

Examiners' Report Summer 2007

GCE

GCE Italian (8330/9330)

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6561 Paper 1 Listening and Writing

Candidates are required to listen to authentic recorded target-language material, to retrieve and convey information by responding to a range of mainly target-language questions and by producing a guided summary in English. They are also required to provide personal responses in the target language.

Assessment principles

Up to 26 marks are awarded positively for correct information retrieved and conveyed in response to target-language questions (questions 1,2, 3 and 4). The quality of language is not relevant unless it impedes communication.

Up to 4 marks are awarded for content and 4 for quality of language for each of the two personal responses to questions 5 (a) and (b) according to the relevant grids, for a maximum total of 16 marks.

Up to 8 marks are awarded positively for a guided summary in English showing the ability to understand the gist and details, infer ideas, select information, transfer it and communicate it concisely. No marks are awarded in this section for answers totally or partially in Italian.

Candidates' responses

Candidates showed understanding of the requirements of this unit and performed generally well.

Question 1: as intended, this question proved to be accessible to the majority of the candidature. In fact, statistics show over 90% correct answers for the overall question, which was a multiple choice question. Unexpectedly, 4d proved to be the hardest choice to make, but even there, only 16% failed to make a connection between "*sono stati arrestati*" and "*sono stati presi*".

Question 2 It was expected that "*la solita storia*" would not be within everybody's reach, but perhaps a few more correct answers were expected than the recorded 54%. Unexpectedly though, the poorest performance was with 2f, where a good 57% of the candidates fell into the trap of choosing "*eleganti*", a too plausible word to associate with clothes, rather than "*leggeri*", as the text suggested. As words were to be taken from a pool, only correct spellings were accepted. It was pleasing to notice that no significant amount of marks was lost over incorrect spellings.

Question 3: candidates generally performed better with the second question on Brano 2 (pairing sentences). Students are becoming increasingly familiar with the demands of this task, and if they understand the text, they usually respond well. Only a couple of presumably older candidates did not understand the task at all and, sadly, lost all marks available for it.

Question 4 (target language questions and answers)

This set of questions catered well for all ranges of abilities. Some factual questions could be successfully tackled by all candidates, some required more interpretation and were intended to separate the more able candidates. Weaker candidates performed better than expected in this task.

The passage was about *Lavoro Minorile*. Able candidates provided excellent responses. Weaker candidates showed difficulty in selecting and handling information.

4a) was well answered (92% correct answers). Some candidates lost marks for answering “11 e 14”, which, without “tra”, did not make sense. Luckier were those who answered “11-14”

4b) was also well answered, and only a minority said they are all Italian or said that they were all from Asia.

4c) enabled nearly every candidate to score the 2 marks although the spelling was pretty poor, especially of *fabbriche* and *ristorante*.

4d) proved to be a challenge for weaker candidates, who just transcribed from the text and seemed to think that it was enough to put “*distribuite in 9 città*”, without indicating where these cities were. More difficult to assess was when a candidate used Naples or Bari to substantiate their claim that it was not only an issue of Southern Italy. There were also a few instances of misunderstanding the question and odd references to the Mediterranean Sea.

4e) on the whole was done well: most candidates were able to identify the targeted information and use it correctly.

4f) required two elements. Many candidates only mentioned one or failed to make clear who was to help/support poor families.

4g) was misunderstood by some candidates, who wrote down the wrong information (from Italy, from all over Italy, from poor families or even listing the nine cities as 4d). The majority, however, answered it correctly, albeit with various spellings of Asia. Some of these were poor transcriptions, showing no comprehension, and could not be credited.

4h) was done well on the whole, but there were a lot of examples of helping the “*famiglie di commercianti*” or having “*dottori di lavoro esteri*”, which could obviously not be credited.

Questions 5 (personal response)

There were a few very good answers to both questions but for 5(a) the majority of answers were on rather dull and consisted mainly on lifting from the text with very little personal contribution both in terms of language and contents. Candidates appear to have been less observant of the word limit than in the past. Many of them filled in long explanations of why people were poor and then lost credit for providing information on what could be done about it, as it was often stated beyond the word limit. The answers on what could be done to limit it were fairly vague, like giving them money each month. The more able candidates gave answers relating to government controls, grants, and cheaper housing and better pay for adults so that they don't need to make children work. Many candidates wrote about school being free or money being given to families who send their children to school which, on one hand, showed that the candidate had missed the point a little bit; on the other hand, it showed an attempt to a personal response.

5 (b) was done better, as candidates had more to write about but again wasted their word count. One of the main concerns was that missing school would affect their future work chances, and stronger candidates went on suggesting that this would perpetuate the cycle of poor education, poor salary, need to make children work. Many also reflected on missing out on being a child, on health and safety issues or on children's inability to demand their rights given the illegal nature of their employment.

Question 6 (guided English summary)

This question was answered well on the whole but again, the word count was a huge issue and answers to bullet point 4 were frequently disregarded as candidates used up their word limit sometimes even before they completed the answer to bullet point 3.

The majority of candidates managed to score the two marks available for box (a). In box (b) only the higher ability candidates wrote about professionals being competent and also helping him. Most candidates thought they could score the two marks by stating that professionals are "exceptionally competent and very good" not realising that it was just a repetition. There was also some difficulty with "*competenti*" occasionally interpreted as "competitive" and even "*bravi*" interpreted as "brave". In box (c) many candidates wasted words by writing how Oscar was in every scene, but nearly every candidate got at least one mark for Bronx/rap language/ language that was difficult to translate or for the speed of delivery/problems of sync. There were quite a few examples of 'sink' and even a few gerund forms of the verb "to sinc", "sincing"! For box (d), nearly everyone got the stimulating nature of the work and there were some fairly strange ways of writing that he was immersed in a new world. This information, though, could not always be credited because of word count.

Advice and Guidance

Candidates appeared to be generally well trained to tackle this unit. More candidates were able to answer questions requiring more than just identifying factual information, but more training on answering questions requiring inference would be useful. Candidates appear to have paid more attention to the questions eliciting personal responses (questions 5 a and b) and irrelevant answers were fewer than in the past but many of them must learn to write more concisely, to avoid either going over the word count or not being able to include sufficient valid points within it. In order to be successful with question 5, candidates need to learn to be selective as any irrelevant information included may cause relevant information to be supplied beyond the word limit and therefore not credited. .

Candidates are reminded that tidy presentation is even more essential now that answers are marked on line. Although every care is taken by examiners to access any part of an answer that might be written outside the clipped area, candidates are strongly advised to write their answers in the space provided or to indicate it clearly if for any reason the answer is completed elsewhere.

6562 Paper 1 Reading and Writing

In this paper candidates are required to read authentic texts in Italian and to retrieve and convey information given in the texts by responding to a range of question types mainly in Italian. Candidates are also required to write 140-160 words in Italian based on a short printed stimulus and a list of 4 bullet points in the target language. The paper this year consisted of five texts of varying lengths. Reading tasks were set on the first four passages and in the final task candidates were required to write a letter in Italian in response to a few extracts from a newspaper article.

The paper produced a good range of marks and once again a good number of candidates scored 60+, which is a very good performance on a paper than requires candidates to perform a variety of tasks.

Assessment Principles

Candidates were awarded marks for Q1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 as shown in the Mark Scheme. If certain details are underlined in the Mark Scheme then these formed an essential part of an answer. The quality of the Italian in the answers to Q4 is not assessed as the marks are allocated for the correct content, unless of course the quality of the Italian is so poor as to render an answer incomprehensible. This was often the case with the very weak candidates. It was encouraging to note that most candidates now realise that they are not allowed to copy their answers verbatim from the text and they made every effort to respect the instruction in the rubric to this question. Inevitably it is usually the weaker candidates who lack the linguistic skill to do other than copy. In answer to question 4(d) *lettura e discussione* was a fairly frequent response where both terms were simply copied from the text. An indication of how little on occasions a candidate has to change is the fact that *la lettura e la discussione dei giornali* was perfectly acceptable for both marks. It simply required the candidate to change *alla* to *la*. A small percentage of candidates sometimes wrote very long answers. The answers to most questions are quite brief. It is worth reminding candidates that they are not expected to find synonyms for every word but they are expected to re-phrase some part of the original text. The written task, Q6, was marked for Content (20 marks) and Quality of Language (20 marks). There are still far too many candidates who write over the word limit. This year, some candidates wrote far too much for the second bullet point, or tended to write a lengthy introduction about their own opinions on obesity/the problem of obesity in general before addressing the questions. Unfortunately for these candidates, their efforts go unrewarded. In fact they often end up by being penalised quite heavily under Content, as within the 160 word limit only one bullet point has usually been addressed. The message is the same as it ever was: respect the rubric.

Candidates' Responses

The first three exercises are intended to be a 'gentle introduction' to this paper and, in the main, the results bore this out. The very good candidates often scored the maximum 18 marks. The less able also coped quite well. Those who performed poorly in these initial exercises usually struggled with the remainder of the exam, given that the level of difficulty increases in Q4 and Q5. Unless someone fails to answer Q6 then it is extremely unlikely that a candidate does not gain some credit for both Content and Language. Having said this, Q6 certainly discriminates between those candidates who respond appropriately and fairly accurately to the bullet points and others whose level of accuracy is such that they are barely able to string a couple of words together accurately.

As already mentioned most candidates coped well with the first three questions. It was rare that a candidate got less than three out of four for question 1. Q2 should now be very familiar to those who have worked on past papers but there were still many candidates who wrote out a chunk of the text instead of the one word required for every question except (b), (d) and (e). (a), (d) and (e) were the questions that caused most problems. Q3 was generally very well done.

Q4. The questions were carefully devised to ensure that candidates could not just lift their answers verbatim but there are always some who manage to do so and pay the price. The questions (a) to (e) were quite straightforward and (f) to (h) imposed a few more demands on the candidates. Questions (a) to (e) were overall very well answered, showing at times a degree of sophistication in the manipulation of the source text. Where candidates did not opt for a re-phrasing of *aderisci al progetto*, choosing one of the options indicated in the mark scheme, for the answer to (a) to be acceptable there had to be a clear indication that newspapers were being read with the students. A common mistake made by candidates in their answer was to say *leggere il quotidiano in classe*, which showed no manipulation of the text as well as being misleading. Weaker candidates also resorted to copying the text to answer (b): *sviluppare un solido spirito critico* and *diventare cittadini liberi di domani* were often found in answer to both (a) and (b). *Libero* occurred again instead of the acceptable *gratuito* in all its variations in (c), and in (d) *letteratura* and even *lettera* cropped up instead of *lettura*. The most frequent error in (e) was a reply in the present tense, which was not acceptable. As the question clearly stated *Qual è stato il ruolo delle università?*, the only acceptable alternative to the past tense was the infinitive. Questions (f), (g) and (h) were more demanding, requiring candidates to understand the fine point made about *come i giovani valutano i quotidiani di oggi e come vorrebbero trasformare quelli di domani* and to say it in their own words. Many candidates were unable to manipulate the text and copied verbatim once again, when replacing the word *quotidiani* with *giornali* would have been sufficient.

Q5. This question gave ample opportunities to candidates across the ability range to gain some marks. Poor spelling and communication in English inevitably led to a loss of marks where answers became incomprehensible. A case in point were several instances of 'valorize' to render *valorizzare* in (b). On a positive note there were many candidates who demonstrated a good understanding of the relevant details of the text and provided very good, clear answers. Most candidates were able to obtain the mark allotted to the first question. A common error was to say that 'salary went up TO 130 euros'. (b) was also generally well answered, with most candidates able to gain at least one mark. In (c) the most common error was to render *maleducati* with 'uneducated', but most students were at least able to gain the mark for rendering *disturbano la lezione* correctly. In question (d), too, only the best candidates interpreted *sgridare* and *bocciarli* correctly, with 'shout at them' and some example of corporal punishment being the most common, unacceptable answers. Questions (e) and (f) certainly served to discriminate between the more able and less able candidates. To answer (e) candidates had to understand the meaning of *verranno promossi* and not many did, with 'being promoted' being a frequent, incorrect, answer. *Lo dicono apertamente* also required precision in the answer, with many candidates opting for 'talk/speak about it' rather than the correct 'say it'. A very common error in (f) was the incorrect understanding of *volentieri*: many incorrect answers included mentions of 'working as a volunteer' or 'have less money'/'giving money to charity', where *farei a meno* was not understood.

Q6 A high percentage of the candidates now seem to realise the importance of answering this question within the stipulated number of words. (The appropriate letter format is not counted in the maximum 160 word limit). There were some really excellent answers to this question. It was good to see so many candidates who dealt with the four bullet points in the order in which they were presented, refrained from irrelevance and waffle, and scored very high marks under Content.

The first bullet point was generally not very well developed: a significant number of students simply repeated the words in the source text, *è giusto che un ministro della salute suggerisca una dieta*, without really expanding their ideas. The majority of students developed just one idea of why the minister was right/ wrong to promote the idea. A small number of candidates got completely the wrong idea and assumed that it was the minister who was going on a diet, and based their answers around this!

The second bullet point was on the whole very well answered. Most candidates were able to develop full answers to this question. The vast majority cited *il 'fast food', la televisione/ i videogiochi* and *i genitori*. Many students explained that 20/30 years ago Italian food was much healthier but didn't always relate this to how it was leading to obesity. A number of candidates approached the question (less successfully) by discussing what the health problems of obesity are, but without necessarily developing this response to fully answer the question.

The third bullet point produced several excellent responses and original ideas. There was some spelling errors on the idea of raising taxes on fast food/ decreasing on healthy food (*creocere/ diminuire/ i tassi*).

However, not all candidates fully grasped the idea of *alimentazione* and wrote generally about how to reduce obesity.

A significant number of candidates failed to develop their ideas and wrote *bisogna avere più istruzione* without expanding fully.

The fourth bullet point was not always as well developed as the 3rd bullet point. Many candidates wrote along the lines of *bisogna introdurre più sport*, which was very similar to the source text. This bullet point tended to be more rushed than the others.

As far as Quality of Language is concerned, the outcome was much as expected. There were some excellent candidates who displayed a good range of structures and vocabulary and made very few errors. A written task that has just a few errors can be awarded maximum marks and there were candidates who reached this pinnacle. The middle-of-the-road candidates tended to use a limited number of tenses and structures and the variety of vocabulary was lacking. The very weak candidates had very little inkling of the basic rudiments of the language. At this level you would expect any candidate to be able to write a simple sentence with a certain degree of accuracy.

Many of the structures that the weaker candidates attempted to use were rather anglicised. Other weaknesses included: adjectival agreement; incorrect endings of regular verbs in the present, future and conditional; incorrect use of the definite and indefinite articles; incorrect use of the auxiliary with frequently used verbs e.g. *ho andato*.

Advice and Guidance

The advice and guidance is no different from that suggested in previous reports. As regards the rubric for each question, it seems that this year the majority of candidates complied with all the necessary instructions. It is always worth reminding candidates of the need to answer the final written task within the word limit as failure to do so can result in a lot of marks for Content being needlessly lost. It is always a good idea to draw candidates' attention at frequent intervals to the various strategies that can be employed to guess the meaning of Italian words, of particular importance for questions 4 and 5. In this year's paper candidates should have been able to guess for example *professionalità*, *compensazione*, *riconoscimento* to mention but a few. In order to develop a good range of vocabulary candidates need to be exposed to a variety of texts and have ample practice in different exercise types to be able to deal competently with the first three questions. All candidates require a good deal of classroom practice in re-phrasing and manipulating the language of the original text to be able to cope adequately with Q4. For Q5, spelling and the inability to communicate answers in English will remain a problem if candidates do not spend sufficient time reading in their native language. It is not an easy task to find the most appropriate expression in your own language to convey the meaning of a phrase or expression in a foreign language. It would at least be useful if teachers concentrated on parts of a text they are using in class and got their students to express the meaning of certain expressions in English. Training in time-management and reading techniques such as skimming and scanning should also form an integral part of exam preparation. Candidates should always be reminded of the fact that 50% of the marks for this Unit are allocated to the Writing Task (Q6). They would be well advised to devote an appropriate amount of their time to this activity and ensure that it is well planned so that all the bullet points are dealt with appropriately. All candidates need regular practice in the art of getting the essential parts of the message across in a concise way. In a Writing task that imposes a maximum word limit of 160 words there is no place for irrelevant passages.

6563 Paper 1 Prepared Oral Topic

An oral exam is as much a test on the TE's ability to conduct it as it is a test of the candidate's competence. It has often been commented on the candidates' oral forms or through letters to the centres that eliciting regurgitation of pre-learnt material was not in the candidate's best interest. When this verges on mal-practice to the point of having a scripted interview marks on response are severely restricted. It was also not in the candidate's interest to adopt what one of our examiners called, quite appropriately, push-button questioning.

Assessment Principles

This test is assessed positively using the revised grid: **Quality of Language 20 marks (10 for Accuracy and 10 for Range)**, **Response 20 marks**, **Knowledge and Understanding 20 marks**.

Candidates' Responses

There was a wide range of wisely chosen topics, which produced excellent performances. Even when the level of language is not particularly high, it is still pleasing to listen to candidates who have thoroughly prepared their chosen topic and are able to present a good range of pertinent facts, have the ability to analyse them in an interesting way and in so doing expressed their opinions in a spontaneous discussion. Some candidates demonstrated up-to-date knowledge of Italian politics (with *Berlusconi* topping the list, but there were also instances of interesting analyses of the recent general election). Literary subjects are becoming increasingly popular and the range of films studied has widened to include more recent ones.

The importance of spontaneity must be mentioned yet again. Apart from the stage-managed performances, there are still some candidates and their examiners who are unable to draw a line between preparing a topic and rehearsing the exam. This is often done in complete good faith but lack of spontaneity limits severely the marks for response and the repetition of language often far above the candidate's real level of competence can only result in very poor levels of accuracy.

There was a welcome drop in the number of candidates choosing *la cucina italiana* or *la dieta mediterranea* for the wrong reason, and those who did deal with these topics more appropriately.

Again, a word of warning for topics like *I giovani in Italia*, *La donna in Italia*, *I cambiamenti nella famiglia italiana* and the like: they are perfectly acceptable topics for unit 3, but all too often candidates tend to produce sweeping generalisation and irrelevant material unless the topic is solidly rooted in the Italian context. When a candidate fails to do that, it is up to the TE to encourage as much reference as possible to the Italian context during the discussion in order to salvage the exam.

Fewer candidates made the mistake of choosing to base their discussions on comparison between the situation in Italy and UK with respect to a particular topic but, regrettably, some TE insisted on eliciting it during the discussion. Unfortunately, a handful of candidates failed to relate the topic of their choice to the Italian context and scored zero.

Performances in terms of linguistic criteria did not differ from the previous exam series: the range was wide and well distributed, from very good performances - not infrequently above specification requirements - to moderate but still commendable extension of linguistic skills from GCSE. Control over agreements, gender and often over verb endings remains a problem even with otherwise able candidates and errors in word stress remain frequent. The range of lexis was often good or even very good, but structures were often limited and repetitive, with a large number of candidates not attempting any subordinate clauses. In the case of scripted material, structures were often too complex for the candidates' ability and resulted into farcically flawed regurgitation.

Teacher Examiners (TE)

The exams were generally better conducted and most 'old' examiners appear to have taken on board the recommendation made on previous years' oral forms. However, some still insist on eliciting regurgitation of pre-learned material, testing specific knowledge rather than encouraging discussion, excessive TE contribution, failing to introduce unpredictable questions, eliciting excessive comparison with UK situation, keeping the discussion within the level of factual knowledge. Some new examiners proved to have prepared conscientiously for their task and were able to elicit the best performance from each of their candidates whilst others need to pay more attention to the exam format. There are still examiner's that do not appreciate the difference between discussion and chat and often ask questions eliciting totally irrelevant material. By way of example: *Il giro d'Italia* is an interesting topic but it becomes a wasted opportunity for a good mark if the candidate is asked if he has a bicycle, how many hours a week he rides it, if he goes alone, if the father is interested in cycling, if he would like to take part in a race and if he ever met a champion. These types of questions do not only affect the mark for K/U, but also response and language. It is different to respond in the context of a discussion or to answer simple questions about oneself: this is normally done well at GCSE level and does not require a sophisticated level of language.

Administration

It was pleasing to note that misuse of oral forms was less frequent this year, but those who insisted on using them as a prompt should be aware of the adverse effects. No credit can be given for information that may have been just read. When prompts are written instead of headings (e.g. *Il 25% dei giovani italiani....; nonostante tutto ciò...; Il governo dovrebbe....*) no indication is given of how the topic has been developed. This makes it difficult to identify the unpredictable elements and it is a clear giveaway of the not spontaneous nature of the discussion. In fact, no examiner would be able to develop a spontaneous discussion on the basis of headings like the above.

There were still problems with the timing. (one particular examiner examined her candidates for anything between 7 and 18 minutes). It must be reiterated that candidates are not likely to gain anything from a longer exam. If they are able they can demonstrate their ability in the time given. If they are not so able, they are more likely to show their weaker points as the exam goes on. Shorter exams are self-penalising because they do not offer opportunity to show the required amount of K/U and the ability to sustain response and quality of language.

Finally would all Centres please ensure that the recording equipment is in good order so that recordings can be made that are of good quality.

This year some exams could not be marked and others could not be given full credit because of bad recording. It is recommended that the quality of recording is checked at the end of each exam.

Advice and guidance

Advice and guidance can be derived from the comments made in the reports. In particular: Candidates should choose a topic of personal interest, making sure that

- it is related to the culture and/or society of Italy or an Italian speaking community.
- they have enough material to acquire all relevant knowledge
- it does not only involve factual knowledge but lends itself to analysis, evaluation and opinion.
- it allows them to demonstrate their full potential

Candidates should plan and prepare their two-minute presentation carefully and be ready to discuss the topic thereafter.

Teacher examiners should elicit discussion and not test for knowledge only.

Not all the subheadings need to be discussed, but the bulk of the exam is to be based on them

Refrain from eliciting anecdotal material, which gains little credit, or engaging candidates in extensive comparison with UK situation.

Make sure that the topic is unambiguously focused on Italian context, and steer the candidate towards it when he/she strays away.

Ask a few, genuinely unpredictable questions related to the chosen topic.

Even when a candidate is hesitant, give him/her a chance to respond. When a response is not appropriate do not just pretend it is and carry on. It may be more in the candidate's interest for the examiner to rephrase a question and give the candidate the opportunity to answer to the point

6564 Paper 1 Oral Discussion of Issues

Candidates are required to choose and prepare an issue on which they must adopt a stance. In advance of the examination they must complete the oral form with a brief statement, in Italian, of their issue and the stance adopted.

The test begins with the candidate outlining his/her stance for about a minute. The examiner then challenges it and the candidate must defend it in discussion for 3-4 minutes.

For the remaining 9-10 minutes the examiner conducts a free-ranging discussion, **moving away from the chosen issue onto unpredictable areas.**

Candidates are expected to express and justify opinions, argue a case, discuss problems or current controversies etc. **as these arise naturally in spontaneous conversation.**

Assessment Principles

This test is assessed positively using the revised grid: **Quality of Language 20 marks (10 for Accuracy and 10 for Range), Response 20 marks, Issue 5 marks, Justification and Debate 15 marks.**

Teacher Examiners (TE)

As suggested for Unit 3, a teacher examiner's ability to conduct the debate is as important as a candidate's own competence for success in an oral exam. Indeed, more so for Unit 4 as the quality of debate depends very much on the TE counterarguments for the chosen issue and the nature of the questions asked for the further issues. Regurgitation of pre-learned material sometimes features in unit 4, to which the danger can be added of treating the chosen issue as a unit 3 style topic of discussion. These were amply detailed in last year's report, and TE still needing to think about their style of examination are welcome to refer to it.

This year candidates (and teacher examiners) seem to be more aware of the requirements of this unit. There was a smaller number of chosen issues that did not lend themselves to a debate. Teacher-Examiners were more aware that they needed to take the opposite viewpoint from the candidate's and that a good debate depended very much on the challenge that they put to the candidates, both for the chosen and unpredictable issues. Here too, better conduct of exams resulted in better performances for Response and JD.

Candidates' Responses

Most students seemed genuinely interested in their chosen issue and were motivated to discuss it intelligently. Similarly, most teacher examiners were excellent in opposing the candidates' views and eliciting good debate. This year a wide range of issues were chosen, limiting the ever popular 'death penalty, abortion, and euthanasia' to a minority. It was refreshing to listen to discussions concerning current issues such as: the protection of the environment (importance of recycling, solutions to reduce pollution, the consequence of exploiting Antarctica), the Church's role in society, world conflicts and religious beliefs, ethical problems relating to adoption, immigration and integration, etc. There was a significant increase in the number of presentations linked to world politics, especially terrorism, the war in Iraq and the increase of violence in society.

From the language point of view, performance did not differ much from previous exam series. There were a number of excellent performances from students (not necessarily native speakers) whose level of language allowed them to display excellent debating skills and to cope coped admirably with unpredictable questions and displayed excellent debating skills. At the other end of the range, a small number of candidates were obviously out of their depth at this level: they lacked the necessary vocabulary and structures to produce any meaningful debate.

The degree of accuracy, as one would expect, was better than for unit 3 but control over agreements, gender and verb endings remains a problem also at this level. However, there is more to success with this unit than just level of language. A well prepared set of arguments in support of the stance taken on the chosen issue can go a long way to compensate for language weaknesses, whereas a low level of debate may deny access to top marks even when the level of language is there. Many candidates, especially mature candidates, were able to achieve a good grade because of their ability to debate. Conversely, fluent candidates who over-relied on their language ability and did not prepare their argument produced a very dull debate and failed to score high marks. In many cases the level of debate dropped after the chosen issue, so did the mark for J/D.

As for the comments on admin, timing and quality of recording, please refer to the relevant section of Unit 3 report.

Advice and Guidance

The issue must be clearly stated and a stance taken.

Teacher's examiners should

- make sure that the issue is clearly stated and a stance is taken;
- prepare challenging counter-arguments so that a high level of justification and debate can be elicited;
- debate the chosen issue for the time required, but no longer;
- Introduce further issues, without undue concern about exposing their students to genuinely unpredictable questions. Well trained candidates cope with genuinely unpredictable questions extremely well and gain credit for it;
- exploit all the potential of subsequent issues before moving on to another one, but make sure that at least two further issues are introduced;
- refrain from being too confrontational;
- keep the debate going;
- remember that eliciting knowledge or involving candidates in chatting about personal experiences is a waste of time and opportunity.

Candidates should be made aware of the following:

- There is a clear distinction between the Unit 3 **topic** and the unit 4/1 **issue**;
- It is very important to select an issue that is of genuine personal interest;
- they must adopt a stance, clearly state it on their Module 4/1 and be ready to defend it;
- after approximately 4 minutes they will be engaged in a free-ranging discussion of further, unpredictable issues for the remaining 9-10 minutes.

In the interest of candidates, teacher examiners are advised to scrupulously adhere to administrative procedures and to check the quality of recording.

6565 Paper 1 Topics and Texts

Assessment Principles

All answers were marked according to the mark grids in the syllabus and each was read once for language and once for content. The mark grids make it clear that five essential aspects of the work are being evaluated:

- knowledge of the text and/or topic
- the ability to use and analyse that knowledge
- coherent and persuasive organisation of material
- logical sequencing and development of ideas
- accuracy and sophistication of written Italian

Candidates' Responses

As was the case last year, candidates' responses showed a wide range in terms of quality, with a substantial number of limited responses and there were more instances than usual where the candidate failed to address the question set. This seemed to be where candidates either misunderstood or misinterpreted the question. It is vital that the candidates address the question set and are advised to read this carefully. There were also many good or very good responses and the majority of candidates wrote substantially more than the 250 word limit in their answers. The majority of candidates proved comfortable writing their responses in Italian.

Candidates are reminded clearly on the front of the paper of the need to correctly indicate their choice of answer and more importantly, they should indicate the part of the question they are answering. In spite of the fact that this was more explicit than ever, a substantial number of candidates still indicated that they were answering one part of the question, for instance, 7a when they were in fact answering 7b.

Candidates were once again keen to quote from the texts studied, and once again there were instances of misquoting. Candidates do not need to quote from the texts but textual reference to exemplify and substantiate the points made is desirable and necessary. Once again, candidates did at times misspell the names of characters or places and this creates a poor impression. This is something that the candidates should learn reliably.

Although there is a word limit, this is merely a guide and better candidates produced more than this limit through development of their ideas and a greater degree of analytical sophistication. Candidates who wrote excessively on a topic/ text tended to lose sight of the question and incurred penalties as a result. Equally candidates who wrote very short responses tended to lose out due to the lack of development and analysis within their argument. Candidates who had clearly planned their answer tended to do much better as a lack of planning often results in rambling responses where ideas are not well sequenced and material is not presented logically. Candidates are reminded of the importance of planning their response within the context of the question set.

There were a small number of responses on the *Italia anni 2000* topic this year, with Q1 (a) proving more popular than Q1 (b). In Q1 (a) candidates were generally able to state the groups in favour of and those opposed to the Euro and the reasons why. Most candidates did mention the support for the Euro from both the president and the prime minister and the opposition of the Northern League. Reasons for included more ease in conducting business transactions within the Euro zone and the advantages for travelling within the area while reasons against included the loss of national identity. However, few candidates were able to produce a convincing analysis of to what extent the single currency has been advantageous for Italy.

Q1(b) was very disappointing as the vast majority of candidates who answered this question misinterpreted the question set. Many did not understand the term *sindacati* and gave an outline of the careers of some of the major politicians. These answers were generally largely or completely irrelevant and few, if any, marks were awarded.

There were again few responses on the *Risorgimento* this year and even fewer successful responses. For Q2(a), many candidates discussed the process of unification rather than the political initiatives of the new United Italy. As a result, answers were often largely or completely irrelevant. Answers to Q2(b) were generally better with candidates being able to mention some of the most important social and political ideas of the *Risorgimento* such as the desire to be free from foreign control and the intention to industrialise the country. Most candidates concluded that these ideas were born of bourgeois preoccupations but few candidates were successful in justifying why they felt this to be the case, with the majority simply focusing on biographical details of Cavour, Mazzini and Garibaldi.

The topic on the Italian region once again proved to be very popular with both parts attracting a high number of responses although part (b) was more popular than part (a). In Q3(a) candidates were generally able to mention some examples of agriculture in the region chosen. These included livestock farming, the cultivation of fruit, cereals and vegetables as well as viticulture. Some candidates also discussed fishing as part of the region's agriculture, where relevant. Better candidates clearly expressed the contribution of the sector to the regional economy although weaker candidates often struggled with this element of the question. Better candidates also came up with more than one idea for safe guarding future and some mentioned threats to agriculture and practical ideas for addressing these. Weaker candidates often came up with less practical and more implausible ideas here. It is worth noting that some of the weaker candidates either did not specify a region, or did not mention agriculture but rather industry in general, and strayed too far from the requirements of the question to gain any significant credit..

3(b) provided many good or very good responses. Better candidates focused on disadvantages of tourism, sometimes with relevant reference to advantages. Candidates mentioned over-crowding, environmental damage, price inflation and a negative impact on local customs and traditions as disadvantages. Better candidates came up with a good discussion of merits or otherwise of limiting numbers, even if they actually argued against it. Weaker candidates often described the tourist attractions in their region, or misunderstood the question either by declaring there are no disadvantages to tourism, or merely mentioning advantages. At times, they mentioned impractical ideas for limiting tourism in the region and some candidates contradicted themselves in this part of the question and thereby, albeit unwittingly, negated their argument.

Q4 again attracted a fair number of responses although as has been the case in previous years, many candidates seemed to struggle to provide enough relevant detail in their responses to score highly. Q4(a) was the overwhelmingly popular choice, with Q4(b) attracting a very small number of responses. For Q4(a), candidates were generally able to

mention some of the current activities of the mafia, such as prostitution, extortion, arms and drug trafficking, corruption of public officials and financial crime. Better candidates were able to mention the changes in the mafia's activities and some were able to discuss the accompanying change in philosophy and the change in concepts of family and honour. Many candidates struggled to structure their responses to this question well and weaker candidates simply gave a history of the mafia from its beginnings to the modern day. In this case, much of the answer was outside the remit of the topic *Mafia e antimafia: dal dopoguerra ad oggi* and these responses were often rambling without any real focus.

The Fascist era texts was not as popular an option as in previous years but the candidates who attempted these questions generally displayed a good knowledge of the texts studied. The degree of analysis within the context of the question varied according to the ability of the candidates. The most popular texts were *Il Giardino dei Finzi-Contini* and *Cristo si è fermato a Eboli*. In discussing the first of these texts, candidates tended to focus on the racial laws and their impact on the daily life of the characters although for the second text, most candidates struggles to relate their knowledge of the text to the questions.

The *letteratura e cinema* topic proved very popular with both parts of the question attracting a very large response. Candidates seemed to respond well to the change of text / film and most candidates displayed a good knowledge of both the text and the film and many good responses were produced. In Q6(a) candidates mentioned the evolution of the relationship between Michele and Filippo, often stating the circumstances in which the relationship begins and then develops. In terms of the importance of the relationship for the boys, candidates mentioned that for Michele, the relationship was an opportunity to experience an alternative friendship and something over which he could have ownership, as well as giving him an insight into the darker world of adulthood, as well as representing for him a journey from innocence to realisation. For Filippo, the relationship is one of physical dependency (for food, water, etc) and then also becomes one of emotional dependency. Many candidates concluded that the relationship is more successfully portrayed in the book as the narrative technique allows us to see Michele's thoughts in more detail, as well as allowing the reader to interpret the relationship in their own way. Some candidates felt that the visual aspect of the film made it more effective and some candidates felt that the relationship is portrayed equally as effectively in both the novel and the film. Degree of analysis and appropriate textual reference by way of substantiation differentiated better candidates from weaker ones.

In Q6(b), candidates generally displayed a good knowledge of the events at the end of the novel although some candidates gave too much emphasis to this part of the question and as a result, some responses were too narrative. Better candidates were able to discuss some of the key themes in their discussion of the events. In answering the second part of the question, many candidates discussed how the ending of the film is slightly different and better candidates often included an analysis of the effect of this change. Candidates mentioned the use of light and the soundtrack and referred to the cinematography in order to discuss the build up of dramatic tension at the end of the film. Better candidates provided more analysis here and substantiated points more fully, thereby producing a more convincing argument.

The Cardella text remains a popular choice and candidates generally displayed at least a reasonable knowledge of the text in their responses. Although there were still some answers which were predominantly narrative, the candidates generally showed a more analytical approach than in previous years. In Q7(a), the candidates' choice of episode varied and this often dictated the degree of success of response as a few candidates chose episodes which did not allow for a great degree of discussion and analysis. Candidates typically chose Annetta being sent to live with her relatives and her realisation of the

nature of society, as well as the sexual abuse at the hands of her uncle as the most moving episode. Better candidates placed the episode within the context of the novel rather than within the order of events and explained why they felt this to be particularly moving, often touching upon key themes in so doing. However, weaker candidates often produced a response that was lacking in focus. A few mentioned their choice of episode briefly and then went on to discuss other episodes or general themes in greater detail.

Q7(b) was more popular than Q7(a) and attracted a range of responses in terms of quality. Candidates generally mentioned the traditional, patriarchal society and the different elements of this as a reason for Annetta's statement. They discussed gender roles and inequality, as well as limited choices for women. Some candidates compared attitudes in this part of the country with the north through reference to Angelina. They also mentioned the parochial mentality of the society as well as the concept of honour as key elements. Many candidates referred to the *pantaloni* as a symbol of the lack of personal freedom for women in the society. In response to the second part of the question, candidates stated that society does not want a woman to be a 'person' as men don't want to lose control of society and they want the status quo to be maintained. Better candidates provided more sophisticated analysis in relation to the question. Some of the weaker candidates did not seem to understand the demands of the question or the concepts in the book and some discussed 21st century Britain or Italy in too much detail rather than the question in hand.

The Baricco text was new for this year's paper and proved very popular, attracting a large number of responses.

In Q8(a), candidates generally mentioned the events at the end of the novel in adequate detail although some gave too much emphasis to this part of the question and produced a response that was too narrative. Better candidates attempted the second part of the question with more success, discussing what Tito was expecting and offering an explanation of why Nina does not do what is expected of her. Candidates mentioned that she has become tired of war and death and the fact that Tito saved her initially and now she is saving him as possible explanations for her actions at the end.

In response to Q8(b), candidates were generally able to give examples of love and hatred in the work, mentioning the love in Manuel Roca's family, the relationship between Tito and Nina and the love of Salinas for his brother as examples of love, and the hatred and violence of the war as examples of hatred. Most candidates concluded that love is stronger than hatred in the work, as evidenced through character motivation and the bloodless resolution at the end. Again, better candidates were able to provide more sophisticated analysis and appropriate textual reference to consolidate their argument.

Dante's *Inferno* attracted responses from a relatively small number of candidates this year but did produce many good responses, with candidates displaying a good degree of knowledge of the *canti* studied. In Q9(a), candidates mentioned an increased interest in money and power, the role of the Church and political life as areas criticised by Dante. Better candidates were able to discuss their interpretation as to whether the *temi sociali* are more important than the *temi religiosi* and answers varied depending on the candidate's point of view. Again, appropriate textual reference and degree of analysis distinguished better candidates from weaker ones. Some of these candidates seemed to misunderstand the concepts of the work with some believing that *Inferno* is set in the 20th century or that religion or society do not play a role in *Inferno*.

Q9(b) was slightly more popular and candidates generally mentioned the journey in physical and allegorical terms. Better candidates referred to an artistic journey under the supervision of Virgil. They discussed where Dante was at the end of the *Inferno* both physically and emotionally and they differentiated between Dante *poeta* and Dante *personaggio*. Weaker candidates often omitted the allegorical aspect of the journey.

There were few answers on the Fo text this year and while there were some very good responses, the overall quality of answers was not as high as in previous years. In Q10(a), candidates were generally able to summarise the key events of this *giullarata* and most attempted to give their interpretation of the message. Some felt that using the miracles of Christ as a means towards highlighting the fallibility of man and that the *giullarata* is a comment on the human condition. In Q10(b), comic elements referred to by candidates included the language used, the grotesque and the use of irreverence. Many felt that it is not necessary to share Fo's political convictions to be able to laugh but few candidates justified their position convincingly.

The Ginzburg text remains a popular choice for candidates and responses were varied in terms of quality.

In Q11(a) many candidates managed to give examples of the importance of the family in the novel. Many candidates opted to discuss the relationship between Elsa and her mother and decided that family had a negative impact on the characters. A range of conclusions was possible and better candidates managed to justify their conclusion. Weaker candidates were often limited by their inability to draw conclusions and some discussed different characters in general terms without explicit reference to the question. Only a few candidates managed to find a positive influence of the family on the characters.

In Q11(b) most candidates managed to summarise the events at the end of the novel offering some analysis of the reasons for the failure in relationships between the characters. Most candidates argued that the ending was a pessimistic one. A few candidates managed to give a deeper analysis seeing optimism in the ending of the story and seeing the echo of the opening of the novel. Weaker candidates generally produced responses that were too narrative.

There were relatively few questions on the Moravia text this year. Q12(a) was the more popular of the questions with candidates mentioning the changes in Luca's behaviour at school as a key element in his *disubbidienza*. Many candidates mentioned Luca's refusal to co-operate, his refusal to join in the football game and the reading of Dante's *Purgatorio* as key events. Q12(b) was less popular and produced some weaker responses. Surprisingly few candidates mentioned the symptoms of Luca's illness in sufficient detail. Those who did mentioned symptoms such as fever, vomiting and fatigue as examples. Some felt that the illness is a physical manifestation of his *disubbidienza* but few candidates attempted this part of the question successfully.

Pirandello's *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* remains a popular choice although did not attract as many responses as in previous years, with Q13 (b) proving much more popular than question (a).

In Q13(a), candidates mentioned theatrical representation and Pirandello's philosophy, as well as themes such as attitudes to marriage, separation and illegitimacy but many struggled to analyse if and how these themes are still current.

In Q13(b) candidates tended to choose the *Madre*, *Padre* or the *Figliastro* as the character who most deserves our compassion and answers varied in terms of degree of analysis. Some candidates made reference to more than one character as a means of cross-referencing. Better candidates identified aspects of the characters that are worthy of compassion and mentioned key themes in their discussion of why this is the case although many weaker candidates tended to produce a response which simply told the character's story with very little analysis.

6566 Paper 1 Listening and Writing

Candidates are required to listen to authentic recorded target-language (TL) material, to retrieve and convey information by responding to a range of TL questions and by producing a summary in English.

Assessment principles

For part one, up to 15 marks are awarded positively for correct information retrieved and conveyed in response to TL questions. The TL must be unambiguously understandable but its quality does not form part of the assessment

For part two, up to 15 marks are awarded for English summary skills, showing the ability to understand the gist and details, infer ideas, select information, transfer it and communicate it concisely. Up to 5 marks are awarded for GPS.

Summary and GPS are marked using the relevant grids printed in the current Specifications.

Candidates' responses

Part one (TL questions and answers)

The vast majority of candidates scored well over half the marks available for part one. Candidates appear to have understood most of the text and when the question required identifying a straightforward piece of information it was normally well answered. But as soon as a little manipulation or interpretation was necessary the performance dropped dramatically

For marking purposes the questions were grouped 1a-e and 1 f-i. Statistics indicate 66% of correct answers for 1a-e and 81,5% for 1f-i.

1a) shows that most candidates have identified the targeted information, but failed to make the little manipulation required to answer the question.

1b) required two elements: creating new smokers, to replace those who died. Many candidates missed the logical link between the two elements but were nevertheless able to score at least one mark for retrieving one of them. Some candidates misunderstood or guessed (wrongly) that *“la pubblicità influenza la gente a smettere”*.

1c) and 1d) were answered correctly by almost all candidates, in spite of the problems with the spelling of *“giovani”*.

1e) showed a variety of answers, from able manipulation of the text to simple lifting of *“incentiva il contrabbando”*, which was a possible answer to the question. Sadly, some candidates were unsuccessful in their attempt to manipulate the text and produced answers which were not creditable (like *“incentire il contrabbando”*). *“Contrabbando”* on its own was obviously not enough.

1f) appears to have been generally well understood, although some candidates assumed that listing all the places where smoking was forbidden was more important than highlighting the contrast between where the prohibition worked and where it did not.

1g) was generally well answered, so was 1h), apart from the occasional confusion between 75 and 65.

1i): Most candidates were able to say that “*prevenzione*” was the best strategy but were not always able to explain why.

As for the quality of language, problems with gender, agreement and even spelling were not infrequent, but these did not affect the assessment unless they impaired communication.

Part two

To gain full credit in the English summary candidates had to cover all the bullet points in the question, and provide most of the details listed in the mark scheme. These however, only served as a checklist and no strict numerical correspondence between points included and marks awarded for summary was established, nor was it necessary to include all the points listed to obtain top marks. The mark awarded reflected the quality of summary skills as shown in the relevant grid.

Most candidates showed good comprehension of the text and almost all candidates had something to offer for each of the four bullet points. This, however, did not always result in good summaries. Although more candidates appear to have been better trained in summary skills, many of them were still not concise enough to include sufficient essential detail in the word limit. Some were not able to select essential information and leave out the superfluous. Others were simply verbose and lacked economy of expression (especially native Italian candidates). As a result, many candidates were not able to gain credit for bullet point 4 as they had exhausted their word limit well before they got there. Summary skills and/or standard of written English have proved to be more of a problem than the comprehension of spoken Italian.

Advice and Guidance

Teachers are strongly recommended not to neglect the development of the skills and strategies that are necessary for a successful completion of this Unit, in particular a careful reading of the question and the ability to identify and select relevant information and manipulate it in a way for it to be consequential to the question.

For part 2, as the English summary outweighs the TL question and answers, teachers and candidates alike must be aware that good summary skills and English GPS are essential in order to access the top range of marks. Many teachers appear to have devoted more effort to this end, but much remains to be done. In an ideal world, a modern language teacher would be entitled to assume that students may have developed summary skills in other areas of the curriculum, but we are all aware that this is not always the case.

6566 Paper 2 Reading and Writing

In this part of the paper candidates are set two questions. In the first they are required to read an authentic text in Italian and respond to a number of target language questions. In the second they are required to translate an English passage of approximately 80 words into the target language. It is important to bear in mind that the passage revolves around the same topic as that used for the first question.

Assessment Principles

For Q1 there are 15 marks available, 8 for answers that contain the correct factual information and 7 for quality of language. If the way in which the factual content is expressed in Italian is so poor as to render the answer incomprehensible then of course no marks can be awarded. Answers that are lifted verbatim from the text without the slightest attempt to manipulate the language gain no credit. With regards to the quality of language, it is essential that candidates make every effort to express their answers in their own words as stated in the rubric. The more language they use from both the text and the questions themselves the less they will be rewarded under this category. Obviously this does not mean that they are expected to find synonyms in every case and it is perfectly understandable that they incorporate into their answers a small percentage of the words from the passage. The remaining 10 marks for this paper are allocated to Q2, the transfer of meaning exercise. As happened last year, this short passage is divided up into 30 assessable elements and a mark is given for each correct element. The final total is then divided by 3 and rounded down or up accordingly. This system worked well again this year, proving to be much fairer to students across the ability range and ensuring greater consistency of marking. Teachers should remind their students that a limited number of words/phrases from the Italian text can be used in this transfer of meaning exercise.

Candidates' Responses

The principle underlying the first question is no different from that of the same question type used in the AS paper. Every effort was made to ensure that the questions were put in such a way as not to allow candidates to lift their answers verbatim from the text. It seems now that this message has got through to most candidates. The very good candidates usually take the opportunity to demonstrate a good variety of structures and vocabulary in their answers. The weaker candidates almost inevitably lean more heavily on the text, as they do not have the linguistic skill or command of the language to do otherwise. Candidates are awarded the mark(s) for content provided that the answer is comprehensible and unambiguous.

As already mentioned candidates are not necessarily expected to find synonyms for every word e.g. *immigrati*, *raddoppiati*, *invasione*, but of course the better candidates will replace the nouns with verbs and show the linguistic flexibility that is going to be best rewarded under the category of Quality of Language, the grid that you will find on page 40 of the Specification.

The overall response to Question 1 was satisfactory with a good number of the candidates showing the ability to extrapolate the required information from the passage and express it in their own words. The downside for a number of answers was the quality of language - the inability to use more complex structures, idiomatic language, the incorrect use of auxiliary verbs in compound tenses and, almost inevitably nowadays, spelling. Unless candidates do have a particular problem then it is rather disappointing to see the misspelling of words that are actually in the text. The questions that proved the most difficult were (b) and (f), for the reasons explained below.

- (a) A high percentage of the candidates coped well with this question.
- (b) The majority of candidates understood the comparison between immigrants and emigrants; some candidates realised the need for a comparison but failed to understand what *la via dell'esodo* meant and made the comparison with the whole of the Italian population. A very small number of candidates answered *usare la via dell'esodo*.
- (c) produced many answers in which idea of substitution was clear but very badly expressed.
- (d) Though most candidates understood the answer required, many did not know how to use the reflexive verb.
- (e) Most candidates understood that the answer was unemployment but did not express the subtler implication conveyed by *in più*. However, most candidates answered the second part of (e) correctly.
- (f) was another question which seemed very simple but that a high proportion of candidates failed to answer correctly, mainly because of their inability to manipulate the language. Apart from the candidates who simply copied the text, many answered by saying that Giuseppe Fioroni *ha vergogna* or *è arrabbiato*. Among the acceptable answers there were however some interesting adjectives to express Fioroni's feelings, like *scioccato* and *disgustato*.

Q2 As this transfer of meaning exercise is divided up into 30 assessable units it does allow the weaker candidates to score some marks, particularly for *immigrati ogni anno, in una società, che ha una cultura*, etc. It has already been mentioned that some of the words/expression appear in the passage for question 1. Most candidates are able to lift and re-use these appropriately. There are always some candidates who fail to do this, however, and write *popolazione* in stead of *popolazione*. The misspelling of words that appear in the text for question 1 is not rewarded. In fact, one of the requirements for this task is a high degree of accuracy. Thus, candidates who omitted to put the accent on *società* were penalised.

There were some excellent translations by candidates who not only adapted or lifted accurately the vocabulary that appeared in the text in Question1 but also had the ability and linguistic competence to cope well with the 'unseen' elements. The more able candidates did occasionally lose marks by trying to be over-ambitious. In their endeavour to modify the original passage unnecessarily they sometimes omitted essential words or oversimplified some of the structures. Having said this, however, the intention is to mark as positively as possible in these situations and give credit where it is due.

In the main, candidates did make an effort to write something or paraphrase as best they could rather than leave gaps. At times their version might have been acceptable but on others not, but nothing ventured nothing gained! One of the most testing bits of this exercise was the translation of 'has one of the lowest birth rates', which very few candidates translated correctly. The sentence 'these people usually need a lot of help' also caused problems for many: the use of the plural with *gente* was the most common mistake and very surprisingly a large number of candidates translated 'usually' with *spesso*. Few candidates managed to translate 'although government policy' as both the words *politica* and *governo* seemed unknown to the majority. A very large number of candidates did not gain marks for *nei prossimi trent'anni* because of the wrong preposition combined, very often, with the wrong article.

A surprising but pleasing fact was the number of candidates who translated *se non fosse* and *sia stata criticata* correctly. More than once these were correctly expressed by candidates who had previously made errors in much simpler structures. Perhaps teachers do hammer in the need to use subjunctives, sometimes a little too much, as several candidates used subjunctives whenever they found a verb. On the other hand, the conditional *diminuirebbe* was achieved by a small number, and an even smaller one managed *considerevolmente*.

Advice and Guidance

The advice and guidance for Q1 is no different from that which applies to the same question type in Unit 2 at AS. It is always worth reminding candidates that they are expected to answer the questions as much as possible in their own words, although most candidates seem to be aware of this now and make every effort to comply with this requirement. Some answers obviously require less manipulation of the text than others. Candidates should change whatever they can without going overboard and producing answers that become incomprehensible because they lack the grammatical expertise to write with any degree of accuracy. As for Q2 teachers should point out to their students that they do need to stick as closely as possible to the original passage and try and avoid translating too loosely or freely. For those teachers who may be preparing candidates for the first time here are two possible suggestions on how to approach this part of the examination: 1) find a suitable text from an original source - newspaper or magazine - that deals with the same topic that you have been working on and adapt it to your needs by changing/simplifying if necessary some of the structures and vocabulary; 2) translate into English a part of an Italian text you have been working on with your students and get them to translate it back into Italian. However, do not make the English passage an identical translation of the Italian one. Make some structural changes and alter some of the vocabulary. Inform your students that they will find some of the vocabulary in the Italian text they have been reading. This at least will serve to simulate an exam situation. This kind of activity will help students to focus both on points of grammar and vocabulary acquisition.

6566 Paper 3 Writing in Registers

All the questions set elicited some answers, with answers being well spread across the three registers. The Discursive Essays were the most popular choice, followed by the Task Based Assignments and then by Creative Writing.

A wide range of abilities was demonstrated. Linguistic standards varied as usual but they appeared to have leveled out, pointing to a general improvement.

Bearing in mind that the mark scheme awards up to 20 marks for content and 20 marks for language (divided in 5 for Accuracy, 10 for Lexis and 5 for Manipulation of Language) most candidates generally scored reasonable marks. The best answers were obviously those which fulfilled the three main criteria as indicated by the four mark grids.

The most popular question this year was q.5 about *violenza e adolescenti*, followed by the essay on cinema 9q.4) and the Task Based Assignment on *Fiera del Libro* (q.9), while the least popular ones were (predictably) the story from the photograph of *carabinieri* (q.2) followed by the essay on the European Union 9q.7), which however both scored the highest means, due to the fact that they were the choice of native speakers or adult candidates with a very good knowledge of the UE issue. The lowest means instead were for the two TBAs, which always attract weaker candidates, and the essay on cinema, due to its popularity.

Some answers were far too long, well over the word limit and thus had to be penalized.

CONTENT

Section A - Creative Writing

Creative writing is often the choice of native speakers.

Question 1 (story based on Marianna's invitation) had to be rooted in the stimulus paragraph and had to be written preferably in the third person. Candidates had to explain where Marianna had been invited to, by whom and why. Candidates also had to consider the possible consequences of this invitation, which may have involved a journey. As usual with this type of question, much was left to their imagination. The stories often involved a letter from a long lost relative or an invitation to an ex's marriage. Candidates sometimes lost marks by omitting the consequences of this invitation for Marianna. A few candidates showed an ability to write very accurately using the past historic, although it wasn't requested, and were duly rewarded.

Question 2 (photo based on *carabinieri*) had to be written in the form of a dialogue between the two *carabinieri* in the photograph and had to make some reference to the picture stimulus, including an explanation of what had taken place and their plans for future investigations. Most candidates who chose this title produced some very good dialogue between the two *carabinieri* about a robbery or perhaps a mafia story, using many good conversational expressions and displaying a good command of the spoken register. Candidates lost marks whenever they didn't use the required dialogue format.

Question 3 (article about *rissa in treno*) produced good descriptions of an episode of violence on a train caused by mobile phone abuse, although some candidates did not deal with how the episode concluded. Others failed to use the right journalistic style.

Section B - Discursive Essays

Question 4 (cinema) produced some discussions on the nature of cinema, whether it is just entertainment or also a form of culture. Key points made were that cinema shows lots of foreign films which enable people to understand the culture of other countries while the obvious benefits of entertainment value are socialising/relaxing. The deeper answers delved into propaganda and the impact on our way of thinking. Some candidates went slightly *fuori tema* discussing rather the advantages and disadvantages of cinema compared to TV or theatre or simply describing the impact of films they had seen.

For **question 5** (teenage violence) candidates produced plenty of ideas on the causes of violence amongst teenagers and solutions to the problem. The most common causes of violence that were mentioned were lack of parental support, violence on TV, videogames, rap music, boredom, history of abuse, the influence of drugs and alcohol while as a solution many mentioned better education from school and parents, more time spent with the family, government intervention. Weaker candidates at times found it harder to suggest possible solutions.

Question 6 (*diritti degli animali*) produced some very deep philosophical discussions on what constitutes a right and why it would/would not apply to animals, considering the difference between humans and animals, while surprisingly not many mentioned more “concrete” animal rights issues such as hunting/shooting, vivisection, furs, extinction, breeding, protection of animals etc. Many however talked about vegetarianism as a way to be more respectful of animal rights.

Question 7 (enlargement of the European Union) was mainly chosen by candidates who had a good grasp of this issue, often adults. The best answers considered both advantages and disadvantages to reach a stance on the question in the title. The widening of the EU was often seen as negative due to unchecked immigration, excessive bureaucracy, more unemployment and racism, a rise in crime, a loss of cultural identity, subsidizing poorer countries etc. as opposed to the advantages of free trade and easier journeys. Candidates produced some very good topic-specific vocabulary.

Section C - Task Based Assignments

Question 8 (TBA on the use of email at work) was often chosen by weaker candidates as it is perceived as an easier option thanks to the presence of a longer stimulus with some helpful vocabulary and a clearer structure with bullet points. Most mentioned some of the advantages and disadvantages of email in the work place (more efficient/less wasteful versus less interaction), while the most common measure to improve social relations was to organize social events after work.

Question 9 (TBA on *Fiera del Libro*) was very popular but the weaker candidates failed to make good use of the stimulus especially when it came to the request for further information. Many cited the Torino Card or the choice of accommodation as an example for further information. Some candidates made a good use of the stimulus by linking the visit to Turin with the study subjects they were doing at school. However weaker candidates struggled to cope with the formal letter register required by the task, as they were not familiar with formal phrases.

LANGUAGE

Accuracy

Although accuracy tended to be variable, the examiners noticed a general improvement in the overall levels of accuracy, especially in the use of the subjunctive imperfect/conditional but often alongside basic errors in more straightforward language. Wrong verb endings and agreements are still the most common errors, together with a widespread misuse of prepositions and articles.

Range of lexis

In terms of Lexis there were some instances of good topic specific vocabulary, especially in the Discursive Essays section, and obviously some excellent and varied vocabulary from native speakers, especially in Creative Writing, but overall the range was just adequate (5-6 out of 10), with many minor spelling mistakes and a few anglicisms with weaker candidates (such as “improvare”/“affettare”...). Many candidates who attempted the TBA did not know the formal register and standard letter phrases.

Manipulation of language

The examiners commented positively on the degree of attempted manipulation of language, with many candidates displaying good use of the conditional tense and hypothetical sentence structure, including the imperfect subjunctive. However, the subjunctive in general was often misused, being applied even when it was not required.

Statistics

Unit 1 Listening and Writing

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	39	35	31	27	23
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

Unit 2 Reading and Writing

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	80	56	50	45	40	35
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48

Unit 3 Prepared Oral Topic

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	45	40	35	30	25
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

Unit 4.1 Oral Discussion of Issues

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	44	39	34	30	26
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

Unit 5.1 Topics and Texts

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	56	51	46	42	38
Uniform boundary mark	90	72	63	54	45	36

Unit 6 Listening and Writing, Reading and Writing & Writing in Registers

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	100	73	66	59	53	47
Uniform boundary mark	120	96	84	72	60	48

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