



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

11N0 Paper 2F

Foundation tier: Speaking in Italian

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Introduction

It is once again important to consider and clarify different aspects of GCSE Italian controlled assessment speaking examination.

Foundation tier consists of three parts:

- a role play with 5 prompts - maximum of 10 marks
- a picture-based task with five prompts - maximum of 24 marks
- a conversation on two topic areas -maximum of 36 marks.

The overall mark is 70.

All the speaking tests are conducted by centres, recorded as MP3 and uploaded to the LWT platform.

There are 10 foundation role plays and 10 foundation picture-based cards, provided by Edexcel Pearson. The **sequencing grid** shows which role play and which picture-based card to hand out to each student.

Students have a 12 minutes' preparation time for the role play and picture-based card.

Role play

The role play is an interaction requiring the student to ask and answer questions, to exchange information and to use different registers. All role plays are marked for communication only.

The role play should last between 1 to 1 ½ minutes.

In the role plays, the prompt marked "!" is an unknown question and the prompt marked "?" requires the student to ask a question.

Teacher-examiners **are not allowed to rephrase** questions for the role plays: any re-wording results in no credit given to the response.

Questions can be **repeated up to three times**, but if the teacher asks a question again because the student gave an initial incorrect response, any subsequent response – even if correct - will not be given any credit.

The replies are not intended to require extended development; rather, they need to fully cover the prompts.

Picture-based task

In the picture-based tasks:

- the first question is a description of the photo
- the second elicits an opinion
- the third requires a response with a past reference
- the fourth requires a response with a future reference
- the fifth question asks for a preference or an opinion.

Teachers-examiners **are not allowed** to rephrase questions for the picture-based tasks.

The picture-based tasks should last between 2½ to 3 minutes.

Students are required to give full answers with some development to access the higher mark bands.

As a guide, students should aim to produce about four sentences from the picture description and two sentences for each of the other prompts.

Conversation

The conversation is based on any two themes and is in two parts.

For the first part of the conversation, the students select one topic from one theme in advance of the assessment. This part of the conversation task starts with this first topic and then moves on to other topics within the same theme.

The second part of the conversation must be on a different theme. This is prescribed by Pearson through instructions on a **sequencing grid**. This part of the conversation may focus on one or more topics from within the selected theme.

The conversations should last between 3½ to 4½ minutes, divided equally between the two topics. Any response started after 4½ minutes will not be given any credit.

Students are allowed (but not obliged) to present their first topic for one minute. This must be followed by questions: if the first conversation topic is a monologue without questions and answers the mark for Interaction and Spontaneity is capped at 6.

Conduct of the tests

Most centres dealt with the administration of the specification extremely well. Almost all completed the CS2 form correctly, including both the students' and the teachers' signatures.

Most recordings had good sound quality which was helpful for examiners.

A few problems on the uploading of the documents on LWT platform made the examiners' task complicated:

- no CS2 form uploaded

- CS2 forms uploaded as PDF or image files, forcing the examiners to re-write all candidates name and data into a new form for marking
- MP3 uploaded on LWT were corrupted or shown as 0 bytes.

Overall, the level of performances was quite high and most candidates were well prepared. In some cases, very strong candidates were entered at Foundation, despite these were native speakers/almost native speakers.

Candidate performance

Most candidates were very well prepared; some should have been considered as Higher Tier candidates. It was a pleasure to mark and to listen to the interesting and varied responses they communicated.

Role play

A very small number of candidates were entered for Foundation.

Most role plays were well performed but candidates need to read carefully the instructions to candidate during the preparation time to avoid disjointed conversation.

Occasionally, students lost marks because the teacher-examiner had re-phrased a question or repeated a question after a wrong answer had been given: no credit can be given for any subsequent answer, even if correct.

Answers should be brief and to the point to access the full marks.

A few teachers failed to read out the introduction as scripted, an omission that could affect the student's performance. More serious was the occasional omission of one of the questions, this clearly confused the students as well as losing them marks.

Most role plays offered similar degrees of difficulty.

Unfortunately, a small number of students answered almost all questions saying: "*Non lo so.*"

FR3: Some candidates struggled to ask the question in Q5 ("How do you get to school?").

FR4: Some higher-ability candidates appeared underprepared and omitted questions in Q4 and Q5.

FR6, FR7: Individual students were unprepared and did not attempt Q5.

FR9: One candidate only responded to Q1 and Q5.

FR10: Generally, well executed across candidates.

Picture-based task

Most students were able to provide detailed descriptions of the photos. Many gave relevant and extended answers to the other points, with frequently correct references to past, present and future. There were a few instances where Teachers-examiners missed out one of the points or added and asked random questions, rather than abiding by the script, which resulted in the award of a lower Communication & Content mark.

FP2: Brief responses with limited detail.

FP3, FP8, FP9: Tasks generally performed well.

FP6: Picture description lacked detail; "tua zona" was not understood by the candidate.

FP7: Candidate struggled with vocabulary due to low ability.

Conversation

Many candidates opted to start with a brief presentation introducing the topic they had chosen. The introduction by the candidate should not exceed **one minute**.

It is essential to keep strictly to the timings and avoid any imbalance between the 2 conversations.

In some cases, the teachers allowed the first conversation to overrun therefore restricting the time available for the second conversation. Since examiners stop listening when the full time is up, the shortness of the second conversation affected the final marks awarded.

Some centres clearly encourage their students to use heavily rehearsed sentences and phrases in Conversation 1. Whilst students obviously prepare responses when they are practising for their exam, it is obvious that regurgitating pre-learnt and often badly understood phrases is not the way of gaining access to the highest Interaction & Spontaneity marks.

Some teachers are still relying on a list of prepared questions and in some extreme cases all the students had been directed to prepare the same answers there by destroying spontaneity and the natural flow of conversation.

Candidates should not go through a list of pre learnt questions.

Those who were able to offer spontaneous answers backed by natural development obtained the best scores.

The aim is to have questions and answers to provide as natural a discussion as possible, not a prepared monologue.

There were also a few tests where only one topic was discussed, therefore, reducing the Communication & Content mark for the candidates concerned.

There were a few occasions when candidates were asked to choose their second theme. **This is not acceptable.**

Administration

Most Centres followed the instructions ensuring that the MP3 and CS2s (**not as PDF**) were uploaded correctly on the platform LWT. However, some Centres had to be contacted either to submit the missing CS2 form or to re-submit the recordings.

It also avoids confusion if correct details of the student's name and number are announced clearly at the start of each speaking examination and the role-play number and picture-based discussion number are announced at the beginning of each task. The teacher-examiner should also announce the start of each theme in the conversation.

Recording

Centres should:

- 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.

Congratulations to teachers and candidates!

This summer exams were well conducted in several centres. Many students, guided by their teachers, produced sound performances and coped well with the demands of the exam.