



Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

11N0 Paper 2H

Higher tier: Speaking in Italian

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In Italian (1IN0) Paper 2H: Speaking

Introduction

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

Higher 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 higher role plays and 10 higher 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 2 to 2 ½ minutes.

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

Teachers-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 point is marked "!" and is **unknown** to students **beforehand**.

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

The picture-based tasks should last between 3 to 3½ minutes.

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

As a guide, candidates should aim to produce about five sentences for the picture description and three 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 5 to 6 minutes, divided equally between the two topics. Any response started after 6 minutes will not be given 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 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, forcing the examiners to re-write all candidates names and data into a new form for marking.
- MP3 uploaded on LWT were corrupted or shown as 0 bytes.

Most candidates were very well prepared, and it was a pleasure to mark and to listen to the interesting and varied responses. It was a pleasure to hear many candidates expressing enthusiasm for their chosen topic.

A small number of centres with very able students scored low in the Role Play and Picture Based parts of the test because the teacher-examiner would add and ask random questions rather than abiding by the script.

Equally, some very able candidates scored low in these tasks because they did not follow the script and randomly went off script.

Furthermore, some teachers-examiners omitted to ask some of the questions as set out on the card therefore disadvantaging the candidate.

Candidate performance

Role play

Most role plays were well performed.

Occasionally, students lost marks because their Teacher-Examiners 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.

Most role plays offered similar degrees of difficulty.

Some teachers introduced additional questions not part of the HR paper.

Some candidates will be disappointed to see a lower-than-expected mark in task 1 because they didn't pay attention to the five prompts and asked the wrong questions or no questions at all.

Some candidates were not told that the questions they had to ask were the ones suggested on the role play card and not what they felt to ask.

It is the teacher responsibility to ask if the candidate has a question or another question to ask and not to expect the candidate to ask the two questions without prompting.

There were several centres where the candidate's performance was affected by the teacher's lack of clarity and/or ability to speak Italian.

HR1: Most candidates managed to successfully rephrase and ask about siblings (Q4).

HR2: Q5 proved challenging for many; responses often included unrelated references to "con chi" and "dove".

HR3: Q2: Some less able candidates misunderstood "ragione" and spoke instead about where they live. Q3: Several students used memorised phrases for their conversation, which lacked relevance and clarity.

HR4: Q4 and Q5 were generally poorly performed, possibly due to limited classroom coverage of this scenario.

HR5: Q3 responses often listed school subjects. Some candidates used libreria to mean "library". Some candidates asked "Qual è la tua professione preferita" rather than "professore" preferito.

HR6: Q4 and Q5 posed challenges for most candidates, including near-native speakers, who struggled to formulate appropriate questions.

HR7: Many found the questions difficult to formulate, likely due to limited exposure to this topic and insufficient practice in question formation.

HR8: This card was the least successfully attempted. Q5 frequently referenced restaurants in Rome, showing that the initial role play context had not been clearly read/understood.

HR9: In Q3, candidates were expected to say what they had done that morning (in their role as tourists in Naples), with some candidates switching to talk about their daily routine. The verb "noleggiare" and the noun "piantina" were not widely known by candidates.

HR10: A familiar and well-liked scenario; candidates generally performed well here.

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 Teacher-Examiners missed out one of the points, which resulted in the award of a lower Communication & Content mark.

It is important to make use of the scripted follow-up questions – '*Altro?*' or '*Perché (no)?*' - to encourage students to extend their responses and aim for higher marks. **Teachers should not introduce unscripted questions in this task.**

Equally, asking for "*Altro?*" when a student has already given a very full and detailed response is counterproductive.

HP1: The word "estate" was not always understood.

HP2: Vocabulary such as "coro" and "cantare" posed problems for some.

HP3, HP5, HP8: Generally performed well by most candidates.

HP4: Limited expansion in Q5; some candidates focused on their community in Q3 instead of their 'casa'.

HP6: Candidates often lost focus during Q4, discussing various places in Italy and then struggling with Q5 vocabulary. Few candidates found difficult to understand the word "regione".

HP7: Performed surprisingly well, with most understanding "estero" in Q5.

HP9: Q2 posed difficulties, and photo descriptions were often minimal.

HP10: Descriptions were frequently brief, and candidates found it difficult to expand on Q2 with opinions.

Conversation

The conversation part of the test was conducted well with regards to time restrictions/allowances. The conversation time was overall divided equally between the 2 topics.

Conversations were interesting and there was a genuine spontaneity. There was a good variety of themes across the five available topics. Themes 1, 2, and 3 remained the most chosen.

A small number of students who discussed environmental issues (Theme 5) demonstrated a high level of language skill, however, less able candidates attempting this topic underperformed, especially when faced with overly ambitious questions by the teacher.

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 a few instances, candidates delivered extended monologues, which left time for only one or two questions. In these cases, the two conversation topics were often unevenly balanced, and in some cases the overall test duration exceeded 15 minutes. Since examiners stop listening when the full time is up, this affected the final marks awarded.

A minority of centres permitted overly rehearsed responses. 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.

In some centres, depth was lacking, with teachers rapidly firing random questions after brief candidate replies, often with 'native' speakers who had not been properly prepared.

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 were uploaded correctly on the platform LWT. **Please do not upload CS2 as PDF.** However, some Centres had to be contacted either to submit the missing CS2 form or to re-submit the recordings.

Please do not send a CS2 for each candidate but for the group.

It also avoids confusion if 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 to avoid noisy background distractions.

- use the best quality recording equipment that is available.

Do's and Don'ts for candidates

- Look at what prompts in **role plays** require you to do.
- Keep **role plays** short. One sentence answer is enough.
- Practise asking questions in **role plays**.
- Listen carefully to the question the teacher asks in the third prompt
- of the **role play** marked with "!".
- Give a full description of the **picture**. (Describe people, activities, weather, give opinions).
- The third prompt of the **picture-based task** requires an answer in a **past** time frame. The fourth prompt requires an answer in a **future** time frame.
- Keep the presentation in the **conversation** to a maximum of one minute.
- Take the initiative in the **conversation** by giving opinions and adding extra information.
- Ask the teacher to repeat a question in **Italian**.

Do's and Don'ts for teachers

- Follow the sequence grid.
- State candidate name and number at the beginning of recording.
- Announce stimuli numbers.
- Stick to the questions on Role Play and Picture Card and **do not ask** extra questions. Some teachers asked question not on the role play card which caused confusion for the candidates
- In RP and PC keep your answers brief.
- Do not correct candidates' mistakes.
- Do not help candidates to understand words they don't know.
- Stop the presentation after 1 minute.
- Ask appropriate questions that help development and are related to the assigned theme in General Conversation.
- State when moving from one theme to the other in GC.
- Spend equal time for Part1 and Part2 in the GC.

Conclusion

Congratulations to teachers and candidates!

This summer exams were well conducted in several centres.

Examiners were pleased to report a good overall standard of the Higher orals they marked. There was an impressive variety, in terms of range of grammar and vocabulary.

Many students, guided by their teachers, produced sound performances and coped well with the demands of the exam.

To further improve the results of their candidates, centre should ensure that all teachers and visiting examiners have had training in conducting this examination.