ITALIAN

| Paper 9783/01 |
| Speaking |

Key Messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:
- in Part I, consider the issue raised in their chosen article and their own reaction(s) to it
- in Part II, choose a subject which genuinely interests them and which clearly relates to a country
- where the target language is spoken
- in Parts I and II, be prepared to take the lead in the conversation
- in Parts I and II, be ready to engage in natural and spontaneous discussion

General Comments

The exam consists of two parts: Part 1 – Discussion of article; Part 2 – Prepared Topic Discussion.

Part 1 and **Part 2** can also be taken in the reverse order, although candidates tend to prefer to start with the discussion of the article that they prepared just before the exam.

The Discussion of the article (**Part 1**) represents a freer and more challenging exercise than **Part 2** in which candidates can demonstrate the ability to engage in a fairly unpredictable discussion.

The overall exam is of considerable length but candidates appeared to be able to maintain their level of performance over the entire exam and performances for the two parts of the exam were well balanced.

Comments on Specific Questions

Part 1

Candidates could choose a stimulus card from

1. *Quant'è caro sposarsi* (Theme: Patterns of daily life)
2. *Gli Italiani e i realty show* (Theme: The media)
3. *Il gap year* (Theme: Employment and unemployment)
4. *Voglio un figlio perfetto* (Theme: Scientific and technological inoovation)

Card 3 was the most popular with the other choices equally divided among the remaining three cards.

Comprehension and Discussion

Candidates were not required to understand the article in detail, but only well enough to be able to engage in discussion on the issues raised. Candidates coped with this part of the exam well. They were able to outline the main theme of the article, discuss the issues it raised and broaden the conversation to the general theme.

Part 2

Literary texts or films were still the most popular choice. They are generally a good choice as they provide scope for analysis, evaluation and opinion and allows candidates to demonstrate their full potential. The same can be said of historical or sociological issues. Candidates should be advised not to prepare topics with mainly factual information as they don't lend themselves readily to opinions, evaluation and analysis. Candidates should also make sure that their topic fully meets the requirement of being related to the history, current affairs or culture of an area of the world where Italian is spoken. Topics which are only partially relevant will inevitably reduce the mark for knowledge and opinion.

Presentations were generally well timed and well structured, leading to discussion naturally. Most candidates were able to present a good range of pertinent facts, had the ability to analyse them and to express their opinions in a naturally flowing conversation with the Examiner.

Language (range and accuracy)

In terms of language, there was a wide range of competence. There were no serious instances of communication being impaired by errors but some candidates appeared to be at ease only when using fairly simple language. Others, on the other hand, were able to use complex structures and a good range of vocabulary. Even at this level, the most common mistakes remain the use of prepositions, lack of control over agreements, gender and occasionally over verb endings.

Pronunciation and Intonation

Candidates appear to have mastered the sounds of Italian, in spite of the occasional misplaced stress and mispronunciation of double consonant or vowel sounds.

Conclusion

Most candidates appear to have fully understood the requirements of this unit, were well prepared for it and performed to the best of their abilities.

PRINCIPAL COURSE ITALIAN

> **Paper 9783/02**
> **Reading and Listening**

Key Messages

- Reading section: candidates are required to target pieces of information in the text, and tailor an answer to the questions asked, using a degree of inference and justification or providing multiple points where necessary.

- Success in the translation question is dependent on being as directly faithful as possible to the original, and on the ability to identify and re-use key vocabulary items that have been presented elsewhere in the paper.

- Listening section: candidates needed to be able to follow information sequentially, and use the material heard selectively in order to answer the questions. Strong candidates gave succinct answers and ensured that their answers were tailored directly to the question asked.

- In the summary question, high-scoring candidates kept to the word count and responded directly to the bullet points, correctly identifying the most salient points of the passage.

General Comments

The paper was generally well received by the candidates.

Comments on Specific Questions

Part 1

Testo di lettura 1

Question 1

Most candidates scored at least one mark but a number didn't refer specifically to the danger of living near a volcano.

The rest of *Testo di lettura 1* was generally well responded to.

Testo di lettura 3

Vocabulary generally did not pose too much of a problem on this question; however a number of candidates lost marks over incorrect / absent usage of prepositions.

Part 2

Brano d'ascolto 1

Question 19

Strong candidates conveyed the idea of supporting / assisting patients; a number lost the mark because they merely mentioned transport without elaborating.

Brano d'ascolto 3

Generally very well responded to. The last two questions were found to be more challenging by a number of candidates.

Question 31

Some candidates struggled to tease out the two pieces of information accurately, e.g. including the insects with the bats / mammals in being important for the ecosystem.

Question 32

Some of the candidates seem to have heard only the *corsi* part of *percorsi*, which resulted in an answer of 'courses'.

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Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- in Part I, choose a title on which they have something to say and for which they have command of appropriate structures and lexis
- in Part I, plan their essay to produce well-structured and persuasive arguments
- in Part I, write complex sentences when appropriate, but without losing the thread of the argument
- in Part II, read each question carefully and make sure they understand the sense of the sentence(s)
- in Parts I and II, carefully proofread their responses.

Comments on specific questions

Part I – Discursive Essay

The best essays here were coherently argued, well illustrated and demonstrated familiarity with complex structures and vocabulary of the language. Many candidates advanced such sophisticated arguments, and even those whose argumentation was more basic, kept their focus on the question and invariably offered a conclusion which returned to it. As for the language, once again there was a little inconsistency in candidates' grasp of the basic (GCSE) grammar even at the top end of the ability range: this makes it all the more important for candidates to check their work carefully before handing it in.

Question 1

(a)   This proved the most popular choice among candidates. Answers almost always offered a balanced view, and although there were a few candidates who concluded that the disadvantages of technology outweighed its advantages, most candidates seemed more persuaded by these advantages. In addition to the expected answers (see published mark scheme), there were some original and creative arguments: technology has brought about globalisation and therefore more tolerance and understanding of different cultures; the Internet has been a huge force for democratising the world as everybody has a voice and the potential for 'global reach'; computer technology has enabled more mothers to work flexibly which has brought both social and economic advances; technology has provided at least as many environmental solutions as environmental problems.

(b)   There were too few answers here to draw any meaningful conclusions.

(c)   This was another popular question, and produced quite a broad range of answers both in terms of quality and content. There were a number of quite different interpretations of the term *giornalista*, and some candidates did not distinguish sufficiently clearly between journalism and the media, leading to some rather vague and ill-defined answers. Among those candidates who engaged more successfully with the title question, there was no real consensus about whether or not journalists are too powerful: the fact that they can influence (irresponsibly or unscrupulously) public reaction to events or trends was offset by the fact that they offer the citizens of countries with a free press a level of protection from the threat of a totalitarian regime.

(d)   This question has proved somewhat challenging. Some candidates didn't seem to understand why the cult of celebrity might be considered analogous to a religious movement, but those who did mostly concurred that it was in fact the 'religion of our time' as proposed by the question. Many of the other answers talked in rather general terms about celebrity or religion (or both) without ever really getting to grips with the title.

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(e)   There were too few answers to draw any meaningful conclusions.

Part II – Use of Italian

There were some impressive performances on **Exercises 1** and **2**, with candidates showing an excellent knowledge of advanced grammatical structures (e.g. the imperfect subjunctive). However, other questions in this section ought to have been accessible to candidates with a good knowledge of intermediate level grammar: e.g. irregular past participles; irregular present tense conjugations; conditional perfect. **Exercise 3** was on the whole well done, but the testing of prepositions proved rather challenging for some candidates.

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Key Messages

To score well in this paper, candidates should read the questions thoroughly and show in their answers their understanding that individual episodes, characters, and relationships discussed in the texts and films have a more general significance which is what the question will doubtless be targeting. The tendency to recount episodes when illustrating arguments is very difficult to avoid but if candidates concentrate on the point they wish to make such 'narration' will be kept to a minimum. Candidates will do well if they respect the evidence found in their texts and films rather than force it into the mould apparently given by the question.

General comments

Questions were answered on three topics – *Gli anni di piombo*, *Visioni del mezzogiorno italiano* and *Il cinema di Federico Fellini*. Answers to the *Gli anni di piombo* questions showed a good level of familiarity with the texts and films. Historical background knowledge, such as was relevant, was used appropriately, and did not ever distract from the essential literary elements of the questions. Some candidates lost marks by giving over too much of their essay to an individual element of a question and thereby not responding in full. Answers to the *Visioni del mezzogiorno italiano* questions generally engaged well with the tasks and showed a sensitive response to the material. Comprehension was occasionally compromised by less well developed linguistic skills. Answers on *Il cinema di Federico Fellini* showed a generally good knowledge of the films and were mostly written in competent Italian.

The standards of response and linguistic ability were generally good. Pleasingly, the vast majority of candidates chose to concentrate on two stimuli rather than spread themselves too thinly over three. Texts were chosen carefully. Candidates should ensure that their answers do not focus too heavily on one text or film over another, and that their answers are balanced and comparative. The vast majority of candidates managed this effectively.

Three texts received answers: Goldoni, Svevo, and Ammaniti. Both essays were attempted for Goldoni's text, but not the commentary. Candidates often chose to focus their answers on a relatively narrow range of characters to illustrate their arguments. This depth over breadth approach was generally effective. The commentary and one of the essay questions were attempted for Svevo's text, with most candidates choosing to discuss the question relating to Guido. Generally excellent knowledge of the text was displayed. All three of the Ammaniti questions were attempted. Answers generally addressed the questions satisfactorily. Some answers tended to be a little superficial.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1

Questions 1

(a) and **(b)** Both questions solicited answers that showed good knowledge of the texts and film. Candidates also demonstrated good background knowledge to the texts/film and most candidates used this to successfully contextualise the texts/film in their answers to the questions. Candidates tended to strike the right balance between literary analysis and historical context. There were some very nicely nuanced answers to the question on *giustizia*, its representation and how it is administered. Candidates had clearly engaged well with the texts and film.

Questions 2

(a) and **(b)** The answers to these questions generally showed a good understanding of the texts and film that the candidates had studied. Some answers to **Question 2(a)** were less than entirely successful in analysing fully the various strands of the question. Some candidates confused their understanding of history with what was contemporary to the story itself. There were some excellent answers to **Question 2(b)**. However, some candidates privileged one text over the others in their answers. Candidates should be careful to give balanced answers that are comparative and analytical.

Question 3

(a) The answers to this question displayed a satisfactory understanding of the films, the relationships between men and women, and the issues to do with power. Comprehension was sometimes impeded by poor language.

Part 2

Question 8

(b) and **(c)** Answers to these questions were generally very good, with **Question 8(b)** proving to be by far the most popular. Answers tended to focus on a narrow range of characters, but showed good understanding of these characters and of the ways in which they interact with each other to create a picture of society as a whole.

Questions 10

(a) and **(b)** Some excellent material was on display in answers to both these questions. The best answers demonstrated a deep understanding of the text and were expressed using sophisticated literary terminology. Candidates successfully explored the complex and multi-layered narrative of the *La coscienza di Zeno* and some had a good understanding of the psychoanalytical themes that underpin the novel. The use of quotation and narrative to illustrate the points being made was excellent.

Questions 13

(a), **(b)**, and **(c)**
Question 13(b)** was by far the most popular one on the Ammaniti text, with the other two being addressed by relatively few candidates. Answers to these questions demonstrated a clear knowledge of the text; however, some were quite superficial in their understanding of the key issues. Essays were generally well structured, although in some cases the lack of depth of knowledge encouraged answers that were quite basic in their structure. Responses to **13(c)** were generally good. Some candidates, however, chose to write exclusively on the conclusion of the novel and did not make appropriate references to the text as a whole.