *l'Italia è sempre meno attraente per gli immigrati e per la prossima generazione giovanile*
- *Il progetto Mose non è uno spreco di soldi*
- *Sono a favore dell' insegnamento delle lingue straniere agli inglesi*
- *Contro il celibato dei preti*
- *Sono per l'uso dei tablets*
- *Contro l'uso di sigarette elettroniche nei locali pubblici*
- *Le palestre stanno sostituendo lo sport tradizionale*
- *Sono contro la pesca agli squali*

Debates that reflected current issues related to crime and society were performed successfully when students were able to combine relevant factual knowledge with abstract concepts.

Topics, which generated interest and energetic debate, were immigration, the Environment and climate change. Religion was a controversial and popular topic, focusing on the role of the Church and, particularly its ability to obstruct decisions on contemporary issues revolving around homosexuality, adoption, gay marriage, contraception, abortion. Education and technology and the development of social networks were both extremely popular topics, and discussions revolved around the way our life-styles are dominated by new ways of communication.

The most popular unpredictable areas were:

Religione

famiglia tradizionale

matrimoni ed adozioni da parte di omosessuali

tecnologia

eutanasia

legalizzazione delle droghe leggere

terrorismo,

razzismo,

immigrazione,

diritti umani

Unione Europea

pena di morte,

aborto,

bioetica/cellule staminali/esperimenti sugli animali

bellezza/diete/concorsi di bellezza/chirurgia plastica

moda

esercito

disoccupazione

scuola/università

parità tra uomo e donna

energia nucleare/energie rinnovabili/ fracking

cambiamento del ruolo della donna e difficoltà nel mondo del lavoro

TV/videogiochi

Sport e società

Obesità/anoressia/bulimia

Fumo/droga/alcol

Quality of language

There were examples of candidates without an Italian background whose oral performance was highly accurate. Pronunciation was generally good.

Most common mistakes:

Error	intended	grammar
acquisiti ambientali i tacchi militari automa i bolletti bullito incontro additti la disturbazione embronio attendere le scuole gusti alimenti l'inquinazione allegati a leggi del successo la manaccia le droghe i medotti la minorità il partito nazionista i nutrienti l'obbligatore di coscienza i regoli il risvegliamento socialismo stritta confidenza talentoso i tazzi vantaggi beneficiale divietato il vittima affettato	acquistati ambientali attacchi militari autonomia le bollette bullied contro dipendenti la distribuzione embrione frequentare le scuole gusti alimentari l'inquinamento legati a leggi di successione la minaccia le medicine i metodi la minoranza il partito nazionalista i nutrimenti l'obietto di coscienza le regole il risveglio socializzazione severa sicurezza di sè di talento i tassi vantaggi vantaggioso vietato la vittima influenzato/inciso	Agreement: <i>I studenti inglese</i> Definite articles: <i>I studenti, I inglesi, il studio</i> Wrong use of prepositions: <i>che aspettano a (di) essere adottati, in piedi (a piedi)</i> Relative pronouns Sequence of tenses: <i>se farebbero</i> Passive voice: <i>sono stati detti</i> the use of subjunctive was mostly successful, a few problems with the conditional in hypothetical clauses. il 'coso', used too often by native speakers to replace specific vocabulary . Use of the impersonal form (verb agreement and use of the preposition 'di') ex: <i>potrebbero</i> instead of <i>potrebbero</i> <i>sono prendendo</i> instead of <i>stanno prendendo</i> <i>subino</i> instead of <i>subiscono</i>

GOOD use of linking words such as: *tuttavia, da un lato e dall'altro lato; infatti; pur...; tutto sommato.*

Reading and Research

Candidates were able to achieve marks with references to articles, books, and internet sources, offering detail and convincing opinion. Many candidates' responses showed extensive reading of newspaper articles on current affairs within topic areas like: politics, environmental issues, immigration, euthanasia and nuclear power.

It is worth mentioning to candidates and teachers that in order to show extensive reading and research on the issue, it is not sufficient to say: "Ho letto un articolo nel giornale o in Internet...".

Comprehension and Development

There were some very interesting and challenging questions, which allowed a natural and logical interaction with teacher-examiners, taking into consideration the fact that this unit assesses advanced-level understanding as well as speaking skills.

Teacher-Examiners

Candidates' success in Unit 3 depends on the good conduct of the exam, as the quality of debate depends very much on the teacher examiner's counterarguments for the chosen issue and the nature of the questions asked for the further issues.

Whilst thanking many examiners who conducted the exam successfully, we would like to encourage others to improve and develop the skills of the teacher examiners.

Some examples of good questions:

- *Abbiamo il dovere morale di aiutare i paesi piu' poveri visto che la ricchezza non e' distribuita in modo uguale?*
- *La violenza giovanile quali cause economiche e sociali produce? Qual è il ruolo della famiglia e dello stato*
- *Violenza ed emigrazione sono sempre collegate?*
- *Esistono elementi positivi dell'emigrazione?*
- *Come spieghiamo il fenomeno della radicalizzazione che è molto diffuso? Come si può risolvere?*
- *Che interesse hanno i giovani nella politica e perchè?*
- *Ha ancora senso mantenere in piedi l'Europa?*
- *La crisi economica secondo te ha messo in discussione l'Europa come istituzione?*
- *L'Europa è riuscita a promuovere l'integrazione?*
- *Le organizzazioni ecosolidali sono veramente di aiuto alle comunità agricole dei paesi in via di sviluppo?*
- *Qual'è la responsabilità più importante di un genitore nel XXI secolo?*
- *Come saranno i trasporti nel futuro?*
- *Pensi che i media contribuiscano veramente allo sviluppo psicologico e culturale dei giovani?*

- *Pensi che ci siano delle aree di ghettizzazione a Londra?*
- *Pensi che in una società in cui c'è molta immigrazione l'integrazione sia più profonda e radicata e quindi ci sia meno razzismo?*
- *Cosa pensi della disuguaglianza tra i paesi occidentali e i paesi del terzo mondo?*
- *L'Europa è un esperimento che ha avuto successo o che ha fallito nel suo intento?*
- *Quali nazionalità trovano più difficile integrarsi nella società britannica e perché?*
- *Quale tipo di discriminazione è più difficile da eradicare nella nostra società?*
- *Perché i giovani credono sempre meno nella religione?*
- *Fino a che punto si può manipolare la natura?*
- *A quale stereotipo è ancora soggetta la donna ai nostri giorni?*
- *A parte il carcere in quale altro modo si può far capire ad un criminale che ha sbagliato?*
- *Quali sono le conseguenze sociali di una società che sta invecchiando?*

To avoid later disappointments, centres must note that if they employ Italian native speakers (and not qualified teachers) to conduct the exam, they should make sure that all the important information of the test is understood. On the other hand, any TE conducting the test should have a good knowledge of the language; questions like - *Pienso perchè è tabù, el poco morboso. La moda Italia è migliore di Inghilterra. Nella futura è un po' como le bebe* - will not help the candidates to show their ability to express and justify opinions. Centres without a teacher could ask information about the possibility to use London Centre Orals for their candidates.

The teacher examiner should study the oral form before undertaking the conduct of the test and should prepare valid counterarguments to avoid silences. For the debate to be interesting, the counterarguments must be well focused. Both the candidates and their examiners should be well prepared. Questions similar to "*Dimmi cosa sai di... - Sei a favore o contro?*" are likely to produce a weak debate. After about **5** minutes the TE should initiate a spontaneous discussion covering **two** further issues.

A number of teacher-examiners did not follow the requirements to explore at least two further unpredictable issues. If a TE covers just one issue then the marks for Response, Reading & Research and Comprehension & Development are reduced. Although examiners are not required to take the opposite view in the unpredictable areas, inputs like "*Cambiamo argomento; **che cosa sai su...?***" will not prompt a high level of debate or will be considered a complex and challenging question.

As in the past examination series, a small number of teacher-examiners were not aware of the requirements, treating the second part of the test more as a conversation rather than a discussion and causing candidates to lose marks. The role of teacher-examiners is not to ask questions to elicit

information, although the candidate might well refer to some factual information to support and justify a point of view.

Some teacher-examiners mistakenly introduced too many issues without allowing any in depth discussion. It is acceptable to move on if a candidate is unable to discuss a topic and might handle another issue better, but a string of issues only just touched upon, is not likely to show the candidate's ability to sustain the discussion. Long monologues learnt and recited by heart without interruption will demonstrate a lack of spontaneity and this could affect the mark given for Response and Comprehension and Development.

Teacher-examiners must remember that a good debate depends very much on the challenge that they put to the candidates, both for the chosen and unpredictable issues. If candidates are prepared regularly in the art of debate and discussion, they will almost certainly do well.

To recap issues that need to be considered:

- initial issue not always arguable
- stance not challenged enough by the teacher-examiner
- some questions on summer holidays or personal life not appropriate for this unit
- too many factual questions not designed to elicit opinions
- questions at GCSE level
- only one topic discussed after initial issue
- no further topics
- candidates not allowed to demonstrate debating skills.

Administration

Some issues arising from the administration of the test can be summarised as follows:

- during recording some background noise and/or other sounds (the bell, telephone, mobile phones, etc.) made candidates lose concentration
- no name or number of candidates on the box or CD
- stance not clear and/or written in English
- exam either too long or too short
- old Oral Topic Form OR3
- incomplete Oral Topic Form OR3
- no attendance registers sent
- badly damaged CDs.

Sound quality of CDs is excellent, although examiners need to know, for the sake of efficiency, if a given CD needs to be played on computer or on a simple CD player.

Centres should wrap CDs in an appropriate plastic box or at least in a padded envelope.

NB: Please note that following notification on the qualification page of the Pearson/Edexcel website, and via the updates from the Subject Advisor, Mr Alistair Drewery, we will no longer be accepting audio cassettes for assessment from September 2014 onwards.

Advice and Guidance

Teachers-examiners should:

- make sure that the issue is clearly stated and a stance is taken
- prepare challenging counterarguments
- debate the chosen issue for the time required, but no longer
- introduce two further issues
- exploit all the potential of subsequent issues
- keep the debate going
- remember that talking about personal experiences can take up valuable time
- in the interest of candidates, teacher-examiners are advised to adhere scrupulously to administrative procedures.

Candidates should:

- select an issue that is of genuine personal interest
- adopt a stance and be ready to defend it
- be prepared to be engaged in a free-ranging discussion of further issues for the remaining 8 minutes.

Conclusion

Congratulations to teachers and candidates

This summer exams were very well conducted in several centres. Many candidates performed well in this examination and appear to have worked thoroughly to prepare themselves. The facility to contact any of the Principal Examiners through the Ask the Expert service is offered to the centres. An online Oral Training Guide is also accessible.

Unit 3: Understanding and Spoken Response

Marking guidance for oral examiners

Tests that are too short

The timing of the test begins the moment the candidate starts the presentation. A test is too short if it is less than 10 minutes 30 seconds (including a 30 second tolerance).

Drop down one mark band to the corresponding mark across the following assessment grids:

- 'Response'
- 'Comprehension and Development'

e.g.

5-8	Limited incidence of spontaneous discourse; limited range of lexis and structures; very little evidence of abstract language.
9-12	Satisfactory incidence of spontaneous discourse; range of lexis and structures adequate with some ability to handle language of abstract concepts.
13-16	Frequent examples of spontaneous discourse; good range of lexis and structures; good use of abstract concepts.

If a candidate would have scored 12 for Response, they should be given 8, if they would have scored 9, they should be given 5. A similar adjustment would be made to the mark for Comprehension and Development. This adjustment should not be applied to marks for Quality of language or Reading and Research.

Tests that are too long

Once the 13 minute mark has passed, the examiner stops listening at the end of the next sentence/sense group.

Tests that do not have a debatable or defensible issue

e.g. where the candidate does not present or defend a definite stance, or the teacher-examiner fails to give the candidate an opportunity to justify their opinions.

- Candidates will be limited to scoring a maximum of 4 for 'Reading and Research'.
- This may affect the marks given for 'Comprehension and Development'.

Tests that do not move away from initial issue/topic

e.g. further unpredictable areas of discussion are not covered and/or a monologue.

- Candidates are limited in the amount of marks they can score. Please see the grids.

Response	
Only one unpredictable area discussed	No more than 12 marks
No unpredictable areas discussed	No more than 8 marks

Reading and research	
Only one unpredictable area discussed	No more than 4 marks
No unpredictable areas discussed	No more than 3 marks

Comprehension and development	
Only one unpredictable area discussed	No more than 10 marks
No unpredictable areas discussed	No more than 7 marks

Spontaneity/Response

A performance which is, in the marker's view, *largely* recited, and demonstrates *very little* spontaneity as well as impaired intonation may suggest pre-learning. If the examiner believes that a test has been pre-learnt then the mark for **Response** will be limited to 8, irrespective of use of lexis/structure/abstract language.

A pre-learnt test may also affect the mark given for **Comprehension and Development** if it does not permit a natural and logical interaction.

It is important that the PE and team leaders can see clearly the justification for marks awarded and examiners should note briefly on the OR3 form the reason for any caps which are applied in marking an oral test.

If a score of '0' is awarded for any of the assessment grids, the recording should be referred to your Team Leader.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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