ITALIAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0679/01
Listening

Key Messages

- Candidates performed very well in this examination.

- Candidates were rewarded for unambiguous communication in their answers.

- Candidates should be aware that redundant material will not be rewarded if the meaning is not clear

- Centres need to ensure candidates are familiar with the requirements of the syllabus and read the questions carefully.

General comments

Overall, many candidates demonstrated an excellent understanding of spoken Italian. As the quality of a candidate's written Italian is not being assessed in this examination, he or she merely needs to communicate the answer to a sympathetic native speaker/ Examiner in the target language to gain the mark. It is important, nevertheless, in the written answers to address the question being asked, so it is essential that all candidates are familiar with the question words in order to select the correct information for their answer. The answers required are mostly very short, so it seems reasonable to ask that candidates make an effort to write legibly and, in the tasks where they are required to tick boxes, to make their intentions clear.

The paper was expected to discriminate between levels of performances, but candidates generally coped well with the entire range.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1

Questions 1-8

Most candidates performed well in this introductory series of questions. The few incorrect answers centred mainly around the time (**Question 5**), *portafoglio* (**Question 7**) and the *bibita* (**Question 8**).

Exercise 2

Questions 9-16

This exercise was based on a longer passage, spoken by a tour guide on a coach trip to a lake.

Candidates proved they recognised the vocabulary relating to travel and tourism. A minority of candidates thought that *pullman* (**Question 16**) was a train and were not aware that the distance of Isola Grande from the shore is 400 metres (**Question 11**).

PAPA CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education
0679 Italian (Foreign Language) June 2014
Principal Examiner Report for Teachers

Section 2

Exercise 1

Question 17

Candidates could work towards improving their understanding of the requirements of this question. The exercise was based on statements by four young people talking about their holidays, with candidates expected to select 6 correct statements out of 12. Almost all candidates were able to select at least one correct statement for each of the young people, but a number of candidates thought that Christian would be camping on the beach. In spite of this, the majority of candidates scored all marks available.

Exercise 2

Questions 18-26

This exercise was based on the interviews with two young musicians.

In the first interview (18-22) candidates were asked to correct an incorrect detail in each of the sentences provided. The incorrect detail was clearly indicated.

In **Question 18** *sedici* had to be replaced with *diciotto.* Candidates generally provided the correct answer, albeit with a variety of spellings. Likewise for **Question 19**, where *classica* was to be replaced with *elettrica (*or more often *electrica).* **Question 20** and **22** were straightforward. **Question 21** was a challenge for candidates who were not sure how to make the transition from first and third person- *Alessia* or *lei* were the expected answers. Some candidates wrote " *io"* with or without *Alessia* in brackets. Where candidates had problems in articulating the answer but had understood the targeted information, they were given the benefit of the doubt and their answer was credited, where possible.

The second interview (**Questions 23-26**) was with another young musician. Candidates were expected to demonstrate comprehension by providing short answers to questions in Italian. Candidates coped with these questions very well. The main challenge came with how to render *"incontrare"* and some attempts were incomprehensible, therefore not creditable.

Section 3

Exercise 1

Questions 27-32

This exercise was based on an interview with Massimo, who started his own business as a dog carer. The format of the questions was multiple choice, with four written options. Candidates are advised to read all the options carefully and be ready to identify the correct answers when they hear the recording.

Candidates answered all the questions here well. A handful of candidates indicated that Massimo had found his clients through a website instead of by distributing leaflets (**Question 29**). A small number of candidates found **Questions 31** and **32** difficult.

Exercise 2

Questions 33-42

This final exercise was based on an interview with Simona, a female footballer. This was the most challenging set of questions of the paper and candidates were expected to write their answers in Italian. Almost all candidates attempted to answer all questions, many of them successfully. Some marks were lost where candidates found it difficult to word their answers clearly.

Many candidates wrote that football is for "*masci"* instead of "*maschi"* in (**Question 34**), and in **Question 35** some wrote "*si incoraggiano"* instead of "*la incoraggiano"*. Where possible, candidates were credited here. Unclear attempts at spelling "*incoraggiano"* were rejected.

Question 36 proved to be the most challenging question for candidates. The expected answer was "*è il suo sogno*". A few candidates wrote *"suono",* which cannot be accepted as it means something else. Others avoided it by writing "*le piacerebbe"* or *"vorrebbe"*, which were also accepted, and even "*vuole*" was given the benefit of the doubt. However, candidates needed to identify the targeted information and wrote that Simona would carry on practising hard, rather than the fact that playing in *serie A* was her dream.

In answer to **Question 38** some candidates wrote that male football *"è più fisico"* (or more often *"physico"*), which could not be accepted.

In **Question 39** marks were lost either because of lack of details e.g. not mentioning leg muscles, or over difficulties in providing a recognisable rendition of *"sviluppare".* Some candidates avoided it and wrote *"per i muscoli delle gambe",* which was good enough to gain the mark.

In **Question 40** almost all candidates opted for the first of the acceptable answers according to the mark scheme and tried to say that television should show (more) female football. Unsuccessful attempts included the difficulty in finding a way to express "show", the confusion between *"partite"* and *"partiti"* and the use of *"stesso"* instead of *"spesso"*. *"Partiti"* was rejected when used tout court, but was accepted when clarified by the addition of *"di calcio femminile".* The idea of *"più spesso"* was not essential to gain the mark but candidates who wrote *"più stesso"* invalidated an otherwise correct answer.

The remaining two questions in this exercise were answered well by almost all candidates.

ITALIAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

<table>
<tr><td>Paper 0679/02
Reading and Directed Writing</td></tr>
</table>

Key Messages

Answers are marked on the basis of communication and comprehension.

Candidates performed best where their answers were brief and focused. Providing additional material can sometimes introduce irrelevant information which may invalidate an otherwise correct answer. Indiscriminate lifting from the text should be discouraged and candidates should seek to demonstrate that they have understood the question and are able to locate and communicate the correct answer.

The requirement for answers to be given in Italian should encourage future candidates of all abilities. Less able candidates appeared to locate answers readily in instances where it may be a challenge to give an acceptable English translation.

Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the style of the paper and its various sections and exercises *Prima parte,* **Esercizio 4** in particular demonstrated the need for candidates to consider carefully what was required in order to gain the available marks.

All sections should be attempted and candidates should, where possible, ensure that they leave themselves time to check that they have both completed all questions and checked their answers for accuracy.

General Comments

Given that this was the first year of examination for this syllabus, candidates seemed mostly well-prepared and appeared to approach the questions with confidence. The ability level of the candidates who entered for this paper was generally very high.

The requirement for answers to be given in Italian has the potential to aid candidates, as mentioned in the key messages section. Therefore, answering in Italian should encourage, rather than discourage, candidates of lower ability from entering for this IGCSE.

The accessibility of the paper and its texts was evident both by the high marks scored by many candidates and also by the fact that almost all candidates attempted the full set of questions. However, levels of grammatical accuracy were variable, with verbs, genders, possessives and pronouns all providing difficulties for many candidates.

A significant proportion of candidates did not approach the first of the directed writing sections (**Esercizio 4**) correctly and, as a result, dropped marks needlessly. This may have been an oversight by these candidates in the context of operating in examination conditions and/or a result of the fact that these candidates may not have familiarised themselves with the requirements of the question paper beforehand.

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.

Esercizio 2 Domande 6-10

Questions **6, 7** and **10** were answered almost universally correctly, with **Questions 8** and **9** causing problems. There appeared to be a significant number of candidates for whom the words *macelleria*, *pasticceria* and *parrucchiere* were problematic.

Esercizio 3 Domande 11-15

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

Esercizio 4 Domanda 16

In this exercise, candidates were asked to write an email to an Italian friend, mentioning:

(a)   what pet they have

(b)   what they like to eat

(c)   where they are going this evening

Next to each of the tasks was a picture (a cat, an ice cream, and a scene in a nightclub, respectively). Candidates were required to respond to each of the tasks with the information that was included in these pictures, writing "*ho un gatto; mi piace mangiare il gelato; stasera vado in discoteca/a ballare*", for example. A significant proportion of candidates did not give the information that was required, instead mentioning other pets that they have, other food that they like, and another activity that they were going to do that evening. There were 5 marks available; 3 for Communication and 2 for Appropriateness of Language. Language marks could only be awarded for the parts of the candidate's work for which a communication mark had been awarded. Therefore, there were a good number of instances where able candidates did not score any marks for this exercise because they did not approach the task correctly. This caused candidates to lose marks needlessly. Candidates should ensure that, in the future, they are familiar with the requirements of each exercise.

Seconda parte

Esercizio 1 Domande 17-26

In this exercise, candidates were asked to read a letter from Tommaso to his friend, Pietro, in which he described how he witnessed a crime and subsequently helped the elderly victim. Most candidates performed well in this exercise in which the ability to locate the correct answer in the text was being tested. Lifting from the text was accepted as long as it demonstrated understanding and did not include extra material that would render the response incorrect.

In **Question 18**, nearly all candidates who scored a mark answered by attempting to describe that the elderly woman was (walking) in front (of Tommaso) – *davanti a* – rather than the fact that Tommaso was (walking) behind (the woman) – *dietro a*, although either description was correct. Often candidates struggled changing from the first person to the third person in their response, but credit was given where candidates showed that they had understood the question and had been able to locate the answer.

For **Question 19**, *rubato* (la borsa) was used frequently instead of *preso*, and in **Question 20** a number of candidates described the woman as *spaventata*. In **Question 21**, credit was given for demonstrating understanding of the fact that Tommaso had given the woman water/something to drink (*acqua/le ha dato da bere*).

Candidates who lost a mark for **Question 24** often mentioned only something about the woman falling over or being scared; as a consequence it was not evident that these candidates had understood that the woman had to go to hospital *per un controllo medico*.

Most candidates were able to locate *triste* as the correct response for **Question 25**, however some candidates tried and struggled to put this into a sentence (even though the word *triste* alone was all that was necessary to gain the mark). In these instances, credit was given where the message was clear enough to be understood.

Esercizio 2 Domanda 27

The writing task was generally carried out to a high standard and a large number of candidates scored full, or almost full, marks for this question. 10 marks were available for Communication and 5 for Accuracy. Candidates were asked:

(a)   Describe your school

(b)   Describe what you did at school yesterday.

(c)   What is your favourite subject? Why?

(d)   What do you not like about your school? Why?

Most candidates easily reached the minimum recommended number of words (80) with a significant number writing more than this. It should be noted that it is not in the candidate's interest to write beyond the word limit (100). Candidates should focus on responding directly to the tasks, ensuring that they have given enough information within their responses to merit the full 10 Communication marks. Each of the 4 tasks needs to be covered in order to score the 10 Communication marks, and in order to achieve 5 marks for Accuracy, candidates' work should be "more accurate than inaccurate" (see mark scheme for more details).

Terza parte

In **Section 3**, candidates are asked to demonstrate a more precise understanding of Italian, and as such, they should take care to ensure that their responses are focused. Additional material copied from the text may obscure understanding and consequently invalidate an otherwise correct answer.

Esercizio 1 Domande 28-33

In **Questions 28** to **33**, 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 interview.

Most candidates correctly chose the 4 false and the 2 true statements. In **Question 28**, *ventidue* was almost universally corrected to *diciotto*, apart from in a handful of cases where candidates mistakenly wrote *otto*. Candidates responded to **Question 33** in a variety of manners, mostly mentioning at least one of the correct elements needed to gain the mark. 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 34-41

In Exercise 2, candidates were asked to read a text about Irene and her experience as a volunteer in Peru and then respond in Italian to the questions that followed.

For **Question 34**, many candidates went on to detail who was in the "*famiglia*", and this was acceptable. In **Question 35**, most candidates indicated that the mother specifically had prepared the special meal and/or chocolate cake, and benefit of the doubt was given where it was inferred that the family did this *for Irene*. **Question 36 (i)** and **(ii)** were both answered well.

Question 37 presented some problems and many candidates responded with *bisogna saper lavorare in gruppo* which either on its own or given in conjunction with the correct response (*bisogna lavorare molto*) rendered the response wrong and in these instances no mark was given.

PAPA CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education
0679 Italian (Foreign Language) June 2014
Principal Examiner Report for Teachers

Question 38 was answered almost universally successfully, and **Question 39** engendered a variety of mostly acceptable responses.

Question 40 was problematic for a number of candidates with most losing the mark by responding that (Irene) *ha imparato tantissimo*.

For **Question 41**, most candidates were able to give one or both of the reasons why we know that Irene liked her experience. Where candidates did not gain a mark for this question, it was usually because they responded with only *ha imparato tantissimo*.

Final Remarks

The accessibility of this paper was shown by the fact that most candidates attempted all of the questions and generally performed very well. It is hoped that future candidates will continue to develop a familiarity with the style and requirements of the question paper.

ITALIAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

| Paper 0679/03 |
| Speaking |

Key messages

- Careful preparation by teacher/Examiners is essential to ensure that the format of the examination is understood.
- Teacher/Examiners should adhere to the role play tasks as set out in the Teachers' Notes booklet and be clear about their own roles. They must not change the tasks nor create additional ones.
- Candidates should be given the opportunity to use past, present and future tenses in each of the conversation sections.
- Teacher/Examiners are reminded to make a clear distinction between the topic presentation/conversation and the general conversation.
- Teacher/Examiners should adhere to the timings stipulated in the Teachers' Notes booklet.
- Candidates do not have to be of native speaker standard to achieve high marks.

General comments

This was the first year that IGCSE Italian was offered. Overall, candidates performed well and the teacher/ Examiners understood the format and demands of the test. In the role plays, teacher/Examiners generally followed the cues carefully, prompted where necessary, giving candidates full opportunity to gain the available marks. In some cases, cues were changed, added to, or had not been fully prepared, which added difficulty to the tasks for candidates. In the conversation tests, the majority of teacher/Examiners gave the candidates the opportunity to show what they could do and pitched their questions at the correct level.

The full requirements of the test are laid out in the Teachers' Notes booklet and all teacher/Examiners are advised to read through them carefully. It is essential that no section of the exam is omitted as this will have a serious effect on the candidates' mark. Teacher/Examiners need to understand the requirements of the mark scheme so that they ask the right sort of questions to allow candidates to maximise their marks. To achieve a high mark on **Scale (a), Comprehension/responsiveness**, candidates **must** answer unexpected questions that go beyond straightforward questions. In addition, to allow candidates to achieve a mark in the Satisfactory band or above on **Scale (b), Linguistic content,** teacher/Examiners **must** ask questions that elicit both past and future tenses in both conversation sections.

Clerical checks were mostly done well. Centres are reminded that the adding up of candidates' marks must be checked on the working mark sheets and correctly transferred to the *MS1* mark sheet. The working mark sheets must be sent to Cambridge.

The **Cover Sheet for 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. Centres are reminded of the importance of including this cover sheet with the submission of all other materials.

Nearly all centres submitted a correct sample and centres with more than one teacher/Examiner included recordings from each.

In general, the **quality of the recordings** and **the presentation of samples** was very good with both teacher/Examiner and candidate clear and audible. In a small number of cases the position of the microphone favoured the teacher/Examiner rather than the candidate. Centres are reminded to send in recording on either a CD or and a cassette, as Cambridge cannot accept recordings on USB stick. Centres are reminded to check that the CD has recorded before submitting it.

Centres with large numbers of candidates are reminded that they must seek permission from Cambridge if they wish to use more than one teacher/Examiner. Centres generally followed the procedures well, with

measures put in place to ensure consistency across the centre. Centres are reminded to send a representative sample of teacher/Examiners deployed, and also of the range of candidates. To assist centres in their internal moderation procedures, Cambridge has produced guidelines which are sent once permission has been granted.

Regarding the **duration of tests,** most centres followed the timings stipulated in the Teachers' Notes booklet. Centres are reminded that the conversation sections need to be approximately five minutes each, as in some instances they were either too long or too short.

In their **application of the mark scheme**, teacher/Examiners were in the majority of cases fair and consistent.

Comments on specific questions

Role plays

Teacher/Examiners are advised to prepare the role plays carefully before the examination to ensure that they are familiar with the cues and requirements of the section. Tasks should not be omitted, extra tasks should not be added, and the order of cues should not be changed as this can confuse candidates and make the test unduly difficult. If a candidate uses a verb, it must be correctly conjugated and in the correct tense to achieve 3 marks, otherwise a maximum mark of 2 can be awarded. If a task has two parts or requires two pieces of information, both must be completed otherwise a maximum mark of 1 can be awarded. This includes giving a greeting and offering thanks where appropriate. If a candidate misses out a task, the teacher/Examiner should try to guide the candidate towards completing it. Candidates should also listen carefully to the teacher/Examiner, as on all the Role play A cards there was a question that required them to choose one of two options, and on all Role play B cards there was an unexpected question. Candidates should also read their cues carefully to ensure that, where a question is required, their answer is phrased as such. Teacher/Examiners are encouraged to query an answer if candidates' pronunciation obscures the answer as communication is effected and marks will be lost.

Candidates should be given 15 minutes preparation time immediately before the exam so that they can familiarise themselves with their tasks and think about what the unexpected questions might be.

Role plays A

The A role plays are designed to be more straightforward than the B role plays. Most teacher/Examiners conducted them well and candidates had been well prepared on the requirements.

Role plays B

The B role plays were more demanding. They required candidates to respond to unexpected questions and some required the use of a different tense. Most centres conducted them well, paying careful attention to the cues.

Topic presentation and discussion

Candidates chose a wide range of topics for this section of the examination. Popular choices were sports, travels and particular pastimes. As directed in the Teachers' Notes booklet, candidates avoided '*myself*' or '*my life*' as their topic.

Teacher/Examiners must always allow their candidates to present their topics initially as not doing so risks severely limiting marks. Candidates should be allowed to speak for between one and two minutes before questions are asked. If the timing goes much beyond two minutes, the teacher/Examiner should interrupt with a natural question to initiate a conversation.

Teacher/Examiners usually prepared their candidates for the subsequent discussion but, if they were to score highly, candidates avoided pre-learning questions and answers. Questions worked best when they were spontaneous and developed naturally as the candidate responded.

It is essential that teacher/Examiners ask questions to elicit both the past and the future, otherwise candidates' marks are limited to 6 on **Scale (b)**, **Linguistic content.**

The topic presentation and discussion combined should last approximately five minutes.

Teacher/Examiners are reminded to indicate the transition from the topic presentation and discussion to the general conversation with a phrase such as '*Ora passiamo alla conversazione generale'*.

General conversation

Teacher/Examiners were aware of the need to cover two or three topics in some depth and the discussion generally developed naturally. For less able candidates, more topics were covered in less depth and some teacher/Examiners were skilful in grading their questions to allow these candidates to show what they could do. Stronger candidates often chose some more challenging topics and were able to respond to abstract questions posed by the teacher/Examiner.

Teacher/Examiners are reminded to avoid asking primarily closed 'yes/no' questions, which do not allow candidates to develop an idea nor use a full range of tenses and structures. Deploying mainly open questions that invite the candidate to talk are preferable.

The stipulated time for this section is 5 minutes and most centres adhered to this to allow candidates to showcase their full use of the tenses and structures and, as a result, score highly.

As with the topic presentation and discussion, candidates are required to correctly use the past and future tense to score above 6 marks on **Scale (b)**.

Generally, candidates performed very well with the strongest using a full range of tenses and structures to produce confident and fluent answers, and responding in a spontaneous way to the teacher/Examiner.

PAPA CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education
0679 Italian (Foreign Language) June 2014
Principal Examiner Report for Teachers

ITALIAN (FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Paper 0679/04

Continuous Writing

Key Messages

- Centres should ensure candidates are aware of the word limit as they will not be credited for anything they write beyond 140 words.
- Candidates should read the question carefully and address each bullet point clearly and explicitly.
- Candidates should be discouraged from 'using up' too many words contextualising answers before addressing the bullet points.
- Candidates should check their work carefully.
- Candidates should ensure their hand-writing is legible.

General Comments

The overall standard of the responses on this paper was high. Many candidates showed a very encouraging facility with the language, expressing themselves fluently and using a variety of more sophisticated vocabulary and structures. There were some good performances too from candidates whose command of Italian was perhaps not as good as that of this first group but who 'played to their strengths' effectively by sticking to language items with which they were familiar, identifying the correct tense to use in each part of their response, and addressing each part of the question explicitly. Indeed, it was noticeable that candidates who had been well prepared for the exam - those who had been advised to stick to the word limit and to answer the question, and those who were familiar with the mark scheme used - outperformed candidates of apparently similar ability who were not so familiar with the requirements of this paper. For less able candidates, whose grasp of basic grammar was limited, marks for content were still sometimes good, as Examiners always adopt the role of a "sympathetic native speaker" in understanding what the candidate was trying to say.

Centres are encouraged to take note of the 'key messages' above in preparing candidates for future examination series. In particular, Centres should be aware of the need for candidates to stick to the word limit in both questions which is rigorously and consistently enforced. The most successful responses deal with each bullet point without padding out the response with too much introductory context, or repetition.

A feature of the best responses was that candidates were able to select the most appropriate vocabulary and phrases to meet the needs of the task. Less successful responses were sometimes characterised by the inclusion of perceived 'high value' words or phrases that were not relevant to the context.

Comments on Specific Questions

QUESTION 1 (a): email to a friend about a recent aeroplane trip

This was marginally the more popular of the two choices for **Question 1**, and was well done on the whole. Candidates had little difficulty saying where they had been, and the majority that attempted the second bullet point were similarly successful here, listing a range of activities from reading and watching films to chatting to their fellow passengers. In response to the third bullet point, candidates were fairly evenly split between those that said they enjoyed flying, finding it exciting, exhilarating etc, and those who were less keen, most of whom cited fear and boredom as their reasons for this. The vast majority of candidates were able to communicate where they were going next, and the reasons for these trips ranged from the very brief ('to go on holiday') to the much more ambitious.

PAPA CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education
0679 Italian (Foreign Language) June 2014
Principal Examiner Report for Teachers

QUESTION 1 (b): a dinner at a restaurant

Slightly fewer candidates chose this option, but on the whole the answers were of a similar standard. Most candidates did mention explicitly whom they went to the restaurant with, but Examiners did give the benefit of the doubt when this was strongly implied even if it was not stated explicitly. Most candidates described going with family and friends, or, for some, on a romantic outing. For the special occasion, most chose a birthday but quite a number also opted for a celebration of the end of their exams. Not all candidates addressed the third bullet point sufficiently clearly, and the most successful were those who used the word *serata* in their response, thus clearly pointing the Examiner to the fact that they were offering an opinion about their evening. Virtually all candidates said they did like eating in restaurants, but a few claimed they preferred eating at home, offering as reasons the quality of their parents' cooking as well as the price of a meal in a restaurant. There were very few difficulties with the final bullet point, with candidates offering a huge variety of international cuisines in their responses.

QUESTION 2: healthy living week with family

This proved to be more challenging than either of the **Question 1** options, but this did not prevent many candidates from writing very impressive and high-scoring responses. At the lower end of the ability range, a small number of candidates misunderstood some of the key vocabulary items of the task, and as such did not score very highly for content; however, in these cases the candidates' language was credited. To access the content marks for the first bullet point, candidates needed to understand that this week of healthy living had taken place in the past, and that their descriptions of what they and their families did during the week needed to be in the past tense. In response to this first bullet point, most candidates described how their families had started eating more healthily and taking more exercise – although for some candidates 'healthy living' also meant a ban on technology or even a move to the country. There were many good and successful responses to the second bullet point too: the most common reaction on the part of candidates was that it had been a very useful and valuable experience, even if they had been reluctant or sceptical at the beginning. Many went on to say that they would continue to live more healthily.