

General comments

Practical examination

Candidate responses were marred by too much reliance on rote learning for both parts of the examination. While many were prepared well, they struggled to respond to questions asked with wording other than what they expected. Candidates performed generally better in the *Discussion of stimulus* section; they often preferred to select Unit 3 questions rather than Unit 4. The topic *Environmental issues* was rarely selected as it was perceived as being too difficult compared to other topics; in particular, the wording of Stimulus 12 was deemed to be too complicated. Candidates with a good preparation were awarded high marks for their confident use of more complicated grammatical structures. Breadth and depth of responses played also an important part in the final score with a number of candidates providing a wide variety of details and information. Candidates who performed well seemed extremely well prepared and confident in the use of fillers during the conversation.

Advice for candidates

- Do not rely on providing information that has been rote-learnt. Be selective to engage directly with questions the marker asks. Both parts of the oral examination require you to participate in a conversation with the marker.
- Engage with the images provided in the stimulus. Prepare to refer to these images in relation to questions asked.
- Provide some detail in your discussion of the unit topics.

Advice for teachers

- Practise the examination procedure with your students as familiarity with what to expect in the examination will contribute to their confidence and allow them to concentrate on the content information and their Italian expression when answering questions provided by the marker.
- Practise asking your students questions worded in different ways.
- Ensure students are well prepared on the topics (especially the difference between the three Unit 3 topics).

Written examination

Candidates were able to complete all sections of the paper. While some candidates did not provide an adequate response in the stimulus and extended response sections, others wrote much more than was required.

Advice for candidates

- Be mindful of cognates and idiomatic expressions.
- Ensure you satisfy text type criteria in the written communication section.
- Ensure you address all parts of the question.

Advice for teachers

- Prepare your students on examination format as this contributes to their confidence when sitting the examination.
- Work with students to show how to respond to a question within the given word limit.
- Prepare your students for selecting language appropriate for the context in which an expression is used.
- Teach students how to use the dictionary in order to find contextually different meanings for a word.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Practical examination

Part B: Discussion of stimulus (19 Marks)

Overall, candidates performed well in this section. They needed to ensure they addressed all parts of the question (if applicable) and to refer to the stimulus items.

Part C: Conversation (20 Marks)

Candidates performed well in this section and there was a good spread of marks. The majority were prepared well on the examination format. They knew, for example, that they had to provide three choices of topic.

Written examination

Section One Response: Listening (32 Marks)

The listening section in 2016 included a table that was difficult for candidates to negotiate. In response to feedback, and with the removal of background language candidates, an attempt was made to reduce the difficulty of this section. However, there appears to have been some over-compensation, as candidates found this section quite easy, although some questions were not attempted. The fact that this section came first in the examination might have at least provided candidates with some level of confidence to tackle the other sections in the examination.

Section Two Response: Viewing and reading (32 Marks)

In general this section was completed well. It produced the highest mean of all sections. A few questions proved to be a bit more complicated but the easiest questions were understood by the majority. Cognates were a major issue. Often, the language in the text was not interpreted within context but simply translated literally. Some responses were also vague (e.g. Q15). Candidates also had difficulty in understanding complicated, longer and more complex sentences (e.g. Q22).

Section Three: Written communication Part A: Stimulus response (20 Marks)

Candidates in general understood the stimulus questions. Many wrote a lot more than what was required. The stimulus text was handled well generally, with many candidates referring to the graph in their responses. Both questions had two parts to them and often this aspect was not clearly addressed in the responses. Candidates were generally well prepared on the topic (environmental issues) and provided relevant content. Some responses lost marks for the range and accuracy of the grammar used.

Section Three: Written communication Part B: Extended response (20 Marks)

In general candidates were able to complete all questions. There was a good spread of choices among questions. Many candidates addressed the questions superficially providing only some information or predictable content. The spread of marks was noticeable with some candidates writing at length and including a sophisticated language range and accuracy while others managed only simple structures or very basic responses. Nearly all responses satisfied the text type's requirements.