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Examiners' Report  
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCSE In Italian (1IN0)  
Paper 4 Foundation Tier: Writing in Italian

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For this paper questions are set in common contexts, addressing a range of relevant contemporary and cultural themes.

They are organised into five themes, each broken down into topics and sub-topics. The five themes are: Identity and culture, Local area, Holiday and travel, School, Future aspirations, Study and work and International and global dimension. The assessment tasks feature general content that is familiar and accessible to all candidates.

Candidates are required to produce responses of varying lengths and types to express facts, ideas and opinions in Italian. The length of each response required and complexity of language increases across the paper. Recommended word counts are specified for each question. Candidates will not be penalised for writing more or fewer words than recommended in the word count or for going beyond the mandatory bullet points although a piece that is too short will be self-penalising.

All questions are marked against the assessment criteria as published in the current specification. The instructions to students are all in Italian but this year still question titles were in English as an extra help for candidates following disruptions to learning due to the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. The use of dictionaries is not permitted. For this paper questions are set in common contexts, addressing a range of relevant contemporary and cultural themes.

The examination for paper Q4F is 1 hour and 10 minutes in length and it carries 60 marks. The paper consists of three open response questions and one translation from English into Italian. Candidates are required to answer all questions.

Q1 assesses candidates on their ability to write to describe and to express opinions.

Q2 has two options, from which students have to select one . This question assesses candidates on their ability to note down key points and convey information. Candidates must use the formal register.

Q3 has two options, from which candidates have to select one. This question assesses candidates on their ability to convey information, narrate, express opinions, interest, and convince the reader about a certain point. Candidates must use the informal register. This question is common to the Higher tier.

Q4 is the translation question. Candidates are required to translate five sentences from English to Italian. The sentences are ordered by increasing level of difficulty.

### **Question 1**

Q1 required candidates to describe the photograph and to give an opinion about sport. Candidates were asked to write 20-30 words in Italian.

The question could be answered using exclusively a present time frame, but candidates were not penalised for using other tenses. It was clear that candidates were generally well-prepared for this question and most candidates were able to

describe the photo to some extent although some struggled with verb conjugation. Most also gave the required opinion although some seemed to miss this and lost marks as a result.

## Question 2

Q2(a) required candidates to write a formal letter to the manager of a restaurant in Italy regarding a job in the restaurant. Q2(b) required the candidates to write a formal letter to the director of a museum in Italy regarding their visit to the museum. Candidates had to include in their response the information given in the four bullet points. The bullet points appear in the formal register and candidates are expected to respond in the same register. They had to write 40-50 words in Italian.

This question proved quite challenging for some candidates, perhaps as a result of the use of the formal register in the question. As a result, a few wrote responses about someone else and not about themselves. However, this was less frequent than in previous series.

Q2(a) was by far the most popular of the two.

Most candidates were able to give some personal details, such as their name, where they live or their age, although some candidates used *essere* with age. Many candidates misunderstood the second bullet point and wrote about when they arrived in Milan, as opposed to when they will arrive. There is no requirement to use past tenses in Q2 at this level. The vast majority were able to express an opinion, mostly positive, about Italian cuisine and most were able to express why they want to work in Italy. A considerable number of candidates used *vuole* instead of *voglio* for this point which did affect communication.

In Q2(b) most candidates were able to give some personal details, such as their name, where they live or their age. For some the accuracy with some basic constructions was an issue, e.g. *sono 16 anni* instead of *ho 16 anni*. Again, some confused the second bullet point and wrote about when they arrived in Rome, as opposed to when they will arrive. There is no requirement to use past tenses in Q2 at this level. Most candidates were able to express a reason for wanting to visit the museum, but a fair number failed to say what they would like to buy at the museum and omitting a bullet point has a significant impact on the mark that can be awarded.

In both questions there was a reasonably high incidence of error, especially with verb conjugation and tenses, as well as basic spelling of nouns at times. Candidates often managed to use time markers, even when they did not correctly conjugate the verbs that followed these. There were a few blank responses or responses in which candidates only attempted one or two bullet point and they must attempt them all in order to access the full range of available marks.

## Question 3(a)

Q3(a) required candidates to write an informal email about technology. They had to address the four bullet points and produce between 80-90 words in Italian. The question had to be answered using past, present and future time frames.

This was the less popular of the two options. Candidates were generally able to state if they prefer using the computer or their smartphone, with the general consensus being the latter. Most were able to communicate some information about what they did recently with technology, although verbs were often conjugated incorrectly, or candidates used infinitives with a past time marker. Some of the candidates were also able to write about why technology is important for young people, but responses tended to be very basic, e.g. *perché è divertente/interessante*. The last point was challenging for some candidates whilst others were able to state how they would like to use technology in the future. However, used *vorresti* instead of *vorrei* and this affected communication and did not fully fulfil the requirement of the task.

### Question 3(b)

In Q3(b) candidates were given four bullet points within the context of an email to a friend about their family and family activities; they had to write 80-90 words of Italian. The question had to be answered using past, present and future time frames.

This was by far the more popular of the two questions and at Foundation level it tended to produce better responses. Candidates were generally able to say where they like to go on holidays with their family. Many candidates started their answer with a lengthy description of their family, which was not required. Some candidates then did not actually answer the bullet point, as the lengthy description of the family possibly made them lose focus on the question. In terms of a recent holiday, many communicated something relevant, although the formation of the *passato prossimo* proved challenging for some, especially with *essere* verbs, e.g. there were many instances of *ho/abbiamo andato*. The third bullet point was challenging for some, but a lot of candidates managed to communicate basic information, using adjectives such as *è divertente* or *interessante*. The final bullet point was generally well understood although formation of *vorrei* + infinitive and use of the future tense (e.g. *andarò* instead of *andrò*) was patchy.

### Question 4

Q4 addressed the topic of school. Candidates had to translate five sentences from English to Italian.

The translation resulted in most candidates picking up some marks, although very few achieved full marks as basic errors often mean that the mark could not be awarded. For part (a) most were able to translate *scuola* and *stazione*, but the majority did not know *vicino a*. In (b) many did not know *a piedi* and many also struggled with formation of a basic verb such as *vado*. For part (c), some candidates did not know how to conjugate the verb *studiare*, with quite a few simply writing the infinitive. A significant number of candidates also confused *inglese/Inghilterra* and *francese/Francia*. In [part (d) most communicated 'I like geography' but some struggled with the second part. The last part, (e), was perhaps the most challenging. Many did not know *la settimana scorsa* and many could not render *visitare* in the *passato prossimo*. A surprising number of candidates did not know *castello*, with many writing it in English "castle". Most candidates did, however, know *noioso* although it was often misspelt.

## Paper Summary

Most candidates made a good attempt at the paper but the level of grammatical awareness was often patchy at best and there were frequent inaccuracies, often such as to impede comprehension. Standards appeared to be similar to last year but still lower than pre-pandemic. The translation, in particular, was less-well done than in previous series.

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- read every question on the exam paper before you begin to write your answers
- look very carefully at the whole question, including the rubric, to make sure that you fully understand what you are being asked to do
- look for key words in the bullet points as these will help you to answer each of the bullet points correctly
- Answer each of the bullet points in order
- Write a separate paragraph for each bullet point, as this will help you check that you have covered all of them in detail
- in Q1 write both a description of the photo and an opinion (there is no need to use tenses other than the present)
- in Q1 in Q2 and Q3 address all four of the bullet points
- remember that Q2 uses a formal register, so the instructions will say *Lei* rather than *tu*; however, it requires only present and future time frames in the response
- in Q3 try and use a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary to avoid repetition vary the language you use
- in Q4 try and translate all the words, as you will get credit even for partially correct answers
- leave enough time to check your work carefully at the end of the exam
- that you have written, for example, part of Q2(b) on the page for Q2(a), then please write a brief note so that the examiner (who only sees one question at a time) is aware of this and can take the necessary action. The same applies if the answers are continued on extra paper
- ensure that your handwriting is as neat as possible. This year there were many instances of responses that were virtually illegible.



