



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Italian (6IN03) Paper 1A
Speaking

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6IN01 Unit 1: Spoken Expression and Response in Italian

In this Unit candidates are required to demonstrate their understanding of a short Italian text (linked to one of the general topic areas of the AS specification) and to engage in general discussion on the same topic area. The candidates' understanding of the text is tested by 4 questions posed by their teacher/examiner (TE), who then develops the conversation into a more general discussion of the topic area chosen by the candidate before the test, moving away from the subtopic covered in the first part of the test. The general topic areas are as follows:

Youth culture and concerns

Lifestyle: health and fitness

The world around us: travel, tourism, environmental issues and the Italian-speaking world

Education and employment

Candidates are free to choose any of the four general topic areas, according to their preference and interests. They should be advised to choose a topic area with which they are familiar and which they are prepared to discuss in detail. They will need to research their chosen area and undertake reading from a variety of sources. Candidates are given 15 minutes prior to their examination to prepare their stimulus text. During this time, they should study the text with a view to answering questions about it, offering their opinions about the subject of the text and the related subtopic, and to discussing the subject of the text in more detail. The Oral form (see Appendix 1 in the specification) must be completed with the general topic area chosen by the candidate and the number of the stimulus used.

Assessment Principles

Up to **50** marks are awarded positively using the appropriate grids for **Quality of Language** (**16** marks, **8** for **Accuracy** and **8** for **Range of Lexis**), **Response** (**20** marks) and **Understanding** (**14** marks, **4 Stimulus specific** and **10** related to the **General Topic area**)

Candidates' Responses

This was the final iteration of this examination series; there was an extremely small number of candidates and all of them were resitting the exam in order to improve their marks. In general terms, most candidates were very well prepared. Centres kept to the spirit of the examination, in allowing candidates to speak in a natural way within the broad topic area of discussion.

As in previous years, a good number of candidates reached commendable levels of linguistic competence. Many candidates were able to sustain their discussion well and offer interesting slants in their opinion of given topics.

PART A

Centres were aware this year of what was required of each candidate and candidates made a more conscientious effort to provide detailed answers to the initial four compulsory questions. Some answers to question 1 seemed justifiably shorter since the question seems so general - *Di che cosa parla il brano?* Some students, even more able candidates, had difficulty with question 2, because the question was quite precise, requiring an answer with exacting vocabulary and an ability to paraphrase. As in previous years, students were more at home with questions 3 and 4 where they were able to demonstrate their considerable and, in some cases, extensive knowledge of their chosen topic area. Many candidates achieved scores of 3 or 4, although 2 and 1 were achieved in isolated cases.

PART B

This was on the whole well done, and candidates seemed less inclined to simply deliver pre-learned material. Many students scored well in this part of the test because of their own excellent preparation. They were able to move smoothly from one sub-topic to the next. The better performances were more markedly dependent on language skills.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Candidates who had selected this topic offered interesting discussions, particularly on job prospects for young people and on the way in which schools and higher education should equip students for the world of work.

The main text of stimulus 1A/B was well understood overall. Moreover, interesting discussions often followed on levels of school-generated stress in young people, its causes and ways to improve the situation.

Stimulus 2A/B allowed for good discussions following section A.

THE WORLD AROUND US

Candidates who chose this topic area showed good knowledge and understanding of climate change, pollution, recycling and tourism, producing excellent informative discussions. Many candidates achieved a score of 7, 8 or 9 for Understanding (General Topic Area).

In a limited number of cases, the questions asked in part B were limited to personal travelling experiences or preferences and generated a simple and plain conversation, rather than the discussion required at this level. Questions such as: *Ti ricordi qualche vacanza molto bella del tuo passato? Che cosa hai fatto? Che cosa hai visto?* ... did not develop discussions suitable to AS level.

Both stimuli were well understood providing some very good ideas and comments on the importance of recycling, on the environment and its problems.

YOUTH CULTURE AND CONCERNS

Stimulus 1A/B: most candidates could answer the questions on these cards, explaining how the family has been changing, the role of grandparents and the changing role of women. The discussions that followed were always interesting and thorough.

Stimulus 2 A/B: these cards were also well done and often led to focused answers on the dangers of technology.

In the general discussion, a recurrent point of debate was the family and social relationships and how technology and social media have had an impact on strengthening or weakening these ties. Music and fashion play an important role in providing youngsters with role-models, directions, trends, and an opportunity to express both individuality and encourage integration.

LIFESTYLE, HEALTH AND FITNESS

Stimulus 1A/B didn't pose any difficulties and gave candidates the opportunity to speak about the physical and mental health advantages of exercise. Sometimes the discussion that followed was bland, when the teacher-examiner asked too many personal questions.

Question 4 of Stimulus 2A and question 3 of Stimulus 2B posed some problems to less able candidates, producing inconsistent answers.

Candidates seem to have a good knowledge of this Topic Area, particularly in relation to food and sport. The transition between stimulus content onto other subtopics was not always clear and the questions in section B seemed stuck between physical activity to keep fit and a healthy diet. This was a pity as it limited ideas being expressed and often stifled the conversation.

Overall language levels this year, compared to 2018, were a very commendable standard. There were few very weak candidates.

As in previous years, accuracy was not a problem for the high number of native speakers, or for students who had spent a considerable amount of time in Italy. Among standard native English candidates some students need to be aware that *che* translates who, whom, that and which and cannot be replaced by *chi*. Stress continues to be a problem, especially with the third person plural of the present tense. Among less fluent speakers, and where vocabulary was insecure, there was a tendency to use simply the infinitive of the verb rather than seeking the correct tense or the correct ending. Among weaker candidates there were frequent errors in adjectival agreement. Prepositions sometimes caused problems, particularly with verbs. It was not uncommon to hear *dipendere su qualcosa* rather than *dipendere da*. Likewise, students frequently said and incorrectly *È molto importante di ricordare che.....* It was not uncommon for candidates to achieve a score of 6.

On the whole student command of vocabulary was good, very good or excellent. As a rule of thumb candidates are wise to prepare in Italian important key phrases which they regularly use in their native language. As with accuracy, many candidates achieved a score of 6 or 7.

In general terms, response this year was very commendable, with the exception of Question 2 of the compulsory 4 questions, where the response was sometimes hesitant, possibly because candidates were trying to rephrase what was written in the text. A variety of sub-topics were covered and students often appeared conversant with all of them, allowing them to achieve a score of 16 and 17.

Teacher Examiners (TEs)

The exams were generally well conducted: the majority of TEs and their candidates did extremely well. It was evident that TEs had conscientiously prepared their candidates' topics eliciting very good performances from their students. However, there are still some TEs who are obviously not aware of the exam specifications and conduct the examination incorrectly; some who tend to keep the conversation within the level of factual knowledge rather than encouraging the expression of opinions and discussion; and some who limit the number of questions in part B to 4.

Administration

There were fewer problems this year with the timing: the most recurrent problem was the insufficient time given to Part A.

There were still a few examinations where in Part B the TE did not move away from the stimulus subtopic to explore one or more of the other subtopics of the chosen General Topic Area. This is regrettable as candidates are severely penalised and limited as to the mark they can be awarded for Quality of Language (Accuracy, Response and Understanding of the GTA).

Quality of recording was generally good.

