

ITALIAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0535/01
Listening

Key messages

- It is not necessary for candidates to write full sentences in answer to the questions.
- Some candidates need to be more aware of the number of boxes ticked in **Question 16**. A few candidates ticked only four boxes instead of the six required.
- Some candidates seemed not to be aware that the task for **Questions 17–21** requires only the word(s) in bold to be replaced.

General comments

The range of abilities entered for the examination was wider than in the previous series. The majority of candidates performed very well. Almost all candidates answered the questions in **Part 1** correctly, and a good number scored full marks in **Part 2**. **Part 3** discriminated well between different levels of performance.

In **Part 3**, some candidates' responses lacked clarity. Answers were sometimes also longer than necessary. Where redundant material is included in answers, there is a risk that extra, distorting details will be included that highlight a lack of comprehension or invalidate an otherwise correct answer.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–8

The majority of candidates answered all questions correctly, showing comprehension of the eight short conversations/monologues. There were a few incorrect attempts to answer **Question 3**, where 'cioccolatino' was taken by some candidates to mean hot chocolate. There were also occasional problems with **Questions 2** and **5**, but most candidates performed very well.

Exercise 2 Questions 9–15

This exercise was based on a 'Good Morning' message to guests at a campsite.

Candidates mostly demonstrated a good understanding of the vocabulary items tested. A few candidates thought the problem concerned the men's toilets (**Question 11**) or did not recognise 'coppie' (**Question 14**).

Section 2

Exercise 1 Question 16

This exercise was based on statements by four young people talking about text messages. Candidates were expected to select six correct statements out of twelve. Most candidates were able to identify at least four of them. No particular pattern was identified among the incorrect answers given.

Exercise 2 Questions 17–25

This exercise was based on interviews with two young people talking about their life on Isola del Giglio.

The first interview (**Questions 17–21**) was with Alessandro, whose family moved to the island when he was 4. Candidates were asked to correct an incorrect detail in each of the answers provided. The incorrect detail was clearly indicated in bold. Many candidates gave additional information. Although this represents a rubric infringement, in many cases it was a 'harmless addition' (e.g. *piazza del paese*) and credit could still be given. However, in some cases it demonstrated a lack of comprehension and invalidated what would otherwise have been a correct answer (e.g. *piazza del piase/della chiesa/dell'isola*). Candidates should take care to only replace, word by word, what appears in bold in the statement. A number of candidates also struggled to render the word "*elettricista*" in a way that conveyed meaning.

The second interview (**Questions 22–25**) was with Franca, who was born on the island. Candidates were expected to demonstrate comprehension by providing short answers to questions in Italian. Many candidates had difficulty answering **Question 24**. Only a small proportion of candidates were able to answer that Franca is lucky because she also has a flat in Milan: a number of candidates appeared instead to target the information that came after the cue words "*sono fortunata*", trying, often unsuccessfully, to explain the advantages that came to Franca from having the flat in Milan. Candidates' difficulty answering this question has been taken into account. In answer to **Question 25** some candidates wrote about "*foglie rumorose*", and some provided spellings of *discoteche* which did not communicate meaning and could not receive credit.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 26–31

This exercise was based on the discussion between Anna and Marco on the impact of recession on what people eat. The format of the questions was multiple choice, with four written options.

Candidates at the lower end of the ability range often provided answers seemingly at random. In general, however, candidates performed well in this exercise. Some candidates answered **Question 27** incorrectly.

Exercise 2 Questions 33–42

This final exercise was based on an interview with Susanna, offering young people advice on fashion. This is the most challenging exercise in the paper, as the text is more complex than in the preceding exercises. Most candidates attempted the questions.

In weaker performances, lack of comprehension or lack of clarity of responses tended to be the problem. Occasionally answers were invalidated by adding redundant material (e.g. **Question 36** '*qualcosa che non passa di moda e un vestitino nero*'). Candidates should be encouraged to read the questions carefully and to avoid adding extra material not asked for by the questions, which could invalidate their responses.

ITALIAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0535/02
Reading

Key messages

It is advisable for candidates to:

- make sure they have answered every part of every question;
- keep their answers brief and focused, particularly in Section 3 – where only a single line space is provided, a short answer is expected;
- allow time to check their answers for accuracy.

General comments

In general, candidates seemed well-prepared for the examination and appeared to approach the questions with confidence.

The ability range of the candidates entered for this year's examination was mixed but generally high.

Performance was mostly very good. Almost all candidates attempted all questions in the paper.

The standard of presentation and legibility was generally good. Linguistic accuracy of the responses was variable, but, in accordance with the marking criteria, responses received credit as long as comprehension was demonstrated and the meaning was conveyed clearly and without ambiguity.

Comments on specific questions

Prima parte

Esercizio 1 Domande 1–5

Most candidates scored very well in this section, demonstrating familiarity with the items of vocabulary tested. **Question 2**, *mele*, challenged some candidates, who chose to opt for a picture of a steak instead of apples. A small number of candidates in **Question 3** incorrectly chose bananas (*frutti di mare*), most likely due to *frutti* in the question. Where candidates did not score the mark for **Question 4** it was usually because they chose the church instead of the gym (*ci vediamo davanti alla palestra*).

Esercizio 2 Domande 6–10

Questions 6, 7, 8 and 10 were answered almost universally correctly. **Question 9** (*Barbara gioca a scacchi*) challenged some candidates who, unfamiliar with the vocabulary being tested, mostly opted for the picture of someone playing the flute (instead of chess).

Esercizio 3 Domande 11–15

Nearly all candidates performed well in this exercise, locating the correct answers from the multiple choice options.

Seconda parte

Esercizio 1 Domande 16–20

In this exercise, candidates were asked to read an advert for a summer drawing/art course, in which details are given about the course, its location and the accommodation that will be provided. Five statements with gaps that are based on the text then follow and candidates are asked to choose the correct word from the ten options provided. Candidates have to understand the actual content of the text and then transfer their understanding to the gap-fill statements by choosing the word that gives the correct meaning, as well as fitting in grammatically.

The majority of candidates performed well in this exercise. *Primavera* (instead of the correct answer, *estate*) was occasionally given in **Question 16**, and likewise *il francese* in place of *l'italiano* for **Question 19**. A few candidates mistakenly wrote *feste* as the response for **Question 20**, instead of *gite*. Where mistakes occurred in this exercise more generally, it was frequently by answering with *costiera* or *locali* (in **Question 17** and **Question 18**, respectively, but these items could also be found as incorrect candidate responses to other questions in the exercise).

Esercizio 2 Domande 21–29

Exercise 2 was based on an email from Marco to his friend, Maria, in which he discusses his school holidays. This was followed by questions that tested the candidates' comprehension of the email.

Generally, all questions in this exercise were well-attempted, with most candidates demonstrating understanding of the details of Marco's holidays. In **Question 24** (*Perché Marco è andato a letto con le scarpe?*), a small number of candidates supplemented their answers with incorrect additional material (for example, *...e ha dimenticato*), which consequently invalidated their answers.

Question 29 proved more problematic for some candidates due to the omission of *agli adolescenti* or equivalent from the answer (*L'insegnante non sa come insegnare agli adolescenti*).

Terza parte

In Section 3, candidates are asked to demonstrate a more precise understanding of Italian. Responses needed to be focussed specifically on the questions asked. Additional material copied from the text may obscure understanding and consequently invalidate an otherwise correct answer.

Esercizio 1 Domande 30–34

In **Questions 30 to 34**, candidates were asked to read an interview and indicate whether each of the statements that followed were true or false and, where false, correct the statement according to the text.

A good number of candidates correctly chose the 3 false and the 2 true statements. Where candidates chose the incorrect true/false statements and therefore ticked the wrong box, it was usually in **Questions 32** and **33**.

Whereas **Question 30** was almost universally successfully corrected to *Gianni gioca a calcio da otto anni*, **Question 33** proved less straightforward for some. A significant number of candidates did not score the mark here because they included irrelevant material (*incontra diversa gente*) in their response. Those who correctly identified **Question 34** as *falso* almost always provided a successful response/statement.

There were very few instances where candidates attempted to correct a statement by merely rendering it in the negative, but where this did happen, no credit was given.

Esercizio 2 Domande 35–40

In **Exercise 2**, candidates were asked to read a text, and then respond in Italian to the questions that followed, all based on Elena, a journalist who writes her own blog for young people.

Almost all candidates were able to give a correct response to **Question 35**. **Question 36** was answered incorrectly by some candidates who gave *all'università / per un giornale locale* instead of *a scuola*.

Some candidates did not score the mark for **Question 37** because they merely offered *perché era stanca / perché era stanca di non avere libertà*, rather than the full response and its consequent significance (*perché era stanca di non avere libertà di scelta su cosa scrivere*).

Question 38 was mostly answered successfully, although a number of candidates demonstrated a lack of comprehension by targeting the wrong sentence of the text, and described the style of the blog as *socievole* instead of *informale*. *Socievole* was the adjective used earlier in the paragraph to describe Elena's character.

Question 39 was broadly answered well in both parts, and in **Question 40**, most candidates were able to locate and discern the required response (*scrivere nel suo blog cosa succede nel mondo in maniera onesta*).

ITALIAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0535/03
Speaking

Key messages

- It is essential that Examiners read the Teacher's Notes booklet prior to conducting the examination in order to familiarise themselves with the format and the requirements of the mark scheme.
- The Role play cues, as written in the Teacher's Notes booklet, should be followed carefully.
- Examiners should ensure that they ask questions to elicit past, present and future tenses in **both** conversation sections.

General comments

Overall, candidates performed well and the Examiners conducted the examinations according to the Teacher's Notes booklet. In the Role plays, the majority of Examiners followed the printed cues carefully, however in some cases Examiners improvised the scenarios and modified the cues, adding difficulty and missing out tasks. In order to ensure that the level of difficulty of the task remains the same for all candidates, Examiners should not miss out tasks or change the cues provided in the Teachers' Notes booklets. In the conversation tests the majority of Examiners gave the candidates the opportunity to show their best and questions responded naturally to the candidate's responses and were pitched at the right level. Candidates should be given the opportunity to answer both straightforward and unexpected questions. To allow candidates the opportunity to achieve a mark of above 6 on scale (b), linguistic content, Examiners must ask questions that elicit past and future tenses in both conversation sections.

Clerical checks

The addition of marks and the transfer to the MS1 mark sheet/computer print out were done well and there were only isolated errors.

Cover sheet for moderation sample

The cover sheet for the moderation sample, which can be found at the back of the teachers' notes booklet, provides a checklist to ensure that all required examination materials and documentation are correctly completed and submitted. Whilst the majority of Centres included it, a few Centres did not and are reminded of its importance.

Sample size

Centres submitted a correct sample and Centres with more than one Examiner included recordings from each. The requirements for selecting the sample are set out in the Teacher's Notes booklet.

Recording quality and presentation of samples

The recording quality was generally good and both the Examiner and the candidate were clear and audible. In isolated cases the position of the microphone favoured the Examiner. A test should be carried out prior to the examination to check recording quality.

Internal moderation in Centre

Those Centres which, having a large numbers of candidates, had requested and been given permission to use more than one Examiner, followed the procedures set out in the Cambridge guidelines well. Centres had put measures in place to ensure consistency across the Centre and provided a sample that included examinations conducted by each Examiner.

Duration of tests/missing elements

Most Centres carefully followed the timings for each section of the examination, as stipulated in the Teacher's Notes booklet. Centres are reminded that each conversation section should last 5 minutes.

Application of the mark scheme

The majority of Examiners applied the mark scheme consistently and appropriately. Where it was necessary to make an adjustment to marks, the most frequent reasons were as follows:

- marks had been awarded for Role play tasks that were omitted or only partially completed
- marking at the highest end of the ability range had been too severe
- candidates had not been given the opportunity to use both past and future tenses in both conversation sections.

In the Role play tasks, if a verb is used it must be correctly conjugated to merit 3 marks. In a two-part task, if only one part is completed a maximum mark of 1 can be awarded.

Comments on specific questions

Role plays

The Examiner should be familiar with the Role play scenarios in advance and the candidates should be given 15 minutes to prepare the Role play tasks prior to the examination. Examiners should ensure that the candidates feel at ease and follow the printed cues carefully. The order of the tasks should not be changed and additional tasks should not be added. Where a task is made up of 2 parts, both must be completed otherwise a maximum of 1 mark can be awarded. This includes greeting, giving thanks and reacting. A reaction must take the form of an expression, for example, *Che bello*. It is often possible to complete a task without a verb and with short utterances and achieve 3 marks. If a verb is used it must be correctly conjugated otherwise a maximum of 2 marks can be awarded. In Role play A the candidate is required to respond to a question by selecting one of two options and they should be trained to listen carefully to the cues. In Role play B there is an unexpected question and candidates must demonstrate understanding and provide an appropriate response. A short utterance is again adequate to merit 3 marks. Candidates should prepare the Role plays carefully and be ready to ensure that they give the required number of details. If a question is required the candidate must ensure that an appropriate question form is used and not make a statement. If a candidate does not understand a cue, it is appropriate for the Examiner to repeat it. If a candidate misses out a task, the Examiner should guide the candidate to completing it.

A Role plays

Most candidates had been well prepared for the A Role plays and used the cues well to complete the tasks. The A Role play is designed to be easier than the B Role play. In general, Examiners made candidates feel at ease in this part of the test. In some instances Examiners changed or omitted tasks, which is to be avoided.

B Role plays

The B Role plays include both unexpected questions and the requirement to use a different tense. Most Centres followed the cues carefully and gave the candidates the opportunity to gain marks for each task.

Topic presentation and discussion

Candidates have the opportunity to present their chosen topic for up to two minutes. If the candidate talks beyond the two minutes, the Examiner should interrupt with a suitable question to initiate a conversation. Stronger candidates used the presentation to demonstrate knowledge of a good range of vocabulary and grammatical structures.

Candidates chose a range of different topics that covered different aspects of their life including their town, travel and pastimes. Candidates at the highest end of the ability range sometimes chose more demanding topics – this is not necessary to achieve full marks.

The conversation that follows the presentation should be spontaneous and develop naturally as the candidate responds. Examiners should focus on questions about the candidate's own experience as they are more accessible and allow candidates to demonstrate the range of language required at this level. It is essential that Examiners ask questions to elicit both past and future tenses; otherwise a candidate's mark is limited to 6 on scale **(b)**, linguistic content.

The strongest candidates could respond confidently to both straightforward and unexpected questions, justifying and explaining routinely. They used both past and future tenses confidently and used a range of vocabulary appropriate to their chosen topic.

The topic presentation and discussion combined should last approximately five minutes. If the section is too short, candidates may not be able to demonstrate the full range of language to maximise their mark. If the section is too long, the candidate may be overstretched.

It is important that the Examiner alerts the candidate to the transition to the general conversation, for example by using a phrase such as 'ora passiamo alla conversazione generale'. This supports the candidate and ensures a clear division for the purposes of the moderation of the Centre's marking.

General conversation

The general conversation gives the candidate the opportunity to answer questions on 2 or 3 additional topics. A good range of topics from the IGCSE syllabus was covered and included family life and Schools. In a few cases the Examiner asked questions that were too abstract or too complicated for this level. Centres are reminded of the need for a candidate to use both past and future tenses to access a mark of 6 or above on scale **(b)**, linguistic content and Examiners should ensure that they ask a number of questions to elicit each tense.

This section of the exam should last for approximately 5 minutes as stipulated in the Teacher's Notes booklet. Examinations that are too short may not give the candidate an opportunity to use the range of language required to score highly.

The strongest candidates used a range of tenses and grammatical structures and varied their vocabulary. They routinely gave opinions with justifications and developed their responses confidently.

ITALIAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0535/04
Writing

Key messages

- Candidates should read the questions carefully.
- In **Question 2** and **Question 3** candidates should address each bullet point clearly and explicitly.
- Candidates should take care to avoid introducing extraneous or irrelevant material into their answers.
- Candidates should check their work carefully.
- Candidates should take care to ensure their handwriting is legible.

General comments

The overall standard of the responses on this paper was high. Many candidates showed a very encouraging command of the language, expressing themselves fluently and using a variety of more sophisticated vocabulary and structures. Candidates across the ability range attempted the paper very well. In less successful performances, candidates' answers were sometimes too short to allow coverage of the different bullet points, which limited their scope to gain marks for content.

Some very weak performances were seen from candidates at the lowest end of the ability range, with candidates demonstrating an uncertain grasp of basic grammar and providing very little accurate language. There were also many instances of communication being limited due to other-language interference, with a number of candidates making heavy use of Spanish vocabulary items or structures. Accuracy of spelling was also a frequent area of weakness even among relatively strong candidates.

It is worth reminding candidates that on **Question 3**, variety of language – both verbs and other grammatical structures – is rewarded. Some candidates relied on a narrow range of repeated vocabulary and structures.

Comments on specific questions

QUESTION 1: list of things the candidate might see in city centre

The majority of candidates were able to list five words which were recognisable as things that might be seen in a city centre; a certain amount of leeway was granted here in terms of accuracy of spelling and gender (e.g. accepting a k for a c in *supermercato*) and crediting 'lookalike' and 'sound-alike' words (e.g. cafe for *caffè*). There was a generous range of nouns available for marks in this exercise. A few candidates nevertheless included items that lacked specificity to the context (e.g. *sole*, *mare*) and were not considered worthy of credit. However, the vast majority of candidates successfully listed public spaces, buildings or other amenities that would be seen in a city centre.

QUESTION 2: description of candidate's family

There were many detailed answers here which achieved full marks for communication. Candidates seemed at ease especially with bullet point 1 (writing about any relevant factual detail or opinion about family). Unfortunately, many candidates focused too much on this bullet point and because of this they were not able to give an full answer to some of the others. Not all candidates successfully tackled bullet points 2 and 3 as they sometimes seemed to have difficulty differentiating between what they like to do with their family and whether they get along with their family. A number of answers did not mention what the candidate likes to do with his/her family but what another member of the family likes to do. Most candidates scored well in terms of language.

QUESTION 3(a): a party

This was the most popular choice. Most responses were fluent and detailed, and most candidates followed the bullet points closely. Some candidates followed very closely the recommended word limit, writing just enough to allow themselves to score full marks for content and verb use. Others seemed to write well beyond the requirements. Most of the responses to the first bullet point were about a birthday party. There were just a few candidates who took an alternative approach – usually because they interpreted the word *festà* not just as a party or a feast day, but as a festival or religious/traditional festivity (e.g. *la befana*, Natale, Halloween). The stronger candidates expressed interesting opinions about which type of party they prefer and why, but many candidates simply wrote “preferisco questo tipo di feste” “perché è divertente”. Bullet point 5 was not answered by all candidates as some omitted to say what they would *do* at the next party, and just wrote where they would go. Some candidates made successful use of a range of accurately formed verbs and also made ambitious use of more complex structures.

QUESTION 3(b): public transport

This was the second most popular choice, and some candidates seemed to have at their disposal a particularly wide and complex range of vocabulary about the environment. Candidates dealt very well on the whole with the first bullet point, with most candidates saying they preferred public modes of transport such as trains and buses. Those who answered “*la macchina*” sometimes repeated themselves when they answered bullet point 4. Responses to the second and third bullet point were in some cases limited by candidates’ lack of fluency or grammatical accuracy. Nevertheless, almost all managed to say when was the last time they used public transport. A number of candidates, however, overlooked the follow-up bullet point 3 and did not offer an opinion about this. For the final bullet point, many candidates had a lot to say about means of transport in the future (e.g. *le macchine voleranno, i mezzi di trasporto saranno più ecologici*). Weaker candidates with more limited vocabulary nevertheless often attempted the bullet point, for example *Gli autobus saranno i trasporti del futuro*.

QUESTION 3(c): a trip that went badly

This was the least popular choice in this section, but performance was generally very strong. There were some interesting, detailed and quite original responses to this more open-ended narrative task. A few candidates scored less well in terms of communication marks because they did not get around to tackling the third or fourth bullet point. Some candidates found bullet point 4 relatively challenging. Some candidates did not write in the first person where appropriate, or were inconsistent in their use of the first person.