

Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

11N0 Paper 4F

Foundation tier: Writing in Italian

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Summer 2025

Publications Code 1IN0_4F_2506_ER

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ITALIAN GCSE PAPER 4F: Writing in Italian (Foundation Tier)

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 question titles are in English. The use of dictionaries is not permitted.

The examination for paper 4F is 1 hour and 15 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. The question is set using 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. The question is set using 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 music. 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. Some gave an opinion about the photo in general, rather than about music and therefore they did not fulfil all of the requirements of the task. Candidates must ensure that they read the question carefully.

Question 2

Q2(a) required candidates to write a formal email to the tourist office in relation to a day trip to Rome. Q2(b) required the candidates to write a formal email regarding a summer job in Italy. Candidates had to include in their response the information given in the four bullet points. The bullet points appear in the formal 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 more popular than Q2(b). Most candidates were able to say when they will arrive and who they will come to Rome with. Many candidates were also able to say why they want to visit Rome although this element was more challenging for some than the first two bullet points. The vast majority were able to say what they would like to do during the visit and showed good vocabulary knowledge relating to leisure/holiday activities. A few candidates answered the final point using *vorrebbe* from the question instead of *vorrei*, which did affect communication. There is no requirement to use past tenses in Q2 at this level.

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*. Most candidates were able to give information about the languages they speak although a few mixed up the names of countries with the names of the languages. While most candidates were able to say where they want to work in Italy, some candidates answered the final point using *vorrebbe* from the question instead of *vorrei*, which did affect communication. It is clear that the topic of work is well prepared by candidates, and they knew topic-specific vocabulary. There is no requirement to use past tenses in Q2 at this level.

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 points 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 article about eating out. 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 slightly less popular of the two options. Candidates were generally able to communicate information about what eat during the day, although a few did not know the vocabulary for different meals. Most were able to write about the last time they went to a restaurant, although verbs were often conjugated incorrectly, with many instances of *ho andato* and other candidates used infinitives with a past time marker. Many candidates mentioned when they visited the restaurant and with whom, as well as what they ate there. Most candidates were also able to express if they preferred to eat in a restaurant or at home. Candidates were able to justify their opinions, mostly using basic phrases, e.g. *perché è divertente/interessante*. The last point was challenging for some candidates whilst others were able to state where they would like to eat next year for their birthday. However, some candidates used *vorresti* instead of *vorrei* and this affected communication and did not fully fulfil the requirement of the task. It was clear that most candidates had a good knowledge of time markers relating to the past and future, even if they were not able to conjugate verbs correctly.

Question 3(b)

Q3(b) required candidates to write an informal email about cinema and television and they had to write 80-90 words of Italian. The question had to be answered using past, present and future time frames.

This was slightly more popular than Q3(a). Candidates were generally able to state what they like to watch on television. They generally showed good knowledge of topic-specific vocabulary here. In terms of the last time they went to the cinema, 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*. In the third point most candidates were able to say whether they prefer to watch television or go to the cinema and give a justification for this, mostly using basic phrases, e.g. *perché è divertente/interessante*. The final bullet point was generally well understood, although formation of *vorrei* + infinitive

and use of the future tense was patchy, with some candidates simply copying *vorresti* from the bullet point and this affected communication and did not fully fulfil the requirement of the task. Candidates were generally able to communicate relevant details for this topic, which is clearly well prepared by centres, but in many instances, there were errors in spelling, verb forms and adjectival agreements.

Question 4

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

The translation resulted in most candidates picking up some marks, although basic errors often meant that the mark could not be awarded. For part (a), most were able to translate the meaning, even if not completely accurately. There were many responses of *mia scuola è grande* instead of *la mia...* In (b), most candidates knew *ho* and *molti* but a significant number did not know *compiti*. For part (c), most candidates were able to fully communicate the sentence, but a few wrote *ando* or *andare* instead of *vado*. In part (d), most communicated 'I like', despite some grammatical errors in the formation of *mi piace* + infinitive. Most candidates communicated 'English' and 'Maths' even though there were many spelling errors. Most also successfully translate 'is difficult', although again it was often misspelt, e.g., *dificile*. Part (e) was the most challenging for many candidates. Some did not know *ieri* and a few even translated 'yesterday' as *la settimana scorsa* or even *domani*. Many candidates clearly knew the verb *andare*, but many also struggled to conjugate this correctly in the *passato prossimo*. A surprising number of candidates did not know *piscina*, with some writing it in English or inventing a different word. Most candidates did, however, know *con i miei amici*, although this was often just written as *con miei amici/con amici*.

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, which often impeded communication. Standards appeared to be similar to last year across all questions.

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.
- In Q2 and Q3, only attempt one of the two options, i.e. part (a) or part (b). Choose the option that will suit you best and plan your work carefully.

- 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 give an opinion about the aspect that is specifically mentioned, not just an opinion of the photo in general. There is no need to use any tenses other than the present.
- 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 to use a variety of grammatical structures, time markers and verb tenses and vocabulary to avoid repetition.
- In Q4, try to 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.
- Write your answers on the correct pages of the answer booklet; if you find that you have written, for example, part of Q3(b) on the page for Q3(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.