



# GCSE **Italian**

8633/SH

## Report on the examination

Version: 1.0  
June 2025

Further copies of this report are available from [aqa.org.uk](https://aqa.org.uk)

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

## General comments

It was truly encouraging to see how well students approached this paper, and most handled it very well.

The vast majority of students were appropriately entered for this tier. However, a small proportion may have benefited from being entered for the Foundation Tier, given their level of ability. The majority demonstrated strong command of the present and past tenses and were able to express opinions clearly, with well-structured justifications. While some students encountered challenges with the future and conditional tenses, as well as with using the correct auxiliary verbs for the perfect tense, their progress in mastering complex structures was excellent.

Confidence notably improved this year when students discussed topics such as charity work and volunteering. Many were particularly engaged when speaking about homelessness and how they personally support those affected. However, vocabulary related to environmental topics, such as recycling and actions taken to help protect the environment, continues to present challenges.

Students appeared less assured when exploring work-related topics and their future career aspirations.

Overall, performance was good, with noticeable improvement in the variety of verbs used to express opinions and provide justifications.

The range of vocabulary was very good, and students made strong use of connectives and a wide range of comparisons.

It was pleasing to observe the correct use of prepositions followed by a verb, and to note the precise and confident use of direct and indirect pronouns.

## Role Play

In general, students performed well in the Role Play.

Many demonstrated growing confidence when responding, and their efforts to use relevant vocabulary and grammatical structures were evident throughout.

In questions requiring two details or two answers, there were instances where the second part of the task was not elicited by the teacher. Once a student responds, the teacher is not permitted to repeat the question, even if the student's answer is incorrect.

Unlike in the Photo Card task, rephrasing of questions is not allowed. A few teachers asked supplementary questions that were not included in the Teacher's Booklet.

Marks were most commonly lost due to:

- incorrect use of verbs or lifting verbs directly from the question
- inaccurate use of pronouns in the unpredictable task
- tasks not being asked by the teacher.

## The unpredictable question task

While most students understood the task, some attempted it without using the correct form of address as outlined in the Teacher's Booklet. Several lost marks for using incorrect pronouns when asking questions, and some used the verb in its infinitive form as presented on the card. A number of students asked grammatically incorrect questions or posed questions unrelated to the stimulus. A few appeared unaware that the question mark symbol (?) indicated they were expected to formulate a question.

## Role Play 7

Overall, this role play was handled well. The topic was among the most familiar to students, though the second part of **Task 2** was occasionally left unanswered. A few students requested that the question be repeated, which is entirely acceptable, particularly when done in the target language.

## Role Play 8

This role play was generally well answered, though several students responded with only one detail in **Task 2**, typically mentioning the type of films they enjoy while omitting information about the films they dislike. A few students stated they had no favourite actor or actress, which cost them marks. In the question task, many used the informal form *tu* rather than the required formal version *Lei*.

## Role Play 9

**Task 3** proved challenging for many students. Several were unable to provide an answer, while others spoke about how many days they go to the gym and how many hours they train each week. A few students struggled to understand the verb *consigliaresti* and asked for the question to be repeated multiple times.

## Role Play 10

This role play was generally well handled. Students appeared confident discussing their regions and towns.

## Role Play 11

Most students approached this role play with confidence and responded well overall. However, a few found **task 4** challenging, as they appeared to struggle with understanding the part of the question referring to *studiare da solo*.

## Role Play 12

Most students appeared to have misunderstood **Task 1**, with many responding by saying they worked as doctors or lawyers. Several struggled with the conditional tense used in the question, which led to many being unable to respond. The word *sogni* posed a challenge for many, as they were unsure how it related to *lavoro*.

## The Photo Card

On a few occasions, teachers rephrased questions when necessary but maintained the intended meaning. A few also provided vocabulary for students to use in their answers.

In some cases, when a question had two parts, the second part was omitted, resulting in a loss of marks for the students. The Photo Card task occasionally exceeded the three-minute time limit.

Many students were aware that achieving the highest marks required at least three verb clauses across a minimum of three responses. As the first three questions were prepared in advance, many successfully extended their answers and incorporated justified opinions. Most were able to give a very detailed response to the first question, *“Che cosa vedi nella foto?”*. Some questions included *“Perché?”*, and students were generally prompted to address this part, with a few offering justifications even before being asked.

However, the question *“Con chi vai d'accordo?”* proved challenging. Many appeared confused by the word *“chi.”*

## Photo Card G

This photo card was generally well answered, as students tend to speak confidently about their family and friends. However, **task 4** proved somewhat challenging; *‘Con chi’* at the start of the question presented challenges for students who appeared unfamiliar with this type of question structure.

## Photo Card H

In **Task 2**, a few teachers omitted the second part of the question – *‘Ti piaceva?’* and *‘Perché?’* – which limited students’ responses. In **Task 3**, some students confused a ‘sports personality’ with simply being sporty. For **Task 5**, although the question referred to *‘attori,’* several students responded by speaking about *‘calciatori’* instead.”

## Photo Card I

This photo card was generally well handled, though a few students struggled with the word *‘sogni’* in context, as some were unsure how it related to the mention of ‘house’.

## Photo Card J

In **Task 4**, a significant number of students found the second part – providing justification – particularly challenging. **Task 5**, which required giving advice, also proved difficult for some students due to a limited range of vocabulary available for expressing suggestions in Italian.

Nonetheless, several students demonstrated perseverance and made genuine efforts to tackle the questions.

## Photo Card K

Students responded well to this photo card overall, with the majority performing particularly strongly on **Task 2**, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of undertaking the job of a pizza chef. However, some students struggled with **Task 4**; rather than talking about a friend's job, they referred to their own part-time work or future career aspirations. In **Task 5**, a few did not understand the phrase *'lavoro dei tuoi sogni'*, which affected their ability to respond appropriately.

## Photo Card L

This photo card did not present significant difficulties. However, a number of students found describing a past lesson challenging and instead spoke about their favourite subject or their favourite teacher.

## The General Conversation

The conversation was thoroughly enjoyable – bright, engaging, and at times genuinely amusing. Hearing expressive idioms such as *“diciamo pane al pane e vino al vino,” “costa un occhio della testa,”* and *“piove a catinelle”* was a real treat, reflecting the students' confidence as they engaged with the exam.

The majority of students produced well-structured conversations. Notably, fewer students appeared to rely on pre-learned questions compared to previous years, indicating a positive shift toward spontaneous language use.

Many students successfully incorporated opinions and justifications, demonstrating confident control over a range of tenses. A few even used the subjunctive to express personal opinions, showcasing advanced language skills.

An increase in the use of linking words was observed. However, where students did not achieve higher marks, this was often due to limited use of tenses, inaccuracies in verb forms – particularly when lifted directly from questions – or overly brief responses.

Students were generally very confident when discussing topics related to family and friends, and increasingly comfortable speaking about environmental issues, although some gaps in vocabulary remain.

The range of vocabulary and sentence structures used in the General Conversation was impressive. Students demonstrated confident use of pronouns and more complex forms to

express opinions. In several cases, however, students' potential to reach higher band grades was affected by the conduct of the exam, such as not eliciting responses in all required tenses, restricting conversation time, or failing to encourage students to ask a question. Additionally, in a few instances, the theme selected for the General Conversation overlapped with that of the Photo Card.

Occasionally, the general conversation took the form of a student-led presentation rather than an interactive exchange with the teacher.

**Recurring linguistic inaccuracies were noted in students' responses, which had a direct impact on their Communication marks.**

*Polluzione*

*Prendere foto*

*Additivo*

*Stretto/stretto*

*Annoiante, annoioso*

*Sana, sante*

*Salute fisica*

*Salvare soldi*

*Mangare instead of mangiare*

*Delizioso instead of delizioso*

*Scermo instead of schermo*

*Amusante*

*Sono/ero quindici anni*

Several names of places: *Paris, Londres, Venice, Spain*

Several mistakes with agreements: *siamo alto, abbiamo due casa*

Increased use of English and Spanish words

Errors with auxiliary verbs in the perfect tense: *ho stato, abbiamo andato, ho tornato*

Higher use of regional dialects or slang expressions: *mi piace un botto, tipo, quella vacanza era una bomba*

## Question types

Overall, teachers asked questions that were well-suited to students' ability levels. However, in some cases, the questions were either overly simplistic or excessively challenging, which made it difficult for certain students to respond effectively.

In a few instances, teachers missed opportunities to encourage students to use a wider range of verb tenses. This limited students' ability to demonstrate grammatical flexibility during the general conversation.

## Themes and topics

All prescribed themes and topics were covered during the general conversation and students generally demonstrated increased confidence across the range of content.

However, questions relating to jobs and the environment proved more challenging for some students, highlighting gaps in vocabulary, grammatical accuracy and fluency in these areas.

## Asking a question

It was observed that students generally asked their question during the first theme of the General Conversation, with many following up with a second question in the second theme. Notably, the commonly used prompt *'e tu?'* appeared significantly less frequently this year compared to previous years. Some students were able to formulate well-structured questions.

## Timing

In several cases the test exceeded the maximum duration of seven minutes, while in a few instances the General Conversation fell below the required minimum of five minutes.

## Tips for Teachers and Students

### Role Play

- Focus on including all the specific details required on the role play card.
- If you're asked *"perché?"* make sure to give an opinion.
- Use the correct form of address (formal/informal) when asking questions, as indicated in the role play.

### Photo Card

- Aim to use three verbs for each task and include at least one opinion with a justification across the whole task.
- Listen to the questions carefully and take note when more than one detail is asked.
- Pay close attention to the tense used in the questions and respond accordingly.

### General Conversation

- Try to include several opinions and justify them clearly.
- Use a variety of tenses: present, past, and future.
- If you don't understand a question, ask for it to be repeated in Italian.
- Always try to ask at least one question during the conversation.

## Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.