**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2011**

Italian **46301F/H**

(Specification 4630)

Unit 1: Listening

Report on the Examination

General Comments

This was the first Italian examination for the new GCSE specification and is worth 20% of the qualification. The papers provided a variety of question types, some of which were of a more challenging nature than others, and included full coverage of the specification contexts. All questions, on both the Foundation and Higher Tier papers, required either non-verbal answers, or answers in English.

The 2011 candidature included the whole ability range and many students performed well, reflecting very positively the hard work that is carried out in centres. It is hoped that, through the comments that follow on individual questions and answers, centres will be assisted in their on-going preparation of students for future GCSE examinations.

It was pleasing to note that the majority of students gave their answers, as requested, in black pen. Students do need to be reminded, however, that their answers should be very clearly written and that all crossings out should be very obvious. It would be advisable to encourage students to cross out an incorrect answer, rather than try to alter it to a different letter, as this often leaves an unclear answer which cannot then be credited. Marks can be occasionally lost through the careless and/or unclear formation of letters. Equally important is the observation of rubrics. Occasionally students did themselves a disservice by, for example, answering in Italian instead of English or by indicating more than one choice of answer where only one is required.

Foundation Tier

Question 1
There was a very encouraging response to the opening question, where the vast majority of students showed that they were familiar with the vocabulary linked to the café scenario.

Question 2
This, too, was clearly accessible to students, although section (a), testing *una cravatta*, proved to be a little more demanding than the other responses.

Question 3
Students showed that they were familiar with the key vocabulary in the question, namely free time activities. Responses were very good throughout all three sections.

Question 4
Section (d), where students needed to understand *questa carta*, proved to be the most challenging part of this question, with just over half of all students giving a correct answer. Responses to the other sections were very good, particularly (c), which tested *i pantaloni e le maglie*.

Question 5

All three sections of this question were answered very well by the vast majority of students.

Question 6

This question was a little more demanding, requiring both an opinion and a reason for that particular opinion, in relation to places in the local area. It was well answered however, with the majority of students scoring both of the available marks and only a very small percentage scoring no marks at all.

Question 7

There were very good responses to two of the sections in this question, (a) and (c), which required an understanding of the key expressions *prepara da mangiare* and *prendere l'autobus.* Less well known were the expressions in sections (d), *fa la doccia*, and, in particular, (b), *si sveglia*.

Question 8

This was the only question on the Foundation paper in which students had to give short answers in English. Section (a) (i), *a headache*, was very well answered, but in (a) (ii), only 12% of the students recognised *venerdì* as *Friday*.

AQA has noted that in this question although all the vocabulary items tested were listed in the Specification, the context in which the scenario was couched was not appropriate to the new Specification. In future examinations although these vocabulary items may be tested again, they will not appear in this context.

Question 9

The first three sections of this question were well answered, although (b), where a link had to be made between *suonare uno strumento/scrivere canzoni* and the school subject, *music*, was less frequently correct. Less than half the students were able to link *il passato* to *history* in section (d).

Question 10

This final question on the Foundation paper proved to be the most challenging, with fewer than half of the students selecting all three correct statements.

Higher Tier

Question 1

This was the first of the questions common to both tiers and students coped with it very well. All sections were more successful at this level than at Foundation Tier. Once again, however, section (b), *si sveglia*, was the least well known activity, but this time 75% of the students gave a correct response.

Question 2

This question, too, was much more successful at Higher Tier than at Foundation. Sections (a)(i) and (b) were very well answered, but surprisingly, less than half of the students recognised *venerdì* as *Friday*. Even though the question clearly asked *On which day …?*, a large number of students used other information from the text to formulate their answer e.g. *almost a week ago/when she got home from school*, with no reference to *Friday* at all.

AQA has noted that in this question although all the vocabulary items tested were listed in the Specification, the context in which the scenario was couched was not appropriate to the new Specification. In future examinations although these vocabulary items may be tested again, they will not appear in this context.

Question 3

As at Foundation Tier, the least successful section of this question was section (d), with its reference to *il passato*. The first three sections of the question were all equally well answered.

Question 4

In this, the last of the cross-over questions, there was far greater success at Higher Tier than at Foundation. Here, over 80% of the students selected the three correct statements. Where only two correct ones were selected, it was often in selecting A, instead of B, that the mark was lost.

Question 5

This question was very well answered, with over 80% of students gaining full marks.

Question 6

By far the most frequently correct answer in this question was section (b), where the link was clearly made between *ricca, soldi* and icon B. The least well answered was section (a), where students chose icon C having heard *studiare*, without registering the fact that Sergio said he was tired of studying and hoped to find work abroad, thus providing the correct answer, E.

Question 7

There was a pleasing response to this question, particularly in section (c), where almost all students chose the correct job, linking *traffico* and *guidare* to the *lorry driver*. The least successful section was (a), where *shop assistant* was the correct job.

Question 8

Again, this question was very successful, with students clearly listening through to the very end of each person's account of his/her lifestyle, before deciding whether it was healthy, unhealthy, or a mixture of both.

Question 9

This question proved to be very challenging to many of the students. Often, two or more of the activities were totally correct, but the appropriate tense not recognised. What Gianni did in the past was the most successful time frame, but, unfortunately, many students were unable to score here.

AQA has noted that in this question although all the vocabulary items tested were listed in the Specification, the context in which the scenario was couched was not appropriate to the new Specification. In future examinations although these vocabulary items may be tested again, they will not appear in this context.

Question 10

There were two very good responses here, in sections (b) and (c), where students had clearly listened out well for key items of vocabulary that would lead them to the correct answer. Section (a) was the least well answered, with *graffiti* often being selected as the appropriate environmental issue, rather than *deforestation*.

Question 11

Apart from Question 2, this was the only time when students were required to give answers in English, in most cases more than just single word responses.

Section (a) was the most successful, although many gave *England* or *England and France* as their answer.

In section (b), there were lots of references to *Christmas*, possibly as a result of hearing that Elisa's mother *è nata lì*. There were also many incorrect references to visiting *parents*, rather than *family/relatives* etc.

In section (c), *car* was a very popular alternative to *plane/flying* and often the wrong person was identified as being car sick in section (d).

Section (e) brought many incorrect references to hotels being *complete* and section (f), which asked for the **exact** location of the flat, required a much more specific answer than simply *at the sea-side* etc.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the **Results statistics** page of the AQA Website.

Convert raw or scaled marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion.