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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Italian (1IN0) Paper 4H: Writing

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Introduction

This is the first year of the new specification. Previously this component was assessed via Controlled Assessment and now the new specification is assessed by an examination at the end of the course of study.

Each question is set in a context drawn from the themes and topics. The assessment tasks feature general content that is familiar and accessible to all students. Students are required to produce responses of varying lengths and types to express facts, ideas and opinions in Italian. The length of each response required and complexity of language increases across the paper. Recommended word counts are specified for each question. Students will not be penalised for writing more or fewer words than recommended in the word count or for going beyond the mandatory bullet points. All questions are marked against the assessment criteria as published in the current specification. The instructions to students are all in Italian. The use of dictionaries is not permitted.

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

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

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

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

Question 1 (a)

Q1(a) required students to write an email to a friend about their summer holidays. They had to address the four bullet points and produce between 80-90 words in Italian. The question had to be answered using past, present and future time frames.

The majority of the students found this question very accessible. The first bullet point caused few problems, though a few students wrote about what they do during their summer holidays rather than what they like to do. The second and third bullet points, about what they did last summer and the importance of summer holidays, enabled the best students to move away from pre-learned material to manipulation of their own linguistic knowledge in order to express more complex ideas. For the final point, most students were able to write about their future plans using either the future tense or other structures, such as *vorrei* + infinitive. Overall there was a generally good appreciation of tense differences, and majority of the students addressed all bullet points with relevance and expansion.

This is clearly a topic that students had prepared well before the exam.

Question 1 (b)

Q1(b) required students to write an informal email about their best friend. They had to address the four bullet points and produce between 80-90 words in Italian.

At Higher level this question was less popular than Q1(a).

Again, this was generally answered well by students and all bullet points were generally attempted. There was still some confusion with verbs, e.g. *è 16 anni* and adjectival agreement was not always accurate. Students were better able to express ideas and opinions more elaborately and successfully than those who did this question on Foundation, as is to be expected.

Question 2 (a)

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

Most students were able to cope with the demands of this question at Higher level and all bullet points were generally answered well. However, many students did not say what they use social media for and instead gave a generic answer about what people do on social media. While not irrelevant, these students did not meet the exact requirements of the bullet point and lost marks accordingly.

Most were able to give their opinion about social media, stating that it is good for many reasons, such as staying in contact with friends and family and friends out what is going on in the world. In terms of a problem they have had with social media, many discussed the problems with social media in general, rather than a problem they have had, and hence, as in the first bullet point, they did not fulfil the exact requirements of the question and lost credit as a result. Students were able to explain the advantages and disadvantages of social media very well. Some students, however, wrote extensively about social media in general, without drawing on their own experience as the task required. Able students and mother-tongue students produced excellent work using a variety of tenses and refined expressions such as *“mostrano degli ideali di bellezza totalmente falsi”*, *“richieste d’amicizia di persone affidabili”* or *“le reti sociali sono una parte integrante della nostra vita quotidiana”*.

This is clearly a topic that many centres have prepared students for.

Question 2 (b)

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

Again, this was generally well-answered by students. Most were able to give details of the concert and their opinion about it. Some did, however, misunderstand the question and gave general details about what a concert is and what they think of concerts in general and this is not what they were being asked to do. Most were able to state that concerts are important for young people as they give them a chance to have a break from studying and

to meet new people, for example. Most were also able to communicate details about a concert they would like to go to in the future.

A variety of concerts were described (Andrea Bocelli, Ariana Grande, Fedez, etc.) with more able students producing excellent work with a wide variety of tenses and vocabulary making their pieces very interesting to read (“*svagarsi*”, “*è stato pazzesco*”, “*sembrava di essere in un posto surreale*”, “*canzoni d’amore scritte con anima e cuore*”).

Question 3

Q3 required students to translate a short passage of four sentences from English into Italian. The passage was based around the topic of work and future aspirations.

This was a new question type, and many students found this challenging, although most students were able to translate at least some of the passage successfully. Some did struggle with items of vocabulary such as ‘newspaper’ and some struggled to correctly translate ‘at the weekend’. Some students left blanks where they did not know a word or phrase and they would be strongly advised to attempt all of the passage as blank spaces do not result in marks.

Based on their performance on this paper, students are offered the following advice:

- Read every question on the exam paper before you begin to write your answers.
- Look very carefully at the whole question, including the rubric, to make sure that you fully understand what you are being asked to do.
- Answer each of the bullet points in order.
- Write a separate paragraph for each bullet point, as this will help you check that you have covered all of them in detail
- Leave enough time to check your work carefully at the end of the exam.
- Try and use a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary to avoid repetition.
- Write your answers on the correct pages of the answer booklet. If you find that you have written, for example, part of Q2(b) on the page for Q2(a), then please write a brief note so that the examiner (who only sees one question at a time) is aware of this and can take the necessary action.
- In Q3, try and translate every word, including what might appear minor words.
- Ensure that your handwriting is as neat as possible.