

Examiners' Report/  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2015

Pearson Edexcel GCE  
in Italian (6IN01) Paper 1A  
Spoken Expression (TE)

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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. 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

The majority of centres that entered candidates for the AS oral examination in Italian should, in general terms, be congratulated on the thoroughness of their preparation. Many 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.

There were still some cases of over-rehearsal, although fewer centres appear to have tried this approach than had been the case in the past.

The importance of spontaneity must be stressed in relation to performances that can only be described as:

- stage-managed, in which candidates have learned everything by heart for the whole of Part B and at times spend an agonizing 8 minutes regurgitating information, often leaving out bits so that the conversation becomes largely meaningless.
- monologue, with little or no teacher participation.
- one centre, one topic, when a class had studied the same topic and TE rotates the same 'unpredictable' questions to all candidates (all of whom had learned the answers more or less well).

This is often done in complete good faith but the lack of spontaneity severely limits the marks for Response. The repetition of language, often far above the candidates' real level of competence, can only result in poor levels of accuracy.

#### PART A

As in previous years, a number of candidates found the initial text and its questions too complex. Whilst most candidates now expect a question of the type – *Di quale situazione parla il brano?* – few were happy to begin with a simple *il testo dice che* or *il brano spiega che*, replying incorrectly with *il brano parla che*. Questions asking for 'quali vantaggi' or 'quali svantaggi' were often misunderstood, causing candidates to provide the wrong answer. Another element of confusion was the presence of figures, numbers and most of all percentages, which some candidates found difficult to interpret and explain orally. Candidates continue to need practice in both oral and written summary to answer competently the first two questions of the initial text, although there were fewer cases of candidates relying too heavily on the wording of the text. Some better candidates had been encouraged to give full answers to Q1 and pre-empted Q2. Q3 and 4, being more general, were answered well by better candidates, who put forward very interesting opinions and ideas and produced well developed answers. These questions also showed up the weaknesses of other candidates, who performed better in part B, as they had been able to prepare this. Some candidates offered little expansion and did not cover the required time needed to be spent on the first part of the oral exam.

#### PART B

This was on the whole well done, and candidates seemed less inclined to simply deliver pre-learnt material, which is very encouraging. All centres are well aware of the need for breadth of vocabulary within given topic areas and many candidates prepared themselves exceptionally well for this aspect of the examination. A number of candidates, however, still have an inadequate command of several verb tenses, including the present. Many centres continue to present candidates who perform well in this examination and who show that they are serious in their approach to language study.

This year, the topic areas Lifestyle, Health and Fitness and Youth culture and concerns were the most popular, with Education and Employment and The world around us rather less popular than in previous years.

#### EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Stimulus 1: candidates found the article easy to understand. Candidates were able to offer a variety of good suggestions to help students learn better and of good reasons for the importance of technology in schools.

Stimulus 2: some candidates found the passage challenging: they generally understood it, but found the process of formulating their responses slightly more difficult. Card 2A, Q3: some candidates talked about the advantages rather than the disadvantages of working abroad. Card 2A, Q4: some candidates were unsure as to whether the question referred to Italy in particular or more generally to any country.

In some cases, the opportunities to expand the candidates' knowledge of the topic were not exploited and the general conversation remained restricted to personal experiences at school and/or projects for the future, with some TE reverting to GCSE-style questioning and many closed questions (e.g.: *What's your favourite subject...? Do you like to wear a uniform?*).

In better exams, a much wider variety of discussions emerged from this topic, prompted by more imaginative questions (e.g.: *How does school prepare you for work? How does studying non-practical subjects like Latin or Greek prepare you for the world of work?*)

### THE WORLD AROUND US

This topic area was evocative and the students' obvious intrinsic interest in the environment clearly acted as a springboard to develop other topics such as climate change and natural disasters, the use and development of sustainable energy, the protection of flora and fauna. Students also discussed the impact of tourism on the environment and its contribution to climate change but were generally supporting the need for travel and the importance of improving transport. A more responsible attitude to local issues concerning pollution in the cities and urban planning was the main focus. This was once again the least popular topic area and was chosen by students with a keen interest in and a detailed knowledge and understanding of environmental threats and concerns.

Candidates who chose this topic area showed good knowledge and understanding of climate change, pollution, recycling and tourism, producing excellent informative discussions.

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.

Stimulus 1: both Cards A and B produced generally good answers, although in some cases Q1 and 2 produced answers which were undeveloped. Q3 and Q4 were handled better, allowing candidates to draw on their own personal experience.

Stimulus 2: there were several instances of candidates repeating parts of the text verbatim.

### YOUTH CULTURE AND CONCERNS

Once again, the most popular topic area.

Stimulus 1: some candidates did not understand that the text was about a study. The answer to Q2 was not always complete, with many candidates, even some able ones, failing to give the full answer. Additionally, some candidates were confused as to whether '*sentirsi vicini*' meant living together or just closer to one's family.

Q3 and Q4 on Cards A and B gave all candidates great scope for development. In their reply to Q4, Card B, some candidates failed to provide a more mature answer, saying, for example, that the ideal family is made of 2 parents and 2 children without giving reasons or justifications.

Stimulus 2: was generally well understood and students recognized the dangers and consequences of drinking alcohol on an empty stomach. Q3 and Q4 on Cards A and B gave all candidates great scope for development, with some very good answers on the reasons for such destructive behaviour and good suggestions to solve the problem of excessive drinking.

In the general discussion, students explored cultural differences regarding alcohol intake in different countries, and tended to be more concerned about the addictive and destructive nature of alcohol rather than the problem of drugs. Music was a popular topic, exploring how musical taste defines personalities and friendship groups and helps young people to communicate and share ideas. Regarding

technology, students celebrated the fact that it is a part of everyday life, embedded in everything we do.

## LIFESTYLE, HEALTH AND FITNESS

Another very popular topic area.

Stimulus 1: this was generally well answered, but some candidates were confused about how much Italians should eat. Q2, Card A caused problems to less able candidates, because the answer required a change in the structure of the sentence contained in the passage. Q3, Card A: less able candidates misunderstood "*sempre meno*" and were unable to answer correctly. Q4, Cards A and B again offered good opportunities for expansions and were answered generally well with plenty of different suggestions outlined.

Stimulus 2: the topic was fully understood and responses generally satisfactory, although some candidates had difficulty in answering Q2 fully because they had to provide data and percentages or because "*nel giro di tre mesi*" was left out.

All candidates seem to have a good knowledge of this Topic Area, particularly in relation to food and sport. Only a few TEs covered health issues: apart from the problems caused by smoking, a number of TEs asked questions about the social effects of drinks and drugs among young people.

Candidates' performance in terms of linguistic criteria did not differ greatly from the previous exam series: the range was wide and well distributed, from very good performances – above specification requirements – to a moderate but nevertheless an extension of the linguistic skills required at GCSE level.

Knowledge of the subjunctive remains in some cases theoretical and in practice verbs of thinking were often followed by the indicative when the subjunctive would have been better. The expression *è importante che* was frequently used but was often incorrectly followed by the indicative. Some weaker candidates are still insecure in their knowledge of the present indicative and tend to skim over the verb ending. There were a number of GCSE-type mistakes, for example modal verbs were sometimes not followed by the infinitive. Some candidates did not distinguish between *chi* and *che*. Care needs to be taken with verb endings, relative clauses and stress (particularly in the third person plural of the present tense, where the stress is not on the ending, e.g. *adoperare* > *adoperano*). The use of the verb *piacere* remains problematic.

The range of lexis was good or even very good, but structures were very often limited and repetitive, with a large number of candidates not attempting any subordinate clauses. In the few case of scripted material, structures were often too complex for the candidates' ability and resulted in very flawed performances with marked differences between Parts A and B.

Accuracy about agreements, gender and often verbs endings is still a problem even with stronger candidates and errors in word stress and pronunciation remain frequent.

Common errors were:

*'agrossisce' instead of ingrossa*

*'capabile' instead of capace*

*'cortano le parole' instead of accorciano, riducono*

*'devo piace il mio lavoro' instead of mi deve piacere*

*'difficoltare' instead of rendere difficile*

*'diventano dipendati' instead of diventano dipendenti*

'donatore di lavoro' instead of *datore di lavoro*  
'indivalità' instead of *individualità*  
'involve' instead of *coinvolge*  
'i litighi' instead of *le liti, i litigi*  
'nel questo' instead of *in questo*  
'i pidofili' instead of *i pedofili*  
'raggiungato' instead of *raggiunto*  
'rifusato' instead of *rifiutato*  
'i risulti' instead of *i risultati*  
'la sensibilazione' instead of *la sensibilizzazione*  
'sociabili' instead of *socievoli*  
'solvere' instead of *risolvere*  
'i vegetali' instead of *le verdure*  
'violare' instead of *vietare*  
'le vitamane' instead of *le vitamine*  
'cacchiare' instead of *chiacchierare*  
'capicità di contrazione' instead of *capacità di concentrazione*  
'le camere di multe' (speed cameras) instead of *le telecamere* or *l'autovelox*  
'creato, creare' instead of *creato, creare*  
'la drogatura' instead of *il dopaggio*  
'esperienzare' instead of *provare, fare esperienza*  
'si fa felice' instead of *rende felici*  
'fare cose male' instead of *comportarsi male*  
'imposare' instead of *imporre*  
'l'individuale' instead of *l'individuo*  
'i lingui' instead of *le lingue*  
'è malo per' instead of *fa male a*  
'il perso' instead of *la perdita*  
'al piede' instead of *a piedi*  
'non potiamo' instead of *non possiamo*  
'predictere' instead of *predire*  
'il grande preoccupo' instead of *la grande preoccupazione*  
'la problema' instead of *il problema*  
'il scemo' instead of *lo schema*  
'l'aumentazione' instead of *l'aumento*  
'i relativi' instead of *i parenti*  
'dipendere, dipendente su' instead of *dipendere, dipendente da*  
'malo' instead of *dannoso / negativo / nocivo*  
'il governmento' instead of *il governo*  
'fisicale' instead of *fisico*  
'sarà aumentare' instead of *aumenterà*  
'preventare' instead of *prevenire*  
'contribua' instead of *contribuisce*  
'potrebbe essere fare' instead of *potrebbe essere fatto/a*  
'cominciare di' instead of *cominciare a*  
'espressarsi' instead of *esprimersi*  
'avere confidenza a/con' instead of *sentirsi a proprio agio con*  
'avantaggi' instead of *vantaggi*; 'disvantaggi' instead of *svantaggi*;  
confusion between the use of *migliore* and *meglio*, *peggiore* and *peggio*, *buono* and *bene*, *cattivo* and *male* (i.e. the use of adjectives instead of adverbs and viceversa);  
pronunciation of *rischi*, *schermo*, *freschi* with the English 'ch';  
incorrect use of *piacere*;  
in response to question 1, the phrase 'il brano parla che...' instead of *parla di* or *dice che*;  
relative pronouns: 'chi' instead of *che*;

agreements: noun and adjective, verb and noun, etc.;  
 if clauses with wrong tenses;  
 'qualche giovani pensano' instead of *alcuni giovani pensano*;  
 'molte/molti gente' instead of *molta gente*; *gente* followed by a plural verb;  
 intransitive verbs with *avere*;  
 infinitive form of verb instead of conjugated form;  
 'perché' at the beginning of a sentence, instead of *siccome/dal momento che/dato che*;  
 'suoi/sue' instead of *loro*;  
 'gli umani' instead of *gli esseri umani*;  
 'la media' instead of *i media*;  
 'la maggioranza di' instead of *la maggioranza di*;  
 'affettare' instead of *colpire, influenzare*;  
 'i giovani diventano alcolici' instead of *alcolizzati*;  
 'dopo che sono graduato' instead of *dopo essermi laureato*;  
 'l'articolo si tratta' instead of *l'articolo tratta di/nell'articolo si parla di*;  
 'improverare' instead of *migliorare*;  
 'contribuare/contribuato' instead of *contribuire/contribuito*;  
 'gagnare' instead of *guadagnare*;  
 'cose aiutevoli' instead of *cose utili*;  
 'i chimici' instead *le sostanze chimiche*;  
 'confianza' instead of *fiducia*;  
 'la cambia' instead of *il cambio/il cambiamento*;  
 'la pianeta' instead of *il pianeta*;  
 'i veicolari' instead of *i veicoli*;  
 'espensivo' instead of *caro/costoso*;  
 'esclusato' instead of *escluso*;  
 'centrico' instead of *centrale*;

## Interesting Topics and Questions

È giusto viaggiare in un luogo senza conoscerne la cultura?  
 Come possiamo essere turisti responsabili?  
 Il flusso che porta gli italiani all'estero aiuta a portare la cultura italiana a chi non la conosce?  
 Che cosa causa la fuga dei cervelli?  
 Pensi che la società moderna diventi sempre più pigra?  
 Quale ruolo ha lo sport nella società di oggi?  
 È importante per i giovani essere alla moda?  
 La droga aiuta veramente a fuggire dallo stress?  
 Il fumo è ancora un problema nella società di oggi?  
 Dovremmo vietare le sigarette elettroniche?  
 Chi fuma dovrebbe pagare per le cure mediche?  
 Come possiamo disintossicarci dalla rete?  
 Nel futuro faremo solo acquisti in rete?  
 Quando i giovani partecipano a proteste o fanno parte di gruppi pacifisti lo fanno per moda?  
 Il mondo del lavoro va cambiato o l'università va cambiata?  
 Il lavoro precario è un'opportunità piuttosto che un fatto negativo?  
 Vantaggi e svantaggi di una convivenza prolungata con i genitori.  
 Secondo te, quando è il momento giusto per andare a vivere da soli?  
 Perché il matrimonio non è visto più come la prima forma di convivenza?  
 Quali sono i buoni esempi di giovani che dobbiamo pubblicizzare?

Pensi che le campagne antifumo siano una forma di discriminazione nei confronti dei fumatori?

Qual è il ruolo della scuola nella lotta contro il fumo?

Ci sono aspetti negativi nell'uso massiccio delle tecnologie da parte dei giovani?

La scuola prepara per la vita o per il lavoro futuro?

L'università è ancora una garanzia di una carriera di successo?

Quali consigli daresti ad un giovane che si prepara a scegliere l'università?

Nel mondo del lavoro, uomini e donne hanno raggiunto la parità? Come si può cambiare questa situazione?

Cosa si può fare perchè i giovani abbiano più possibilità di lavoro?

Le campagne pubblicitarie aiutano a cambiare le abitudini alimentari delle persone?

Cosa si potrebbe fare per migliorare i comportamenti alimentari delle persone?

Che responsabilità ha l'industria alimentare verso le persone?

Come si convince la gente a smettere di fumare?

Come può influire la tecnologia sul rapporto genitori/figli?

In che senso oggi si parla di 'famiglie'?

Sei a favore dei matrimony gay?

In che modo la famiglia è importante per un giovane della tua età?

Pensi che il binge-drinking sia in parte responsabile per la delinquenza giovanile?

Pensi che abbia una parte anche nelle gravidanze precoci?

Sposarsi e fare figli è ancora importante per i giovani di oggi?

Viaggi virtuali o reali?

Gli italiani nel mondo: l'esperienza italiana di emigrazione, le comunità italiane all'estero?

Il gap year: è una buona idea e perché?

La competizione nello sport: aspetti negativi e positivi

Calcio: violenza e razzismo

Donazione di organi: pro o contro?

Aspetti negativi della rivoluzione tecnologica

Espressioni di ribellione: tatuaggi, piercing, droga

La vulnerabilità dei ragazzi

La droga come risultato della crisi sociale.

Preoccupazioni, sogni, ideali dei giovani d'oggi.

Perché i giovani non sono interessati alla musica classica?

Perché siamo così affascinati dai personaggi famosi?

Cos'è per te un buon padre / una buona madre?

Oltre il viaggio in sé, in quale altro modo si può conoscere bene un'altra cultura?

Quali elementi della cultura italiana sono più conosciuti e valorizzati all'estero e perché?

Perché certi sport sono considerati più seri di altri?

Cosa pensi della tendenza moderna di mangiare davanti alla tv?

Molti giovani oggi dicono di essere stressati – perché?

Se una persona è obesa o se fuma, dovrebbe avere diritto alle stesse cure di una persona che si prende cura di se stessa?

Perché gli inglesi non sembrano molto appassionati per le lingue? È giustificabile secondo te disinteressarsi in questo modo?

È giusto includere la religione nel programma obbligatorio delle scuole?

Dovremmo fare qualcosa per rallentare la tendenza delle aziende a spostare le loro fabbriche nei paesi dove la manodopera costa meno?

Quali fattori sono importanti nella scelta della carriera?

Fino a che punto i genitori determinano la scelta della carriera dei loro figli?

Quale funzione sociale può avere la musica?

Pensi che le campagne di sensibilizzazione influenzino le abitudini alimentari delle persone?

Bastano le azioni individuali per ridurre l'inquinamento?

Gli sport 'estremi' o pericolosi vanno proibiti?  
Ritieni che il doping sia veramente 'frode sportiva' oppure un modo legittimo di migliorare le proprie prestazioni?  
Per quali motivi si diventa vegetariani? Quali sono gli svantaggi e i vantaggi per l'individuo e per gli altri?  
Perché la gente continua a non mangiare sano quando c'è tanta scelta e tutti sanno che frutta e verdura fanno bene?  
Bullismo: secondo te, perché una persona diventa bullo?  
Che cosa pensi dei 'casalinghi' – i padri che restano a casa per badare ai bambini?  
È possibile praticare il bullismo attraverso internet, MSN, sms, la chat?  
Pensi che la musica che piace adesso piacerà ancora tra dieci anni? Perché (no)?  
Perché certe persone cercano sempre di cambiare il 'look'?  
Fra 50 anni, come studieremo, secondo te? Come cambierà il mondo della scuola e degli studi?  
Pensi che sostenere un colloquio di lavoro a distanza possa avere dei vantaggi?  
Con le recenti proteste contro l'aumento delle tasse universitarie, abbiamo visto una rinascita d'interesse per la politica tra i giovani?  
È giusto fare sciopero per proteggere i diritti dei lavoratori? Ci sono delle professioni o dei mestieri che non dovrebbero avere il diritto di scioperare?  
Fra 50 anni, come lavoreremo, secondo te? Come cambierà il mondo del lavoro?  
Il turismo è sempre positivo? Che significato pensi abbia l'espressione 'turismo responsabile'?  
Perché la gente continua a vivere in zone a rischio di attività sismica o vulcanica?  
Che cosa pensi del cosiddetto 'commercio equo' – stai attento quando fai la spesa a fare scelte ecologiche e solidali?

### **Teacher Examiners (TEs)**

The exams were generally well conducted: the majority of TEs and their candidates did extremely well. It was evident that a good number of 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 still some problems with the timing: in some cases the examinations were either too short or too long, but the most recurrent problem was the insufficient time given to Part A. In a minority of cases, it was obvious that the stimulus-related questions had been known to the candidates before they were asked by the TEs, and even this part took the form of a regurgitation of pre-learnt material.

Another recurrent problem was the rephrasing and/or expansion of the stimulus-related questions.

This is regrettable, as it ultimately has an adverse effect on the candidates, and it must be reiterated that, in the interest of fairness and comparability, candidates will be penalised if the examinations do not take place according to the specifications. It is therefore imperative that centres ensure that TEs are familiar with the prescriptions which govern the conduct of the oral examination.

Finally, some centres did not include the oral form or the register and some did not use the correct stimulus.

Quality of recording was generally good but there were still isolated cases where exams were inaudible. Centres must ensure that recording equipment is in good order so that the recordings made are of good quality and can be marked.

### **Advice and guidance**

Detailed advice and guidance can be derived from comments made throughout the report. In particular:

- candidates should choose a general topic area which reflects their personal interest
- the material should not only involve factual knowledge but also include opinion
- candidates should be prepared to give full and extended answers to the stimulus-related questions
- candidates should plan and prepare, not memorise, the discussion in Part B.

Teacher examiners should:

- use the correct stimulus
- ask the 4 stimulus-related questions as they appear on the card, without re-phrasing or expanding them
- elicit opinions and not test for factual knowledge only
- ensure that sufficient time is devoted to Part A
- move away from the topic of Part A to more general discussion of the topic area
- ask genuine unpredictable questions related to the chosen topic
- give a hesitant candidate the chance to respond but don't correct or interrupt

## **Grade Boundaries**

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