

Examiners' Report /
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

GCSE Italian (5IN01) Paper 1H

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There are 8 questions in this paper: four cross-over questions and two questions aimed at B grade each carrying 4 marks and questions aimed at A and A* each carrying 8 marks. The total mark for this paper is 40.

All questions are in English and invite non-verbal responses except for one of the 8 mark questions inviting free-text English responses.

Question 1 – A wonderful friend, Question 2 – A weekend trip, Question 6 – Travelling by train and Question 7 – Which School? were the cross-over questions and were, as expected, answered better at higher level, with a large proportion of candidates scoring all 4 marks available. Average candidate's performance was comparable to that of top range candidates for 1F, which shows that the questions were at the right level.

Question 3 – Sea festival, targeted grade B. Most candidates scored for questions (i) and (ii) whereas (iii) and (iv) were quite good at differentiating performances.

Question 4 – Young people and music, targeted grade B and it proved to be an effective discriminator, producing a good distribution of the whole range of marks.

Question 5 – The Bergamo youth games, was made up of two sets of questions each carrying 4 marks. Section 5a was a multiple choice question. Question (iii) was answered correctly almost by the entire cohort, probably helped by the title. The other ones provided a good spread of marks.

Section b required candidates to select the 4 correct statements. Top candidates gave four correct answers but most candidates chose at least 2 correct ones. Most candidates failed to connect "promuovere l'idea che lo sport è parte integrante di una via sana" in the recording with "promote the benefits of sport". On the whole question 5 did not produce the spread of marks which would be expected of an A* question, in spite of requiring some inference.

Question 8 – Interview with a holiday rep, proved to be the biggest challenge. Only one question 8d) was answered correctly by more than half of potential A grade candidates whereas 8e) was answered correctly by less than 5% of them. This question was an excellent discriminator for the top of the range. Once more it was proved that the nature of the task influences results more than the complexity of the text and that having to produce answer, albeit short and in English, is much more of a challenge than selecting an answer from those given.

Generally, 1F and 1H were good papers, with the right level of difficulty allowing differentiation between different abilities. The fact that all questions for the listening papers are now set in English does not necessarily mean that answering them is easier: candidates can no longer rely on clues coming from the recorded text and, in the case of verbal responses, there is no longer the possibility of scoring thanks to a successful transcription of the targeted information.

Candidates need to be familiar with the whole range of question types. In particular, more practice is needed for verbal responses: reading and understanding the question, identifying the relevant information and transferring it into English.

Entry levels have been wisely chosen. The best foundation candidates appeared to be comfortable with the tasks without having wasted opportunity for a higher grade and very few of the candidates entered at Higher Level really struggled with the difficulty of the paper.

Grade Boundaries

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