

Moderators' Report/  
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2012

GCSE Italian (5IN02) Paper 2A

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Publications Code UG032556

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## **Moderator Report**

A majority of centres were familiar with this qualification, having entered last year.

This year again, the majority of candidates reached high standards. In many of the assessments, good interaction and spontaneity were achieved, with appropriate questions and answers from both teacher examiner and candidate eliciting genuine conversations.

Many candidates showed a good knowledge and understanding of the language, used a wide range of appropriate vocabulary and structures and a competent use of different tenses. There were, inevitably, candidates who were far less confident but nevertheless managed to communicate information relevant to their chosen topic.

Whilst there were overall fewer administration problems this year than last, it was felt that there was still a lot of room for improvement. Many centres had to be chased up.

### **Choice of tasks**

Similarly to last year, the topics of Media & culture, Sport and leisure and Travel and tourism were the most popular. Some centres devised their own task, which was often on the topic of School. Apart from centres with mature students, very few chose Business, work & employment.

This year, most centres took on board the instruction that each candidate must complete two task types, one for 2A and a different one for 2B. However, the requirement that both task 2A and task 2B should not be the same task type for all candidates was often disregarded. Moderators received many samples with the 2A task consisting of a single task type.

There should be a mix of either some open interactions + some presentations and discussions, or some open interactions + picture-based discussions, or some picture-based discussions + presentations and discussions included in the sample sent to the moderator.

Most centres opted for picture-based discussions and presentations and discussions, with only a few favouring open interactions, although this was on the increase compared to last year.

When deciding on which to choose, centres should bear in mind that certain task types will help certain candidates display their skills more effectively.

## **Presentation and discussion**

Mostly, centres maintained a healthy balance between the presentation section and the discussion section of the task. The presentation must last for a minimum of one minute and can last for up to three minutes, but once it is over, it is important to have enough time for a genuine conversation including unpredictable elements.

Moderators reported that some presentations were over-rehearsed. Presentations on topics chosen and researched by the candidates produced more personalised and successful performances than those based on the same title for the whole centre.

Teacher examiners who responded to their candidates' comments encouraged spontaneity and lead to them achieving better marks.

## **Picture based discussion**

Many picture-based discussions lead to interesting exchanges. Questions tailored to the candidates' answers allowed them to demonstrate that they could respond to unpredictable questions.

Some teacher examiners seemed unaware that the introduction of the picture in this task type should not exceed 1 minute and allowed their candidates to recite a lengthy pre-learnt description. Some used a bank of questions, asking these in a set order. This did not enable their candidates to qualify for the highest Content and Response marks.

## **Open Interaction**

Few centres choosing open interactions opted to devise their own. Most used the Edexcel set tasks published on the website, with some adaptations.

Most of the open interactions offered natural performances, based on a transaction giving rise to an interactive dialogue with relevant questions and answers from both the teacher examiner and the student.

However, candidates still tend to be more at ease answering rather than asking questions and in some cases, at the end of the conversation, the teacher examiner prompted the candidate as to whether he/she had any questions to ask.

## **Conduct of the tests**

The tests were generally well conducted. Moderators reported very few instances of the speaking tasks not adhering to the required timing (4-6 minutes), where marks were limited because a test was too short; or in a test that was too long, a candidate had not covered all the necessary points in the first 6 minutes.

Most candidates were well prepared and competent. It was especially pleasing to hear many spontaneous dialogues and genuine interchanges of ideas from those who had chosen a topic that obviously interested them.

Generally, teacher examiners are to be congratulated on the efficient and sympathetic way in which they led the conversations, tailoring the questions to the candidates, allowing them to respond to the unpredictable questions and encouraging the use of a variety of tenses.

Each candidate is an individual with his/her own potential and this needs to be fostered. In centres where the teacher examiner works through a set list of questions, this invariably has negative implications for spontaneity and interaction and prevents candidates from achieving the highest scores for the content and response mark, which carries 60% of the overall mark.

## **Application of mark grids**

It was pleasing to note that, apart from rare exceptions, the Assessment criteria had been correctly interpreted and marking was in most instances in line with the standards set by the examination board.

## **Administration**

### CM2 forms

On this point, it was pleasing to see a great improvement from last year. Almost all centres used the correct mark sheets and most completed them correctly. It is essential that all the information be entered in the appropriate spaces and the form signed by both the candidate and the teacher examiner.

### CA2 forms

A large proportion of centres did not enclose CA2 forms with their samples. Candidates are not obliged to use them, but when this is the case, it must be indicated in the relevant box on the CM2 form.

## Stimuli

In order to moderate students' tests, it is necessary to establish exactly what task was set.

For presentations and picture-based discussions, it is useful to have an outline of the task. In addition, for picture-based discussions, a copy of the picture in question (or a description of it on the CM2) is essential. For Open Interaction a stimulus is required, detailing the transaction and reminding the candidate to ask questions.

Many centres had not enclosed task sheets, which caused difficulties. This was an issue last year and does not seem to have gone away this session.

## OPTEMs

The majority of centres sent the correct copy of the 2A OPTEMs with their samples, but some sent none, whilst others included more than one copy. Each copy of the OPTEMs indicates whether it should be retained by the centre or details of where it should be forwarded.

The 2A OPTEMs highlight with an asterisk \* which candidates' tests must be part of the sample. To these must be added the highest and lowest marked candidates' work. In a surprisingly large number of cases, this was not done and moderators had to contact centres to obtain the missing items.

Errors also occurred in the completion of some OPTEMs: incorrect transfer of marks from the CM2s to the OPTEMs and absent candidates given a mark of zero. They should be marked as 'A' (absent).

## Recordings

Most of the recordings were on CDs and USB sticks this year. This is a great improvement over cassettes, in terms of clarity of recording and ease of finding individual candidates' work. Only rare instances of poor sound quality were reported, when candidates were positioned too far from the microphone.

Whilst most centres had labelled the recordings very clearly and indicated the relevant track numbers on the CM2 sheets, moderators sometimes struggled to locate the tests they needed to listen to. Occasionally they found that each test had not been introduced in accordance with the instructions.

A few centres forwarded both 2A and 2B tasks for moderation. Only 2A tasks should be sent.

Teacher examiners are urged to refer to the Administrative Guidance (ICE) document published on the subject page of the Edexcel website, for further information regarding administrative procedures.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, the candidates' performances this year were impressive and this is to the credit of their teacher examiners. To quote one of the moderators: 'The new style specification allows the candidates to express interest and enthusiasm for their chosen topics... The level was very high and it was a pleasure to moderate.'

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Order Code UG032556 Summer 2012

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