

# Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

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

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Summer 2023

Publications Code 20230824

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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 assessment time for paper 4H is 1 hour and 20 minutes in length and it carries 60 marks. The paper consists of two questions and one translation from English into Italian. Students must answer all questions.

Question 1 has two options, from which students have to select one. This question assesses students on their ability to convey information, narrate, express opinions, interest and convince the reader about a certain point. Students should use the informal register. This question is common to the Foundation tier.

Question 2 has two options, from which students have to select one. This question assesses students on their ability to convey information, narrate, express and justify ideas and opinions and interest or convince the reader. Students must use the formal register.

Question 3 is the translation question. Students are required to translate a short paragraph from English into Italian. The individual sentences are ordered by increasing level of difficulty.

### **Question 1(a)**

Q1(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 question was the less popular of the two questions and at the Higher level it was very well answered by candidates who chose it. This is clearly a topic that candidates had prepared well before the exam. Verb tenses were generally good, and candidate managed to answer all bullet points well. There were a few candidates who struggled with verb conjugation, particularly when using the past tense, with incorrect use of the auxiliary verb or wrong agreement with the past participle.

### **Question 1(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 the more popular of the two questions and this is clearly a topic that has been well prepared as the question was answered very well by most candidates. Candidates were better able to express ideas and opinions more elaborately and successfully than those who did this question on Foundation, as is to be expected. Again, there were a few candidates who struggled with verb conjugation, particularly when using the past tense with incorrect use of the auxiliary verb or wrong agreement with the past participle. Some candidates lost focus by providing a lengthy, and unnecessary, description of their family and then did not address the first bullet point as a result. It is best to stick to the exact requirements of the bullet points to make sure that these are addressed fully.

### **Question 2 (a)**

Q2(a) required students to write an article about their best holiday ever. They had to address the four bullet points and justify their ideas and opinions. They had to produce between 130-150 words in Italian.

Q2(a) was far more popular than Q2(b). This question was answered well by most candidates, as it is a well-rehearsed topic, and many showed a broad range of vocabulary and structures in their responses.

Most were able to give details of a holiday and their opinion about this. Most were able to state that holidays are important as it gives people a chance to have a break from work and study and to experience new cultures and meet new people, for example. Most were also able to communicate details about a future holiday.

Many candidates showed a good command of grammar although there were some issues, especially with the past tense, with incorrect use of the auxiliary verb or wrong agreement with the past participle.

A few candidates did not answer the bullet points in order and while there is no requirement to do so, it is advisable so that candidates do not forget to come back to the point, which is possibly what happened to some candidates who omitted bullet points.

## Question 2 (b)

Question 2 (b) Q2(b) required students to write about a birthday party. They had to address the four bullet points and justify their ideas and opinions. They had to produce between 130-150 words in Italian.

This was the less popular of the two options and candidates who chose this were able to cope with the demands of this question and all bullet points were generally answered well. Most were able to give an account of a birthday party that they attended and were able to narrate events and give descriptions, as well as their opinion. They were also able to express the importance of birthday parties as a special day for the person whose birthday it is. In terms of giving advice, candidates felt that it is important to invite the right people and be well organised. Some candidates addressed the first and the second bullet point together, expressing an opinion about the party and describing the party at the same time, which was acceptable.

Candidates were generally successful in manipulation of language although a few struggled with the *passato prossimo* and the conditional, especially with irregular verbs.

## Question 3

Q3 required students to translate a short passage of four sentences from English into Italian. The passage was based around the topic of languages. Most candidates were able to translate most of the passage successfully. Some did struggle with items of vocabulary such as 'foreign' and 'useful'. A few struggled to conjugate *conoscere* correctly in the past tense and there were some issues with the pronoun *mi* when translating 'she wants to visit me'. A few candidates left blanks where they did not know a word or phrase and they would be strongly advised to attempt all of the passage as blank spaces do not result in marks!

## Paper summary

Standards appeared to be similar to last year but possibly still lower than pre-pandemic. There appeared to be a very high proportion of native/near-native speakers. There were a few instances of candidates who struggled to produce a coherent response in Question 2 and should have been entered at Foundation level.

Overall, however, the level of response was very good, and candidates seemed to have covered the topic areas well.

Grammatical awareness and accuracy were better than at Foundation level but there were many instances of careless mistakes and inaccurate verb

formation and candidates are advised to read over their work carefully and check it. Candidates are also advised to read the question very carefully and consider what each bullet point is asking then to write about *exactly* before completing their answer.

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.
- 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
- Leave enough time to check your work carefully at the end of the exam
- Try and use a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary to avoid repetition
- In Q3, try and translate every word, including what might appear minor words
- Write your answers on the correct pages of the answer booklet. If you find 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.