2000 HSC Notes from the Examination Centre Italian

Italian

2 Unit Z

Listening

Candidates are reminded that they should include all relevant information in their answers and to express themselves in coherent English.

A significant number of candidates demonstrated a lack of familiarity with basic vocabulary items.

Item 1:

Candidates encountered difficulty with an accurate rendition of *un chilo e mezzo*, *mila* and the units of currency.

Item 2:

Many candidates understood the concept of "rainy weather" but not the idea of the cat being outside.

Item 3:

Many candidates did not recognise *il libretto d'assegni* as cheque book, referring to it as "traveller's cheques".

Many were unable to accurately interpret *messaggi registrati*, referring to car registrations instead.

Item 4:

The majority understood the concept of plane travel, but were unable to express *l'ultima volta* correctly.

Item 7:

In part (a), many candidates were unable to adequately express *lo spettacolo* in relation to a film.

In part (b), many did not include all specific information relating to the age restriction.

Item 8:

In this item many candidates did not recognise *risotto* and were unable to interpret *tra mezz'ora* accurately.

Item 9:

In part (a), the concept of *accompagnare* was often expressed as "visiting my sister in hospital" rather than going with her.

In part (b), *ginocchio* was commonly mistaken for *occhio*.

Item 10:

Many candidates did not interpret *cliente* accurately, and did not explain that the delay was due to blocked traffic caused by an accident.

Item 11:

Many candidates encountered a problem differentiating between a department store and a shop or a shopping centre.

Item 12:

Candidates found the concepts difficult in this question: the girl wanting a military career not study and combining study and sport.

Item 13:

Many candidates misinterpreted the concept of the man having lots of luggage and the function of the gondolier.

Item 15:

This question presented several vocabulary difficulties: *due passi*, *un temporale*, *fra mezz'ora*.

Item 16:

This question was well answered by the majority of candidates. Most recognised *pallacanestro*.

Item 17:

This question was generally well answered, except for part (c), where interpreting *la mia macchina fotografica è guasta* proved a problem.

Item 18:

In part (c), candidates encountered difficulty with interpreting *se no mi addormento durante lo spettacolo*.

Item 20:

This question was quite well answered, although some candidates did not recognise the "number plate" concept.

Speaking

SITUATIONS

On the whole, candidates performed reasonably well in this section. Candidates proved to be better prepared for this type of examination.

Most candidates could paraphrase when unable to give the exact word in certain situations and capably responded to the less directed (more open) cues.

Situation 1:
- Handled well by most candidates.

Situation 2:
- Failure to link the request for two other items with shopping at a delicatessen.

Situation 3:
- Inconsistency in the gender of a friend.
- Incorrect use of *da* with a friend.

Situation 4:
- Confusion between *trovare* and *cercare*.

Situation 5:
- Inability to express the first two cues in this situation by the majority of candidates.

CONVERSATION

Candidates made a good attempt at responding to the conversation questions and, on the whole performed at above average level.

The better candidates sustained a conversation and elaborated appropriately in their responses. However, poorer candidates offered little elaboration and also had difficulty in understanding the questions, in particular Question 8.

Question 6:
The better responses were able to elaborate as to why they preferred a particular subject. Most candidates were able to adequately answer this question. Weaker candidates on hearing the word *materia* often began listing the subjects they study at school.

Question 7:
The better responses elaborated on a variety of activities. Some candidates had difficulty with the verb *esci*.

Question 8:
This was the most challenging of all the questions for many candidates. The weaker candidates had difficulty with the concept of *preparazione*.

Question 9:
The better candidates comprehended the key words of this question, which were *piacerebbe* and *estero*.

Question 10:
The better responses were able to relay information about their intentions related to study and travel. Candidates were generally well prepared for this question.

Reading Skills

PASSAGE A

Overall, the candidates performed well on this challenging text.

    a)   This question was answered well.

    b)   This question was the least well answered. Very few candidates included all elements of the answer.

    c)   Candidates answered this question reasonably well.

    d)   Vocabulary items that proved challenging to many candidates were: *concreto impegno* and *inquinamento*.

PASSAGE B

This passage proved challenging to many candidates.

    a)   Vocabulary items that proved challenging were: *aziende alimentari*.

    b)   Many candidates found *le regole igieniche* difficult to understand.

    c)   This was the least well answered question. Most candidates did not understand *forno a legna*.

    d)   This question was the best answered.

PASSAGE C

Despite the demanding nature of the passage, questions were adequately answered overall.

    a)   Some candidates were not able to qualify *carne* correctly.

    b)   (i)   The majority of candidates were not able to understand *fette sottilissime* and many candidates confused "ham" as part of the ingredients rather than a comparison.

           (ii)   The majority of candidates were unable to comprehend *senape*.

    c)   This question was reasonably answered.

    d)   This question was answered well.

PASSAGE D

Overall this passage was well answered.

    a)   Most candidates answered this question well.

    b)   *accoglienti* and *riposanti* proved to be difficult vocabulary items.

    c)   Only some candidates grasped the concept of the house that rotates on its base.

PASSAGE E

Overall, candidates performed quite well.

    a)   Most candidates answered this part well.

    b)   Some candidates had problems with *impianto audio* and *albergo*.

    c)   This part was well answered.

    d)   This question was sometimes not understood and caused confusion.

Short Writing

Question 1

(a) Better responses were able to actually describe an incident, rather than just listing a sequence of events. This included acknowledging the incident that occurred in town or on the way there or back. Good responses handled the past tense well and demonstrated a sound knowledge of idiomatic and grammatical structures.

(b) This question elicited better responses. Better candidates expressed a range of feelings and were able to use expressions such as *non vedo l'ora* rather than directly translating from the English. Better responses handled the future tense well. Many candidates had learnt a number of useful expressions and the better ones were able to adopt them appropriately within the context of the question.

Question 2

(a) Better responses gave clear detail about time, place, date of arrival and were able to handle the future tense. Spelling items: *aeroporto/volo.*

(b) Better responses had *ho ordinato* and were able to convey the request, using expressions such as *puoi…* or *mi puoi fare un favore…* Better responses also specified the item clearly (including a description of it) and that it had to be collected, not just purchased. This proved to be a challenging question.

(c) Better responses confidently handled expressions of time and date, avoiding the anglicised *sul sabato*. The invitation proved awkward for many candidates. Better responses handled subject/verb agreement (especially *tu* and *voi* forms) well.

(d) This was the best handled question in the short tasks. Better responses avoided a literal translation from English (eg *è non possible*). Better responses acknowledged and used fax format, including signing off appropriately. *Tu/voi/Lei* forms handled well by the better candidates.

2/3 Unit

Listening Skills

Item 1:

(a) Candidates frequently did not include all relevant information in their answer, eg 6 months ago and New Year's Day/Eve.

(b) Candidates needed to be specific and include the "English" language.

(c) Many candidates specified that the mother never hears from Alessandra by phone or in writing.

Item 2:

(a) More able candidates were able to understand "Northern" and "alpine" region.

(b) Most candidates understood "in the mountains", but many omitted "above 1000 metres".

Item 3:

(b)"Arthritis" posed problems for many candidates.

(c) The majority of candidates understood *bicicletta*, but many did not specify that she "buy" or "get" a bike.

Item 5:
This question proved to be difficult for the majority of candidates. Concepts were often muddled.

Item 6:
This item was generally well answered, but many candidates were unable to identify "director".

Item 7:
Less able candidates misunderstood *antiquario* for *aquario*

Item 8:

* A large number of candidates experienced difficulty with *impiantate sotto la pelle* and *una cellula solare*.

* The majority interpreted *ricaricare la batteria* as recharging the battery, rather than replacing it.

* *Sensibile* was often translated as "sensible" instead of "sensitive".

* Global understanding of this item proved challenging for the majority of candidates.

Item 9:

(a) Very few candidates understood *in moto*, identifying a car rather than a motor-bike.

(b) *All'ombra* was misinterpreted by many candidates.

Item 10:

(a) Many candidates provided more than 3 features. Candidates should be reminded to write the response they are most confident about, when they have a choice.

(b) *Tre milioni* was often misinterpreted. Candidates should not convert currency. *Incentivi ecologia* was misinterpreted by many candidates.

Item 11:

(a) Many candidates did not specify "World War I".

(b) The full date was not supplied in many cases.

Item 12:
This item was generally well understood, although in Part (a) many candidates wrote that she was sitting down in her seat rather than minding it.

Item 14:
Lo stacco was misinterpreted by many candidates as "taking it off the hook" rather than it being disconnected.

Item 15:
This question proved to be an excellent discriminator.

Item 16:

Candidates often allowed their answers to part (b) to be influenced by the information in the multiple choice in part (a).

In part (b), very few candidates understood the concept of the window being sealed.

Item 17:
Part (c) proved a challenge for all candidates as it required them to provide all components of the response.

Item 18:
Candidates needed to convey all elements in their answer. In part (c), many candidates did not include "below 20 grams" in their answer.

Item 19:
This question was generally well answered, although a significant number of candidates did not understand the pun in the answer for part (b).

Speaking Skills

SITUATIONS

Situation 1:
Candidates experienced difficulty with basic vocabulary, eg January, overcoat, size and grey. Expressions such as "warm overcoat" were not handled well by many candidates.

Situation 2:
There were difficulties with vocabulary items, such as "rent", "next time", "around the corner" and "on foot". Few candidates were able to express "about to" correctly.

Situation 3:
Sapere was used more than *conoscere* to indicate knowledge of Sydney. Candidates experienced difficulties with less structured situations, eg relating their personal experience to job requirements and did not provide appropriate information. The cue "say when you could start" was misinterpreted by some candidates.

Situation 4:
Some vocabulary items caused problems, eg "assignment", "oral exam", "to hand in". More able candidates used direct/indirect pronouns effectively.

Situation 5:
The correct form of address was not used well in this situation.
Difficult vocabulary items included "art", "galleries" and "recommends".
Candidates experienced problems with grammatical structures such as *studio…da…*, "the best way" and "one of the galleries".

CONVERSATION

The vast majority of candidates were able to respond to the cues and expand on their ideas. More able candidates were able to elaborate appropriately at greater length on the topics.

Question 6
Many candidates did not understand *estive* and alternative expressions had to be used. Some candidates confused *estive* with "festive".

Question 7
Some candidates found it difficult to answer because they had not seen a film **recently** due to study demands. These candidates had to be encouraged by the examiner to talk about any film they had seen.

Question 8
Zona caused a problem for some candidates.

Question 10
Many candidates responded in a basic manner to this question. Few were able to expand on their responses to this question.

Question 12
Most candidates understood the question and were able to respond adequately. However, many candidates struggled with giving extended answers to *Come ha cambiato la tua vita*?

Writing Skills

Question 3 – Short Writing

In part (a) the better candidates used the appropriate vocabulary and expressions, but weaker candidates had difficulty conveying the information required.

Part (b) allowed candidates the scope to elaborate on a personal experience.

The best responses combined good use of a variety of idiomatic expressions.

Candidates are advised to take great care with grammar and spelling.

Question 4 – Long Writing

The majority of candidates attempted part (a); very few attempted part (d).

Many candidates displayed some originality in their development of ideas and used descriptive language and a variety of grammatical structures. Candidates should avoid repetitive responses, lack of detail and inappropriate expressions.

Reading Skills

Both questions were answered well by the majority of candidates. However, candidates are to be reminded that they should endeavour to supply complete answers in coherent English.

In Question 1, some vocabulary proved a challenge, eg *morbido*, *I volti delle persone*, confusing this with "voices" and *scopi utili*.

In Question 2, some candidates did not recognise "couples" and confused *ridere* and *sorridere*. Other areas of difficulty were *instinti vitali*, *il riso* and *umorismo*.

Options

Question 5 – Calvino

This question was generally well answered by the majority of candidates. Many displayed a sophisticated understanding and knowledge of the text and were able to quote accurately in Italian to support their answers.

Most were able to identify correctly what the *sentimento* in Question 1 referred to, although some puzzling alternatives were offered.

Some candidates also encountered some difficulty with the "imagery" concept. It was felt that the majority of candidates acquitted themselves well in this question.

Question 6 – Dario Fo

Unfortunately a number of candidates displayed little knowledge of the play. However, there were some perceptive and thorough answers.

In part (b) many candidates opted to re-tell the story rather than to discuss the staging and very few commented on the stage directions quoted, preferring instead to describe the house.

In part (c) there was some misunderstanding of the term "bureaucracy".

In part (d) many candidates were able to distinguish the various roles in the play.

In part (e) the quality of the answers varied greatly. The best answers adapted their knowledge of the play to an appropriate answer.

Song Option

ALESSANDRO E IL MARE

Candidates generally coped adequately responding to all components of the song option. Most candidates presented the themes well in their responses and better candidates were also able to substantiate with appropriate quotes from the song.

(a) and (b) Many translated answers rather than interpreting, analysing and inferring answers.

(c)   This was by far the most challenging question with candidates unable to provide a view of the song.

(d)   Candidates were challenged here, in terms of interpreting structure and then linking it to themes. Many candidates merely recounted the story linking themes rather than answering the question. Other candidates only discussed one theme.

(e)   By far the best responses were evident here. Candidates were able to comfortably discuss this theme.

3 Unit (Additional)

Speaking Skills

The better responses had well-structured and convincing arguments and used an impressive range of lexis, structures and language appropriate to the task.

The poorer responses were repetitive, using language below the level expected of 3 Unit candidates.

Although the level of grammar was generally satisfactory, candidates found it difficult to express themselves using more sophisticated language and to sustain a coherent argument.

Listening Skills

The 3 Unit Listening paper proved to be challenging.

Challenging questions included:
2(b), 3(c), 4(b), 6(b), 7(b) and (c) 10(a), 11(b) and 12(c).

The better candidates were able to identify the key words required for a complete answer.

Examples

Item 5(b) – …*abitare il cucciolo alla macchina fin dalla terza settimana* – "from the third week" NOT "for/until 3 weeks"

Item 7(b)(ii) – *impedisce il godimento delle bellezze della citta* – "inhibits the enjoyment of the beauties of the city" rather than "detracts from the beauty of the city".

Candidates should always ensure that the answers they write in English are plausible.

Reading Comprehension

Generally, this section was well answered, with candidates displaying a high level of understanding of the passage. Candidates must ensure that they include all relevant information in their responses.

Some candidates encountered difficulty in their global understanding of the contents of the passage and in expressing their responses in coherent English.

Writing

Question (a) was answered by the majority of candidates.

Some candidates were unable to use basic grammatical structures adequately.

Better responses contained arguments to support their position, with concepts and vocabulary being clearly expressed.

The appropriate register should always be used – such as the formal letter format in part (c). Incorrect use of the *tu* form was common in this response.