



GCSE

Italian

8633/WF Writing (Foundation)

Report on the examination

Version: 1.0
June 2025

Further copies of this report are available from 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

The paper was well differentiated, allowing students to score marks across a range of questions. The majority of students were entered for the appropriate tier, with only a few exceptions. The quality of work produced in this examination varied depending on the question, though it was generally of a lower standard than that seen last year. However, there were fewer instances than previously where students left entire questions blank.

As highlighted in the individual question feedback, some students struggled to address certain bullet points due to unfamiliar vocabulary, particularly in Questions 2 and 4, as well as in the photo description and the translation. For Questions 2 and 4, students should be trained to give an opinion on the content of a bullet point even if they are unsure of its exact meaning. When describing a photo, students can refer to the people shown, including physical characteristics where relevant. For the translation, students must read the English phrase carefully and make an educated guess based on the original text.

Where students performed well, they demonstrated the ability to use a variety of time frames and tenses and to express opinions, especially in Question 4. As in previous years, a number of scripts featured handwriting that was either illegible or very difficult to read.

Question 1

The best responses in this series included successful use of phrases such as '*c'è*', '*ci sono*', or '*vedo*'. This year, however, saw less use of the phrase '*c'è*' and more instances of '*vado*' instead of '*vedo*' – though some still made this error. There were more examples of verbs in the third person singular and plural, e.g. '*ha un telefono*', '*sorridono*', '*parlano*', '*guardano il telefono*'. There were fewer instances where students wrote nothing at all. Unfortunately, once again this year, a number of students gave their opinion of the photo. Students need to write four sentences about what is **in** the photo and what they can see. They may give their opinion, as long as it is justified by something visible in the photo, for example: '*Mi piace la foto perché i ragazzi sono contenti*'. The vocabulary for *girl*, *boy*, *man* and *woman*, and their plural equivalents, was widely known. A recurrent error this year was the word for mobile phone, '*mobile*', and students stating that there was a park where there was clearly no evidence of one in the photo. Where students were unable to score marks, it was mainly for the following reasons, some of which are similar to previous series:

- the accent on the 'e' on '*c'è*' was often omitted. To help avoid this recurring mistake, students could instead use the phrase: (*nella foto*) *vedo*...
- the use of '*che*' and '*ce*' instead of '*c'è*'
- the use of '*chi*' (*chi sono*) for '*ci sono*'
- the use of '*c'è sono*'
- inaccuracy causing a delay in communication – use of English, French or Spanish words that do not exist in Italian, or incomprehensible key vocabulary

Advice to students

- Keep the sentences **simple** to ensure that a clear message is being communicated.
- If you don't know how to conjugate the verb but know the infinitive, use the infinitive, eg. *una ragazza guardare il cellulare* = 1 mark.
- Avoid using connectives or longer sentences for this question – they are not required.
- Don't leave blanks – write at least one word.
- Write what you see.
- Don't give your opinion about the photo unless you can justify it with something that you can see **in** the photo.

Question 2

Teachers are reminded that there are 10 marks for Content and 6 marks for Quality of Language. Students are required to write approximately 40 words in total about four different bullet points. All bullet points are compulsory and must be covered, but there is no need for equal coverage of the bullet points. The present tense alone is sufficient for answering this question.

Content

The criteria for assessment address both coverage of the bullet points and clarity of communication. The most successful responses were concise and addressed all four bullet points. Students could write anything in relation to each bullet point.

Many students were able to respond to this question, with the majority earning marks for Content. Some students were unable to score highly due to their misunderstanding of the rubric.

- **gli studi** – most students were able to respond by stating their favourite subject. A few misunderstood the prompt as referring to school in general. Answers that discussed school subjects were accepted.
- **i compagni di classe** – the rubric was sometimes misunderstood as asking for a description of a classroom. Any reference to friends was accepted. Some students gave opinions – which were also considered valid.
- **la ricreazione** – the majority answered this correctly, with many mentioning football as an activity during break. Most also included an opinion.
- **il lavoro** – the rubric was generally well understood. Some students wrote about a part-time job they have, others gave an opinion and some mentioned the job they would like to do in the future.

The present tense was used in most responses, which aligns with the requirements. Some students used the past and future tenses. These were not required by the mark scheme but were still accepted. Where a bullet point was not fully understood, students often provided an opinion instead. Very few left the question unanswered.

Quality of language

The vast majority of students were able to include a good variety of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures. There were good attempts at variety, such as using different ways to express opinions, although this was not required. Where students were unable to score marks, it was due to difficulties in expressing an opinion, confusion between singular and plural forms and the use of vocabulary from languages other than Italian.

The misspelling of *però* and *è* without accents, once again, led to changes in meaning, which affected the clarity of the message.

Advice to students

- Mention **all** of the bullet points. Attempt to write *something*, such as an opinion for each bullet point. Tick off the bullet points in the rubric once they have been answered.
- Stick to the word limit. Aim to write roughly the number of words required.
- Only write in the present tense and use simple connectives.

Question 3

For this question, there are 5 marks for *Conveying key messages* and 5 marks for *Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures*. Given that the level of demand of the messages was designed to target grades 1 to 5, the question provided good differentiation, with all students able to score at least some marks.

The sentences were divided into 12 key messages, as in the table below.

Conveying key messages

	Message	Comments
1	I hate Maths.	Generally translated well with the odd exception of the occasional <i>mi piace</i> . The main issue was the spelling of <i>matematica</i> : <i>maths, mathematica, mathmathica</i>
2	I am tall.	A few variations on the word tall : <i>lungo, grande, sono altro</i>
3	I live	Generally well translated.
4	in a big house	Generally well translated however many missed out the preposition <i>in</i> and used the definite article. The masculine and feminine indefinite articles were either not known or the definite article was used instead.
5	with a swimming pool.	Several didn't know the word <i>piscina</i> . Translations included: <i>con nuotare, con nuoto, in la nuoto</i>

6	I prefer going	A few managed to translate it correctly, <i>preferisco andare</i> . Others translated it as : <i>preferisco io vado</i> , <i>preferisco ando</i> , <i>preferisco andrò</i> or simply wrote <i>andare</i> without mentioning <i>preferisco</i> .
7	to school	At times the preposition <i>a</i> was missed out and <i>scuola</i> was written on its own. There were variations of the spelling of <i>scuola</i> : <i>schola</i> , <i>schoola</i> , <i>scola</i> .
8	by train or by bus.	Once again not many used the preposition <i>in</i> – the vocabulary for <i>treno</i> and <i>autobus</i> caused some issues – most of this chunk was left blank by many.
9	Last week,	Translations included: <i>l'anno settimana</i> , <i>l'anno scorso</i> , <i>l'ultima settimana</i> .
10	my mother	<i>mi madre</i> was not accepted. Not many knew the difference between the possessive adjectives <i>mio/mia</i> . <i>Mio madre</i> was accepted.
11	watched an interesting film	A very small number of students translated the verb in the perfect tense accurately. Many missed out the auxiliary verb <i>ha</i> or used the incorrect person of the auxiliary, <i>ho</i> instead of <i>ha</i> .
12	at the cinema.	Prepositions were not known and mostly incorrectly applied: <i>in la cinema/nella cinema/ in una cinema</i> .

Application of grammatical knowledge of language and structures

As a general rule for the translation, if a word is misspelled but does not mean anything else, that part of the answer is accepted. However, if the misspelling alters the meaning of the word, that part of the answer is not awarded. Minor errors did not prevent marks being awarded for conveying key messages, provided they were communicated. The most common error was the omission of the accent on the 'e'. Additionally, prepositions were once again not widely known in this series. Inaccurate adjectival, noun, and verb agreements, incorrect tenses and misuse of singular nouns continue to be areas of concern.

The vocabulary used in translations is largely drawn from the Specifications vocabulary lists, cognates and KS3 vocabulary. Therefore, students need to have a sound knowledge of the words included in the vocabulary lists.

Advice to students

- Learn prepositions and time expressions used in the past: *in, a, da, il mese scorso, la settimana scorsa, ieri*.
- Learn vocabulary related to transport.
- Check carefully that **all** aspects of the translation have been addressed. Even if you do not know every word in the sentence, make an educated guess. It could make the difference of a mark or two.
- Learn the difference in meaning between *e* and *è*.

- Learn the possessive adjectives *mio, mia, tuo, tua*, etc. and how the gender of the noun they refer to affects which one you use; eg. *mio padre* (masculine), *mia madre* (feminine).

Question 4

For this question, there are 10 marks for Content and 6 marks for Quality of Language. Students are required to write approximately 90 words in total, covering four different bullet points. While all points must be covered, equal coverage of the bullet points is not required. The quality of responses varied considerably. Many students produced extended answers that demonstrated their ability to develop ideas, express opinions and refer to different time frames. However, less successful responses often stemmed from misinterpretation of the bullet points, omission of bullet points or grammatical errors that altered the intended meaning. As last year, many students struggled with the vocabulary in the rubrics. In some cases, this led to general, unfocused writing that did not address the required bullet points.

Content

The criteria for assessment focus on four elements: coverage of the bullet points, development of ideas, clarity of communication and expression of opinions. Students need to be reminded that coverage of bullet points is key, as misinterpreting or omitting even one bullet point means that the award of a mark above 6 is impossible. To be awarded marks in the 7-10 range, all aspects of the task must be covered. In addition, although students had no difficulty in developing ideas and expressing opinions, there were occasions when inaccuracy led to a lack of clarity of communication (referred to as 'lapses' and 'breakdown of messages') and this impacted on marks awarded. Each of the bullet points gave students scope to answer using three time frames and invited opportunity for an opinion. If information was given in relation to all four bullet points, but there were lapses in clarity and a lack of **two** opinions, students could not necessarily score a mark of 8 or 9.

Quality of language

The key features of the criteria for assessment in the Quality of Language are: use of a variety of language, attempts at complexity, time frames and accuracy. There were many examples of attempts at complexity with use of longer sentences, accurate and a varied use of connectives such as *e, ma, comunque, perciò, quindi, dunque, poi* and *però*. Although still an issue with some students, *però* and *è* were for the most part accurately spelt within context.

Question 4.1

Content

This was the most popular task chosen in this series. While a few students produced general, unfocused responses that did not address the main bullet points, a significant number wrote

relevant content that aligned with the task requirements. Below are some observations related to the bullet points:

- **una festa importante per la tua famiglia** – some neglected to mention which feast day they were talking about so it was difficult to award the bullet point. Occasionally, the lack of changing the possessive adjective *tua famiglia* to *mia famiglia*, meant that students could not be awarded the bullet point since the question was not answered; eg. *una festa importante per la tua famiglia è il Natale*.
- **una celebrazione italiana** – The majority of students mentioned celebrations such as *La Befana*, the Carnival of Venice, Easter, or Christmas. Marks were lost when students neglected to explain what the feast day was, or when they used the English word, for example, *Mi piace Easter*.
- **un compleanno l'anno scorso** – most students were able to answer this question mentioning their own birthday, and that of various family members or friends.
- **un regalo ideale** – The majority of students answered this question by mentioning a specific item or occasion they would like as an ideal present. The bullet point was awarded even when the item wasn't specified, as long as students explained that an ideal gift should be meaningful and suited to the recipient. Marks were lost when students wrote only about a general present or described what they received for Christmas or their last birthday, rather than what their ideal gift would be.

Quality of language

- *Mi piace* and *preferisco* were very often used to indicate likes or preferences.
- Connectives such as *e*, *ma*, *comunque*, *poi* and *però* were commonly used. However, the accent on *però* was often omitted, which altered the intended meaning.
- The omission of the accent on 'e' also led to changes in meaning.
- Frequent confusion was noted in the use of: *a /ha* - *o/ho* - *ai/hai*.
- The lack of accent in the simple future of *farò* and *sarà* was a recurring error, often resulting in breakdowns in communication.
- Common spelling mistakes included *quando*, *puoi*, *poi*, *sonno*.
- The incorrect use of *spendere tempo* appeared frequently once again.
- Many students attempted to use complex sentence structures, such as *se potessi scegliere*, but often employed them as standalone phrases without completing the sentence or demonstrating an understanding of their proper use. Basic grammatical structures were not always evident.

Question 4.2

Content

Most students responded to the question successfully. Below are some observations related to the bullet points:

- **un vantaggio della tua zona** – students gave a variety of responses, including activities available in town, proximity to a park or a big town or the presence of surrounding countryside.

- **l'importanza di riciclare** – most students answered this point successfully, often noting that recycling helps save the planet.
- **cosa hai fatto recentemente per aiutare l'ambiente** – marks were lost when students described recent activities that did not clearly relate to helping the environment.
- **cosa ti piacerebbe cambiare nella tua città** – Some students struggled to specify **what** they would like to change in their town, instead discussing **where** they would like to live in the future.

Quality of language

Some students demonstrated the ability to write in all three tenses, using both first and third person singular and, occasionally, the second person plural. However, marks were often lost when students struggled to construct verbs correctly in the appropriate tense, or left them in the infinitive, eg. *spesso riciclaggio la plastica, io aiutare l'ambiente con il riciclare*.

Other common errors included:

- Incorrect use of *e/è* changed the intended meaning.
- Frequent confusion was noted in the use of: *a /ha o/ho ai/hai*.
- Spelling mistakes – examples included *sonno* instead of *sono*, *chi* for *ci*, and *che* for *c'è*.
- Misuse of prepositions – errors such as *a in, su il* were common.
- the word *inquinamento* was unfamiliar to some; instead, students used incorrect words or expressions like *polluzione, enviromento, or importante per la sante*.
- The future forms *farò* and *sarà* were often written without accents, leading to changes in meaning and breakdowns in communication.
- *Cuando, puoi, poi, può, deliciouso, mangiare, guargnare soldi, lo stressso* were common spelling mistakes.
- The pluperfect was often used incorrectly in place of the perfect tense: *ero andato* instead of *sono andato*, *avevo fatto* instead of *ho fatto*.

Advice to students

- Aim to write roughly the suggested number of words. The emphasis needs to be on **quality** and not **quantity**.
- Mention **all** of the bullet points. Attempt to write *something* about each of them rather than omitting them. Tick off the bullet points once they have been answered.
- Identify which bullet points target the different time frames and check that verb formations are accurate. Use the time markers in the bullet points and include them in your response: *in passato, in futuro, recentemente, l'anno prossimo, mi piacerebbe*.
- Make sure you include at least **TWO** opinions as required by the task.
- Make sure your handwriting is legible.
- Learn the possessive adjectives and to correctly shift from the second person singular in the rubric to the first person singular when writing your response. If the bullet point says: *una festa importante per la tua famiglia*, your answer should begin with *una festa importante per la mia famiglia....*

- When including complex language, ensure you understand what you are writing and complete your sentences accurately. Incomplete or grammatically incorrect complex phrases can undermine the quality of your response.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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