



Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2024

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Italian (9IN0) Paper 03

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Introduction

In 2024, as in previous years, many candidates showed they had a native or near-native command of the language. Among standard British students the level of language proficiency was also of a good standard. The general understanding of themes and sub-themes was of a commendable level. Where there was a choice, candidates opted for sub-themes associated with cards 5. 7. 8. 4. 1. Relatively few candidates opted for sub-themes associated with stimulus 10-12 but where they did so, they were able to argue effectively and in detail.

Many candidates showed a clear understanding of the issues studied around Italian culture and carried out a thorough independent research project. Some common topics chosen for the independent research projects revolved around racism, Mussolini and Fascism, immigration and women's role in society. As seen in the past few exam sessions, many candidates chose to base their IRP on an Italian writer, politician, festival or brand, and whilst their research was thorough, their findings were presented in a very descriptive way rather than an analytical/critical one.

It is perhaps important to review and clarify different aspects of this qualification.

The specification

In the A Level speaking examination, students should be able to demonstrate:

- knowledge and understanding of the cultural context by giving ideas, examples and information on one of the themes and on a chosen subject of interest they have researched linked to the social and cultural context of the language studied
- the ability to analyse aspects of the cultural context by presenting and justifying valid arguments, viewpoints and conclusions
- the ability to interact and hold a natural and fluent discourse
- skill in manipulating language accurately
- the ability to respond to written language in speech.

These aspects are assessed via two distinct tasks conducted entirely in Italian, which are carried out in consecutive order in one session.

Task 1 (discussion on a theme)

Content for this task will be based on any one of the twelve sub-themes from one of the four overall themes listed on *pages 8–9* of the specification.

Students have approximately **6 to 7** minutes discussion time for this task.

There are **TWO** parts to the discussion.

Part 1: The teacher-examiner asks the two compulsory questions on the card. The teacher-examiner then helps to develop the discussion by asking appropriate follow-up questions relating to the statement on the stimulus card.

Part 2: The teacher-examiner then broadens the discussion to cover **other aspects of the overall theme**. Teacher-examiner must ask questions to enable the student to meet the requirements of the assessment criteria, i.e., to elicit examples and information to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the cultural and social context and to analyse aspects of the theme by developing and justifying arguments and forming conclusions.

Task 2 (presentation and discussion on student's independent research project)

This task is in two parts. Content for this task will be based on the subject of interest that students have chosen for their independent research project. This may be based on any of the four themes of study listed on *pages 8–9* of the specification or on a subject of interest of the student's choosing. However, it **must** relate to the Italian- speaking cultural and social context.

Students have approximately **10** to **11** minutes for this task.

Part 1: The discussion must open with a **2 minutes** presentation from the student in which they provide a summary **of at least two of the written sources** they have used as part of their research, outlining the authors' main points/ideas and giving a personal response to what they have read. In this part of the task, students are assessed on their ability to respond in speech to written sources.

The presentation must not exceed two minutes.

Part 2: The discussion that follows must explore more widely the student's presentation and their research. The teacher-examiner must use the key findings and list of sources on Form RP3 to help them formulate their own questions to enable the student to meet the requirements of the assessment criteria, i.e., to elicit examples and information to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the cultural and social context and to analyse aspects of their research by developing and justifying arguments and forming conclusions.

In both tasks, students are expected to ask questions that elicit opinions **as part of the natural discourse** and to confirm that their own points of view have been understood. Students are also expected to take the lead in the discussions.

The **key features** of this examination are:

- it is firmly rooted in Italian society and culture
- there are prescribed topic areas for Task 1 and two compulsory questions relating to the statement that the candidate has chosen. The teacher- examiner **must ask** the compulsory questions **in the order** they are presented, **without asking extra** questions
- in Task1 – part 2 the teacher-examiner **must** cover other aspects of the overall Theme
- there is a need for candidates to elicit points of view and check examiners' understanding, naturally and appropriately, at different points during the discussion
- the presentation of the independent research for Task 2 must clearly reference specific **named sources, written in Italian.**
- The new examination is between 5 and 7 minutes longer than the previous Legacy syllabus assessment.

Assessment Principles

Three-mark grids are applied to Task 1 and Task 2:

- knowledge and understanding of society and culture (AO4)
- accuracy and range of language (AO3)
- interaction (AO1).

One mark grid is applied to Part 1 of Task 2: responding to written language in speech (AO2).

A01 – Interaction – Task 1 and 2

This mark grid assesses students' ability to interact with the examiner by giving relevant responses based on what they have heard, by initiating communication and eliciting points of view.

The interaction is awarded **up to 6 marks.**

Teacher-examiners and candidates must remember that asking a question does not automatically place the performance in any of the three-mark bands. Interaction provides a picture of how much the candidate participated in the discussion.

A03 – Accuracy and range of language – Task 1 and 2

This mark grid assesses students' ability to use a range of grammatical structures and vocabulary to produce articulate communication with a range of expression. It also assesses students' accuracy of pronunciation, grammar and syntax.

Candidates are judged on their competence in making themselves understood, showing how able they are at conveying a message without its meaning being compromised by errors that hinder clarity.

Accuracy and Range of Language is awarded **up to 12 marks**.

A04 – Knowledge and Understanding of Italian-speaking society and culture – Task 1 and 2

This grid assesses students' ability to communicate information and demonstrate appreciation for different aspects of Italian-speaking culture and society.

They are also assessed on their ability to respond critically and analytically to different aspects of Italian-speaking culture and society by selecting relevant material, presenting and justifying points of view, developing arguments and supporting their ideas with examples.

Knowledge and Understanding of Italian-speaking society and culture is awarded **12 marks**.

A02 - Responding to written language in speech – Task 2 (Part 1)

This grid is used to assess the student's **two-minute presentation only**. It is not applied to the discussion that follows the presentation. This mark grid assesses students' ability to understand and respond in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources and to summarise information from written sources in speech. The written sources will be those that students read as part of their independent research and they **must refer** to at least **two** named written sources during their presentation.

Responding to written language in speech is awarded **12 marks**.

Responses that refer to just one single written source can be awarded a maximum of 3 marks only.

Candidate performance

Task 1

Candidates who opted for **Cards 7** and **8** addressed both the positive and negative aspects of immigration, discussing the cultural enrichment from learning about different cultures, religions, customs, traditions, and cuisines; the economic benefits, as immigrants stimulate the economy; the problem of Italy's ageing population needing an influx of younger immigrants; the perception of immigrants taking jobs from locals; the need for better integration, language support, and addressing racism.

Many successfully evaluated the differences between North and South and the issues related to both parts of Italy, including its stereotypes.

Candidates choosing Stimulus **Card 5 B** discussed the evolution of internet usage within the Italian population over the years, particularly in relation to social media and technology.

Some candidates struggled to stay focused on social changes, instead discussing the general positives and negatives of the internet and social media.

With few exceptions, all candidates responded well to the question about the dangers of the internet, identifying and analysing issues such as cyberbullying, fake news, hackers, early social media exposure, and online predators.

Candidates choosing Stimulus **Card 4** analysed Italy's music scene, demonstrating knowledge of popular and current singers; the traditional 'love' theme prevalent in Italian songs and the role of 'cantautori italiani'; the popularity of second-generation immigrant singers who have become role models for Italian youth; the significance of the Sanremo Music Festival, not only as a platform for artists but also as a cultural event of great importance to the Italian public.

Card 6. This question was less well answered in so far as it required specific and more in-depth study of cultural aspects of Italian society. This led in part to all too frequent comparison with British traditions. This tendency occurred both with examiners' questions and the candidates' responses.

Many candidates who had selected **Card 6B** were clearly confused as to the meaning of '*feste religiose*' and replied to mentioning celebrations in general, such as Carnival.

As in previous years, students who were able to opt for **stimulus 1-3** had an easier time in presenting their views and arguments in the sense that the sub-themes of family, education and work represent a world in which they themselves live daily.

For Part 1 Task 1, the most common issue was the lack of breadth of the questions asked. The number of personal questions, some of the candidates received, suggests that some Teachers/Examiners are not well acquainted with the exam specification. Teachers/Examiners should avoid asking questions on the candidate's family, their experience living in Italy or plans after school, questions about the candidates' experience as immigrants or questions that generally belong to GCSE level or below. Many Teachers/Examiners did not move away from the first sub-topic, hindering the candidate's chance to achieve more marks in Knowledge and Understanding.

In this part of the exam, it was also observed that, at times, Teachers/Examiners did not ask any follow up questions after asking the two questions in the Stimulus card.

It seems evident that some Teachers/Examiners still need to familiarise themselves with the Specification for this unit. Many candidates did not receive adequate guidance in preparation for this exam or their exam was not conducted appropriately. This was not only disappointing but also affected the candidates' final mark.

The following is an example of a good performance. (**Task1 – Stimulus IN5 B**). TE and candidate seem to have a natural conversation, which flows moving gradually and naturally from Internet to music. Language is mostly accurate and rarely errors hinder clarity.

Task1 – Part1

TE: Q1 *Secondo te, in che modo il Web ha cambiato la vita quotidiana degli italiani?*

Candidate: direi che ha rivoluzionato la vita degli italiani come si informano come lavorano; c'è questa cosa del telelavoro dove la gente possono lavorare da casa e pure ha cambiato il modo in cui la gente guarda la tv possono usare i piattaforme digitali di streaming anche hanno cambiato il modo in cui ascoltano la musica sul telefono. Per informarsi ci sono parecchi giornali online ti do l'esempio di Repubblica.it, Corriere.it questi sono i versioni online dei giornali online cartacei che abbiamo visto, ma poi il Web è diventato molto molto diffuso nel mondo dell'intrattenimento, oggi giorno anche il Festival di Sanremo si può guardare in diretta online. Diciamo che Instagram è diventato il mezzo più di diffuso per pubblicare foto con amici.

TE: Q2 *Quali pensi siano i pericoli di Internet per i giovani italiani?*

C: pure ci sono dei pericoli, ci sono i contenuti violenti e pure esistono le frode online, i virus. L'internet mette in questione la sicurezza della privacy. Pure c'è la gente che hanno una addizione al telefono, la gente che usano il telefono troppo possono diventare isolati. Credo che sia anche il bullismo online o in genere la gente passa molto tempo online forse troppo.

TE: Allora hai parlato dei pericoli e anche il fatto della dipendenza, invece quali sono i vantaggi di Internet?

C: si può informarsi, si può fare tantissime cose come ascoltare la musica online, ma pure è come un hub dinamico per varie attività, nel passato non si poteva fare così tante cose, ma ora si può fare un sacco di cose utile,

come lavorare online, studiare online, cioè per me è molto utile per guardare documentari per informarsi

TE: Tu hai menzionato gli smartphone ed invece come i cellulari hanno cambiato la nostra vita e le abitudini degli italiani?

C: direi che con la mia generazione hanno cambiato la nostra vita un sacco. Per esempio i social sui cellulari hanno cambiato il modo in cui condividiamo i video oppure tanta gente usano i social per comunicare con l'altra gente, ascoltare l'opinioni dell'altra gente. Allora credo che la vita è cambiata molto con l'esordio del telefonino.

Task1 – Part2

TE: d'accordo, parliamo della musica: la musica rap è popolare tra i giovani?

C: ci sono parecchi rapper italiani, do l'esempio di Sferaebasta, Ghali, Il Brasiiano ma pure è diventato una cosa gigantesca in Italia, per esempio un paio di anni fa un rapper Mahmood ha vinto con la sua canzone Soldi.

TE: Secondo te la musica rap un'influenza negativa verso i giovani?

C: credo che ci siano parecchie influenze negative nelle canzoni per esempio i testi sesso trattano dell'uso della droga delle attitudini misogini. Lei è d'accordo con me?

TE: Dipende?

C: direi però che molto testi per esempio quello di Sferaebasta, Mirage, tratta di usare la droga, avere uno stile di vita come non indiscutibile ha delle attitudini misogine.

TE: e quali sono gli artisti che hanno contribuito a far conoscere la musica italiana all'estero?

C: ci sono parecchi, però quelli più importanti sono Pavarotti, un cantore di opera italiana molto famoso, oppure c'è Enrico Morricone, che ha scritto molte colonne sonore di film famosi. Per esempio ha scritto la colonna sonora del Padrino un film famosissimo oggi, ma pure c'è i Maneskin un gruppo contemporaneo che hanno vinto il Festival di Eurovision e dunque hanno reso il rock italiano in tutto il mondo.

Task 2-Part 1: Candidates in the opening statement of their presentation should:

- indicate topic and names of the two written sources to be summarised in the presentation
- give a summary of the first written source
- give a summary of the second written source

- provide a personal reaction to the findings of the two written sources.

'Ho voluto fare una ricerca che mettesse in luce gli aspetti che ruotano intorno a questo tema. Ho selezionato due articoli che si intitolano rispettivamente ... di ... pubblicati su... Il primo articolo parla di... quindi il giornalista invita a ... Il secondo articolo parla di... il giornalista dichiara che ... Sono d'accordo con ... perché ... Condivido l'opinione di ... che ...' (2 minutes)

There was notable improvement in the quality of presentations, with fewer generalised responses.

Unfortunately, still too many of the candidates assessed did not name their sources during their presentation and some only referred to them 'in passing'. This approach led to lower marks. There were, in any case, also candidates who coped well with this section of the test and did so within the two minutes allowed.

Some very interesting research projects this year were:

- Fino a che punto il festival di Sanremo è in grado, oggi più di prima, di interessare i giovani e di influenzare i loro gusti musicali?
- Is Chiara Ferragni really a good influencer?
- Come ha Raffaella Carrà aiutato la liberazione sessuale delle donne in televisione e influenzato la televisione italiana?
- Does Italian legislation discriminate against same sex families?
- Should Ponte sullo Stretto be carried out?
- A cosa è dovuta la popolarità del rap italiano?
- Qual è il ruolo della donna nelle famiglie mafiose?
- Inspector Montalbano: What image of Sicily and Italy emerges from the two TV series and what accounts for their appeal?
- Fin a che punto il Futurismo può essere considerato un movimento fascista
- How Maria De Filippi has changed Italian TV?
- Giorgia Meloni and her post-fascism
- Giulia Tofana, the Palermo serial killer
- Italian Jewish deportation: the Bucci sisters
- Pantheon and its exploitation
- Poverty in Campania: Venere degli Stracci
- Italy should introduce Ius Scholae for immigrants' children
- Is *La Strada* a Neorealist film?
- Giulia Cecchettin, femminicidio which shocked Italy
- The Decline of Italian Cinema
- The role of Opera in the resistance against fascism and the partisan tenor Nicola Stami
- How some popular Italian series explore the world of teenagers and the impact it has on them

- The hardships Alex Zanardi faced in his life, and how he can be considered a role model for Italians and athletes
- To what extent did Moro and Berlinguer's dialogue cause the death of the Christian-democrat
- Verdi and opera as instruments of revolution during the Risorgimento.

Teachers should warn candidates against choosing topics that do not allow them to critically analyse aspects of the Italian culture and society.

- Racism in Italy
- Carneval in Italy
- Italian traditions
- Differences between North-South
- The history of pizza
- 1st League
- Romanticismo
- La Ferrari
- Gucci/ Versace ...

Task 2- Part 2

On average, many candidates responded well to the follow-up questions asked by the Teacher/Examiner and demonstrated critical thinking. In some centres exams were very well conducted.

In some centres candidates and teachers-examiners allowed their discussion to be exceptionally general with no particular focus. In some cases, it was evident that teachers-examiners had not read the RP3 form or were not aware of the candidate's research project in advance of the exam (this was particularly evident for visiting examiners). This resulted in awkward pauses and in questions generally lacking breadth in Task 2.

Some examples of bad questions:

- Parlami del carnevale/ del calcio/ di Venezia...
- Esponimi la tua ricerca.
- I tuoi genitori sono arrivati dall'Africa/ Asia ecc. Parlami della tua esperienza di migrazione.
- Ti trovi meglio in Italia o in Inghilterra?
- Cosa pensi della scuola in UK.
- Preferisci il cibo italiano o inglese?

Some examples of good questions:

- Quali misure possono incoraggiare la scelta di avere figli?
- Secondo te, perché ai giovani d'oggi non piace fare lavori manuali?
- È possibile avere famiglia e fare carriera?
- Fino a che punto i genitori italiani condividono i gusti musicali dei figli?

- Come dovrebbero cambiare i giornali per attirare i giovani lettori?
- Come si possono mantenere vive le tradizioni del Paese, secondo i giovani?
- Cosa pensi dell'alternanza scuola – lavoro?
- Cosa si è fatto in Italia per favorire l'integrazione degli immigrati?
- Qual è l'importanza delle piccole medie imprese in Italia?

Interaction

It was not unusual for a candidate to reach a score of at least 4, and very often 5 or 6. Nor was interaction a problem in part two of the test.

Responding to written language in speech

For many candidates, this section of the oral test which carried **12 marks** and referred only to the presentation, was the most difficult and daunting part of the whole oral examination. Marks were lost in part for not quoting sources or quoting only one source and/or by giving a summary of sources used, without expressing a considered opinion.

Accuracy and range of language

Accuracy was not generally a problem, most candidates demonstrated good or excellent skills. Despite language errors, most students were comfortably within the band 7-9.

Some weak points observed were:

English interferences: il ratto di pago (pay rate), gli immigrati sono persone strane (straniere); fattorie (fabbriche); sentirsi comodi (a proprio agio)

definite article: i italiani, i studenti, i smartphone, la media, i zii

false friends: addizione (dipendenza); educato (istruito)

plural/singular: la famiglia sono in armonia; la scuola devono...

prepositions: scritto per (da = by); parlare su (di); dipendenti alla loro telefonini (da)

sequence of tenses: gerund; use of piacere; use of subjunctive (se il governo sarebbe)

formal/informal: sei d'accordo con me, Signora?, e tu Signora cosa ti pensi?

impersonal: tu puoi trovare lavoro (si può)

pronouns: ci sono tanti (ce ne), uno dei motivi perché (per cui)

slang: ai giovani piacciono robe, ci sta/stanno,

Knowledge and understanding of Italian-speaking society and culture

Most students achieved a commendable mark in this section of the oral test, many being awarded a score of at least 9. Candidates embraced the wealth of cultural background information with obvious enthusiasm, and they are to be congratulated, in many instances, on the richness of detail in which they were able to present their views in both part one and part two of the test. There was a feeling, however, that in some instances the research question or statement lacked cultural and intellectual depth and rigour.

Conduct and administration

Overall, the exams were well conducted.

Most candidates spoke spontaneously, showing a good knowledge of Italian society and culture and their research projects were examples of outstanding work.

The following suggestions may help to improve the conduct of the exam.

Task 1

- **Task 1 Part 1:** Students should give succinct answers to Q1 and Q2; there should be **at least one** follow-on question relating to the sub-theme of the stimulus card for Task 1 part 1.
- **Task 1 part 2:** must **move away** from the sub-theme of the stimulus card and cover at least one other sub theme within the same **overall** theme.
- Keep **focus** on Italian world in Task 1.
- Teacher-examiners' responses should be kept to a **minimum**.
- If the examiner asks if there is anything the candidate wishes to ask him/her, this is **not** credited in interaction.
- **Comparison** with other societies should be strictly limited to avoid drifting into irrelevance in terms of the Italian context.
- The **timing** of Task 1 is recommended to be 6-7 minutes.

Task 2

- **Two** minutes is the time limit for the presentation in Task 2 Part 1.
- **Task 2 (Part 1)** in the presentation the students must provide a **summary** of at least **two** of the **Italian** written sources they have used as part of their research, outlining the **authors' main points/ideas** and giving a **personal response** to what they have read.
- The teacher-examiner should use the **key findings** and list of sources on the Independent Research Form (RP3) to help them formulate their own questions.

- When conducting the examination teachers-examiners should only **move** to another key finding when the student appears to have no more to say.
- It is possible that the conversation could develop naturally and digress from the bullet points which is acceptable
- **The timing** of Task 2 is recommended to be 10-11 minutes (2 minutes presentation- 8-9 minutes discussion)

Students will not receive any marks for any conversation that takes place beyond 18 minutes (total assessment time for Task 1 and 2).

Administration

Timing

Task 1: 6 to 7 minutes (recommended)

Task 2: 10 to 11 minutes (recommended)

Total assessment time: 21 to 23 minutes, (16 to 18 minutes of speaking plus 5 minutes' preparation time for Task 1).

The timing of the assessment begins with the student's first utterance in relation to Task 1.

Once the maximum stipulated assessment time has passed (18 minutes) examiners will turn off the recording device at that point.

Students will not receive any marks for any conversation that takes place beyond the maximum time allowed.

Forms and documentation

The following items should be upload to **LWT**:

- MP3 recording.
- A Level Italian RP3 form – to provide information for Task 2.
- CS4 – candidate speaking authentication sheet – declaration and authorisation form signed.

Recording

- Place the microphone **closer to the candidate** and not the teacher.
- Conduct the exam in a **quiet room**.
- Use the **best quality** recording equipment that is available.
- Record the candidate exam as an MP3.

Final comments

Congratulations to teachers and candidates!

Overall, a good number of the exams assessed for this series were conducted correctly. Many candidates responded well to the questions asked by the Teacher/Examiner and were able to demonstrate good knowledge of the topics studied; some candidates also showed the ability

to successfully summarise the findings of their research in the two minutes allowed, as well as refer to the sources used. Some candidates managed to also critically analyse the sources read and provide insightful opinions on them.

NB: Unfortunately, there were centres in which the teacher-examiner was not aware of how to conduct the exam and did not understand the timing for each part of the exam. These cases unfortunately impacted on the grades of their students.

Although it is anticipated that most students would prefer orals to be conducted by a teacher in their Centre, Pearson offer a **London Centre Orals** service (**online**) for not taught students. Please refer to the administrative support guides on the relevant language qualification pages for more information. These appear under the 'Forms and Administration' section.