

## ITALIAN

In 1995 the total number of candidates sitting for the examination in Italian was 685, of whom 310 presented for the 2/3 Unit (Common) Course, 113 presented for the 3 Unit Course and 262 for the 2 Unit Z Course.

Candidates continued to show a good level of competency in the Listening and Speaking Skills sections, but there is still concern over the satisfactory and less than satisfactory level of achievement in the Reading and Writing Skills as demonstrated across all levels.

The new time allotted to the 2 Unit Reading and Writing papers appears to have been a problem to many candidates who did not finish sections of the paper. Students and teachers are advised to look closely at the 1996 HSC Examination guidelines for clear directions regarding the examination in 1996. Candidates are also advised to do their preferred sections first to ensure that they have completed their best sections, thus maximising their marks. It is also important to discipline themselves to keeping to a time limit for each section.

It is strongly recommended that, during their study of Italian, students spend more time in acquiring better reading skills in order to answer the questions in the Reading Section of the examination paper correctly. Passages need to be read for comprehension and it is recommended that, as candidates read the passage, they should develop a technique of underlining or highlighting sections of the passage that relate to the questions. Before writing the answers in English, candidates should ensure that they have understood the concepts and then proceed to write them in clear, simple yet well expressed English. Students must realise that translating ideas from one language to another is a challenging skill and, in Italian, most often requires paraphrasing and changing the order of words from Italian to English and vice versa. 2 UZ candidates should not assume that the reading passages will be restricted to the Traveller Abroad topics which are the focus in the Speaking and Listening papers.

In the Writing section in all courses candidates are encouraged to be descriptive and imaginative where possible, rather than restricting themselves merely to recounting a series of events. Furthermore, students are strongly advised to study their grammar, vocabulary and idiomatic expressions to ensure a better preparation for this section. Finally, it is important to follow the basic rules of good essay writing; ideas should be presented logically and sequentially; there should be good paragraphing to avoid boredom and confusion of ideas, and it is most important to have a strong effective conclusion, especially in the 3 Unit essays.

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### 2 Unit Z : Listening

The majority of candidates performed reasonably well in this section. It was pleasing to see most candidates attempting all questions. Students are encouraged, however, to provide as much detail in their answers as possible.

The following difficulties were encountered in some cases:

- Item 1 Many candidates failed to understand *motoscafo* and *mal di mare*.
- Item 5 *Servizio stradale* was often misunderstood and some candidates did not say *the car's lights went out*.
- Item 7 Many failed to realise that the woman was responding to a job advertisement.
- Item 8 Candidates failed to provide the correct word for *portofoglio*, giving either *portfolio* or *watch* (from Part B). Many also missed the preposition *sotto*.
- Item 9 *Parenti* was often translated as *parents*.
- Item 10 This item was answered poorly as candidates failed to understand what was on the increase. The word *pallone* was often misinterpreted as being the same as *pantaloni*.
- Item 11 Some gave *cinema* as the translation for *teatro*.
- Item 12 This item was answered well. Some candidates, however, failed to include *new* in the answer.
- Item 15
- (a) Specific information was needed for the woman's request, i.e. type of room and dates. On the whole, however, this was well done.
  - (b) Many candidates did not recognise the *alta stagione*.
  - (c) The majority did not adequately respond with the idea that the receptionist would check to see if anything was available for the previous week.
- Item 16
- (b) The concept of *being fired for badly parking their bikes* was not understood by some candidates.
- Item 17
- (a) A number of candidates did not state *life-size* in their answer.
  - (b) *On the phone* was often omitted.

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- Item 18 (a) Candidates had difficulty in recognising *pallanuoto*.
- Item 20 (a) Including both *tour guide* and *cassette* in their answer proved difficult for many candidates.

### 2/3 Unit : Listening

Candidates generally performed very well and showed their knowledge of a range of vocabulary. Students are encouraged to provide as many details as possible in their answers in order to ensure a complete response.

- Item 1 (b) Generally candidates omitted the point that the speaker had to be satisfied with watching the screen.
- Item 2 *Paesi dell'est* was misunderstood by many candidates.
- Item 3 Many omitted the *per ripartire da un semaforo* element in their answers.
- Item 4 *Mescolato* was often incorrectly translated.
- Item 5 (a) In these parts candidates often omitted elements of the answer and rendering them incomplete, e.g. (b) *successfully/undergo/a singing/audition*.
- Item 6 (a) Many candidates omitted details such as *tourists returning to Italy*.
- (b) Generally candidates failed to understand *svalutazione della lira*.
- Item 7 (b) Some translated *occupato* incorrectly.
- Item 8 (a) Many candidates mentioned that the photographs were ruined but failed to mention the negatives.
- (b) Some candidates did not understand *fiducia*, translating it as *proper, better, more, professional*, etc.
- Item 9 (a) A number failed to provide complete answers. In many cases either *it is the best time* or *for an overseas holiday/trip* were omitted.
- Item 10 Many candidates did not understand *abbonati* and misinterpreted *sanità* as meaning *sanitary*.

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- Item 11 (a) *Intossicati* was translated as *intoxicated*.  
(b) *Ufficio igiene* was also incorrectly translated.
- Item 13 (b) Candidates translated *comodo* as *comfortable* rather than *convenient*.
- Item 15 (b) This part was not adequately answered.
- Item 16 (a) Candidates translated *rovesciato* literally as *vomited*. It is important to ensure that the question is understood. *A scream of terror* is **not** a *mishap*.
- Item 17 (b) Details of *how* the jeans were made were needed; *by computer* was an incomplete answer.
- Item 18 Candidates failed to understand *bagnini*.
- Item 19 (a) The question is a comparative one (*cheaper*). A number of candidates did not respond to the change that had been made. *Second class* is an insufficient answer.  
(b) Many candidates failed to understand that a booking fee had been introduced. The fare had not changed.
- Item 20 (a) Capable students recognised *noti*.  
(b) Vocabulary items were recognised but generally the concept of *the name of the dishes being inspired by the title of classic Italian films* was not recognised.

### 3 Unit : Listening

Generally candidates performed well in this section. The better candidates provided detailed answers, nevertheless, many were not specific enough in the details provided.

The following is a breakdown of problems encountered in each item:

- Item 2 (b) (ii) This proved difficult for many candidates who seemed to become confused by the information in the item.
- Item 3 (b) This part proved difficult, possibly due to the length and the complexity of the item.

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- Item 4            Some candidates expressed (a)(i) and (ii) poorly. This might have been due to the technical nature of some of the vocabulary.
- (b)        Few candidates answered this question fully.
- Item 7 (a)        A number of candidates missed *dai senzatetto*.
- (b)        Many candidates missed *racconti di vita vissuta*, but most recognised *dove trovare un taglio di capelli gratuito*.
- Item 8            Generally this was answered well, especially (b) and (c). In (a) some candidates were too vague and did not include *city of origin*, writing instead *place of origin*.
- Item 9 (b)        Many candidates failed to recognise *fai da te* and seemed to be unfamiliar with much of the vocabulary in the second half of the item.
- Item 10           A number of candidates omitted *temporali* in part (b).
- Item 11           (b)        Although the majority understood this item, many did not give accurate details while others did not understand *spore*.
- Item 13           (a)        The fact that the young people founded an art centre was often omitted, as well as the concept of transforming the refuse into sculpture.
- (b)        *Giostre* was generally not understood.
- Item 14           (b)        Candidates often missed the concept of the motor cyclist being a racer, *corridore*.
- (c)        It was pleasing to see that *asta* was known by many candidates.
- Item 15           (a)        The various complaints that could be made to the President were expressed together and given as one combination rendering the response incomprehensible.

## 2 Unit Z : Speaking

On the whole, students performed reasonably well in this section, although the knowledge of vocabulary proved to be a major problem.

The general difficulties in each situation proved to be:

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### Situation 1

- Poor knowledge of the adverb *appena*.
- Incorrect preposition in front of *city* and inability to say *Florence* in Italian.
- Misplaced or non-existent direct object pronoun; *lo devi leggere*.

### Situation 2

- Inability to use the reflexive verb correctly, *ci incontriamo*.
- Confusion between *volta* and *tempo* in *un'altra volta*.

### Situation 3

- Poor knowledge of vocabulary such as *ripetere* and *domanda*.
- Transliteration of the verb form in the present tense, e.g. *sono abitare* instead of *abito*.
- Inability to conjugate the verb *aiutare* into 3rd person plural.

### Situation 4

- Vocabulary such as *spedire*, *mandare*, *pacco* not known.
- Incorrect pronunciation of *regalo*.
- Inability to express *via aereo* correctly.
- Incorrect preposition in front of countries, e.g. *in Australia*.
- Inability to use a basic idiomatic expression, e.g. *quanto ci vuole* with a verb.

### Situation 5

- Inability to express *al matrimonio di mio fratello*.
- Lack of agreement between the noun and adjective in *quando sono pronte (le fotografie)*.
- General confusion over use of the polite form.

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### 2 Unit Z : Reading

Candidates took very little account of punctuation and so the reading was stilted and lacked fluency. Many found the following words difficult to pronounce:

*svolgere*

*crescita*

*inserimento*

*trasferirsi*

### 2 Unit Z : Conversation

Candidates made a good attempt at responding to the conversation questions and, on the whole, performed at a satisfactory level. The better candidates elaborated appropriately in their responses and sustained a conversation. The poorer candidates offered little elaboration and also had difficulty in understanding the questions.

Questions 1 and 8 were well done by the majority who gave elaborate responses. These were well prepared topics.

Difficulties encountered in other questions included:

Question 2     Difficulty in understanding the words *paese* and *vivere*. The latter was often interpreted as *visitare*.

Question 3     Difficulty in interpreting the words *regalo* and *Natale*.

Question 4     Difficulty in understanding *all'aria aperta*.

Question 5     This sentence was often not understood, candidates, therefore, needed to have it paraphrased as *parli molto al telefono?*.

Question 6     On hearing the word *materia* many candidates often began listing the subjects they study at school. They seemed to have difficulty with the concept of *di più* and totally misunderstood *per quale*.

Question 7     Difficulty occurred in understanding the concept of *l'ora di pranzo*.

### 2/3 Unit : Speaking Skills

On the whole candidates achieved a good standard in this section, with many of them demonstrating an ability and willingness to communicate as fully as possible.

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### Situations

The majority of the candidates responded to the cues given and made a great effort to convey ideas accurately. It was pleasing to note that when a specific vocabulary item was not known an attempt was made to provide an appropriate alternative.

Some of the difficulties that arose were:

- Situation 1
- *tipicale di questo paese* for *typical of this region*.
  - *devo* instead of *dev'essere piccolo*.
  - *spendere* for *spending time at home*.
  - *una persona più vecchia/o di me* for *an older person*.
  - incorrect use of auxiliary verb *sono trovato*.
- Situation 2
- Many students found it difficult to translate *thank the students who voted for you*. Often *the students* was rendered in the third person plural.
- *incontramento, il primo lettura* were used for *meeting*.
  - *una settimana fà* for *in a week's time*.
  - *fare la scuola più meglio, fare la scuola più bene* for *improve the school*.
- Situation 3
- *disadvantaggio* instead of *svantaggio* for *disadvantage*.
  - *advertisement* was often incorrectly rendered.
  - *essere parte di* for *to be part of*.
  - incorrect preposition in *looking for months*.
- Situation 4
- incorrect auxiliary with verb *crescere*.
  - incorrect use of preposition in *from the city centre*.
  - *coltura* for *culture*.
  - misunderstanding of the final cue so that the address to a friend was rendered incorrectly in the 3rd person singular.

### 2/3 Unit : Reading

On the whole the standard in this section was good, with the better candidates making an attempt to read with expression and fluency. A number, however, read without much expression and therefore failed to convey that they had understood the passage.

Common errors in pronunciation were:

- *riscio* instead of *rischio*.
- *transformatata* instead of *trasformata*,  
*in~~sp~~irati* instead of *ispirati*, and  
*paren~~t~~i* instead of *pareti*.



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- omission of the *r* in *scrostate*.
- difficulty with double consonants as shown in *realizzare*, *azzarda*, *razziste*.
- incorrect stress on words *periferia*, *rivolti*, *preside*, *stupefacente*.

### 2/3 Unit : Conversation

Candidates performed well in this section and readily elaborated on their responses without much prompting. They appeared more confident and made every effort to communicate fully so that, generally, the standard was above average.

The poorer candidates tended to rely on rehearsed answers without answering the question being asked. Unfortunately, some relied on dialect because their knowledge of standard Italian is poor. This is unacceptable.

Questions 2, 4 and 6 were generally well answered. Difficulties encountered in the other questions were:

Question 1     *ambiente* was misinterpreted as *subjects* studied at school or a place where the students would like to study after they finish school. The better candidates described the *atmosphere* of their preferred place of study. The majority gave a physical description of *where* they would like to study.

Question 2     Some candidates did not understand *vita scolastica*.

Question 5     Many had difficulty with the word *proteggere*.

Question 7     In a number of responses candidates said *disvantaggio* and had difficulty with the concept of *figli unici*.

Question 8     Responses to this question were often confused.

### 3 Unit : Speaking Skills

The standard achieved by candidates was most pleasing, with many comfortably obtaining the maximum marks for this section. As a consequence, the mean was above average.

Candidates demonstrated the ability to talk on a set topic for the required time, satisfactorily developing their talk and using a variety of appropriate local, national and global issues to support their views.

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Students are advised to read the questions carefully so that they can adopt the correct register.

In this session the inability to adopt the correct register was particularly evident in Topic 1 where there was no hint of a protest rally.

In Questions 2 and 3 many candidates did not indicate sufficiently that they were talking to a group of people and failed to address them as such. It is not sufficient to use simple greetings as an opening and closing statement. It is important to maintain the appropriate register throughout the talk.

Students are advised to practise integrating their arguments with the register required by the question.

### Topic 1

This proved to be the least favoured of the three topics. The better candidates concentrated on the various forms of noise pollution, whereas the poorer candidates talked about pollution in general. Many were badly prepared for this topic and, as a consequence, used a restricted range of lexis which was often barely adequate for the task.

### Topic 2

This proved to be the most popular of the three topics and, on the whole, was delivered competently by many students. In their discussions the better candidates showed a logical progression and organisation of opinions which included a wide range of supporting examples. They also demonstrated an excellent command of grammar, idioms and structures.

Poorer candidates limited themselves merely to stating the need for tolerance in 1995 and often presented a superficial response, incorporating a list of minority groups in the community that deserve tolerance.

### Topic 3

This was the second most favoured question. The better candidates addressed the topic on advertising carefully, balancing the positive and negative aspects of the argument.

The poorer candidates interpreted advertising as being either the media or publicity.. Some candidates did not focus on the *impact on our daily lives* which was fundamental to the question, and this was disappointing.

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## 2 Unit Z

### Section I : Reading Skills

#### Question 1

Generally candidates performed satisfactorily in this question. There were, however, more difficulties with Passages A and C than with Passages B, D and E where there was a good range of responses reflecting the ability of the candidates. Students are advised to read over the passages to accustom themselves to the information before beginning to answer the questions. Furthermore, where passages have a theme or topic which is familiar, care must be taken to answer from the passage and not to rely on personal experiences.

Relevant observations follow:

#### Passage A : Che Rapporto Avete Con La TV?

Candidates tended to base their answers on general knowledge rather than on information extracted from the passage.

- (a) The majority understood *dipendenti* but few understood *confonderci* so that most candidates spoke of *stifling ideas, lacking creativity and imagination*.
- (b) Here candidates had difficulty in understanding *parere* and therefore could not locate the required answers.
  - (i) Only a few candidates were able to express *little quality TV* since the majority expressed this as *a little TV is good*.
  - (ii) The idea of *quando ne abbiamo voglia* was often interpreted as *when you have time, when you have to or watch what you want to watch*.
  - (iii) This was answered reasonably well.
- (c) In this question most candidates understood the idea of changing from one programme to the next but failed to include the concept of not watching a programme from start to finish.
- (d) Most candidates understood putting the remote control out of reach but found the word *scelto* difficult to translate accurately.

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### Passage B : Eros Ramazzotti

This was reasonably well done by the majority of the candidates.

- (b) Here many found it difficult to decide what was the relevant information to include in the answer. Specific reading problems occurred in  
*i suoi tour*  
*è riuscito a non farsi cambiare troppo*  
*il più grosso successo musicale*  
*la gente ama tantissimo la musica.*

### Passage C : Un'interessante Iniziativa

On the whole this passage was answered quite poorly because of candidates' failure to understand the word *iniziativa*.

- (a) Here many understood *lettori* to mean *letters*.
- (b) Few candidates could give two reasons for the initiative. While several could say that it would increase the sales, very few could say that it would attract a regular readership. In fact, some took the word *regolare* to be the same as *regalo*.
- (c) Very few candidates could write about a feature of the initiative.
- (d) The majority of the candidates gained full marks here but, unfortunately, in some cases this was the only answer attempted.

### Passage D : Studiare All'estero?

There was a good spread of marks in this passage. Parts (b), (c) and (d) were generally very well answered and candidates recognised familiar vocabulary items.

- (e) This proved to be the most difficult, with many candidates not understanding *incontri di orientamento*, failing to mention that these took place *before their departure* as stated at the beginning of the sentence, *prima della partenza*. In the second part of the answer many did not realise that *frequentare* was a verb and therefore failed to convey the concept.

### Passage E : La Montagna lo La Vivo Così

- (a) Many candidates did not understand the concept of watching others moving on the slopes, *osservare come si muovevano*.

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- (b) The word *coda* proved to be a problem for candidates.
- (c) This was well done.
- (d) Candidates appeared to have answered this multiple-choice question without thinking. Students are advised to spend more time on these seemingly easy questions.

### 2/3 Unit (Common)

#### Section I : Reading Skills

On the whole the reading passages were satisfactorily answered with a good mean being achieved in the three passages.

Problems arise when candidates do not have a good understanding of the passage as a whole. Students are advised to read the whole passage for comprehension. Before attempting any questions they should highlight or underline sections that pertain to the answer. They should also ensure that their responses make sense and that they express those ideas clearly in English.

#### Question 1 : La Nuova Generazione

Most candidates found this passage challenging and often gave answers based on general knowledge rather than on information contained in the text.

- (a) These were the worst answered in this passage. There was little understanding of the
- (b) concepts of *miti* and *consumi* and much irrelevant information was included in an
- and
- (c) attempt to give the correct answer.
- (d),(e) Here candidates seemed to draw from personal experience rather than relying on the
- and
- (f) text. Candidates should make sure that they have answered all parts of the question
- and that their responses are not ambiguous. Many candidates failed to contrast the
- attitudes of the two generations and therefore failed to specify to which generation they
- were referring. Some did not read the question carefully and answered about *attitudes*
- in general* rather than *attitudes to parents*.
- (g) Many candidates interpreted *sono più svegli di noi* as meaning *they are more awake*
- than us*. Students must avoid translating literally as the English does not always
- convey the exact meaning of the Italian expression as can be seen from this question.
- Other words or expressions causing difficulties were
- inteso*,

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*svegli*,  
*domani lavorare* (often taken literally),  
*infallibili* (candidates could translate it literally but the meaning of the word in English was not understood),  
*totalizzante* (this was poorly translated).

The best answered questions were (e), (f) and (g) but, again, English expression was often poor. Those who gave the best responses interpreted the concepts in their own words and then backed them up with examples from the passage.

### Question 2

#### (a) Caro Computer Ti Scrivo

The majority of candidates found this passage challenging, especially when it came to expressing their ideas in English.

- (i) and (ii) These were well answered, on the whole.
- (iii) Here candidates had difficulty in understanding *unhappy moments will never be forgotten* so that many wrote *happy moments will never be forgotten*. Students are advised to take note of prefixes and suffixes - *infelicità* is not *felicità*.
- (iv) Here candidates misunderstood the question because they did not take note of the punctuation and grammar. Instead of saying *Roberta wanted to see through the eyes of the person found through the computer*, many said she *wanted to see with her own eyes* which meant nothing in the context.
- (v) and (vi) These were answered fairly well, with all the concepts important to the answer being included.

#### (b) Va Pure. Ma Sappi Che

This passage was satisfactorily answered by the majority of the candidates.

- (i) Very few knew the word *carenti* and the translations of the word *paesi* ranged from *towns* and *countries* to *places*, which is too general.
- (ii) Here many omitted the idea of living overseas or in the chosen country. Most candidates understood the idea of *early stages of moving*.

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- (iii) This was generally well done, although some candidates failed to include *per lunghi periodi*. Others wrote *people who had not been in Italy* rather than *those who had not been **out** of Italy*.
- (iv) Many candidates failed to give more than one destination or to include the translation of *occidentale*.

### 3 Unit

#### Section I : Reading Skills

The standard in this section was high, with candidates demonstrating a sound knowledge of the text through the complete answers given and relevant information based on the passage.

- (a) Here there was some difficulty in translating the word or conveying the idea of *impensate*.
- (b) Some candidates did not understand the word *protagonista*.
- (c) This part was answered well.
- (d) The word *condizioni* was sometimes mistranslated as *weather conditions*.
- (e) Here many neither answered fully nor included all the relevant information. A number rendered *romanzo familiare del protagonista* as *the familiar novel* or *the romance of the protagonist's family life*. Furthermore, *la Guerra dei Trent'anni* was translated as *the War of the 30s*.
- (f) and (i) These were well answered.
- (g) Some confusion arose over the phrase *linea di cambiamento di data*.
- (h) Here many candidates misinterpreted *Seicento* as meaning 600 rather than the 17th Century.

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## 2 Unit Z

### Section II : Writing Skills

#### Question 1

Responses here ranged from excellent to very poor. The better candidates made good use of idiomatic expressions, showed an understanding of basic grammar and appropriate use of vocabulary. The majority of candidates tried to respond to all cues. It was disappointing, however, that a number made no attempt whatsoever to respond to the questions. The most common mistakes were:

poor use of tenses	lack of noun/adjective agreement
use of English instead of Italian	literal translations
poor knowledge of common and articulated prepositions.	

Problems that occurred in the short writing items were:

- (a) One of the main cues was often misread. Many candidates responded that they *had not done* their homework, rather than that the homework was being handed in *late*. Students should also be reminded that, in order to ensure anonymity, the real names of their teachers should not be used.
- (b) It was encouraging to note that candidates tried to provide full details as requested. Some, however found it difficult to express these details accurately.
- (c) On the whole, this question was reasonably answered, although some candidates had difficulty in conveying the idea of *get well wishes*.
- (d) Candidates provided the most varied responses in this question. Many, however, did not respond to all cues given, with a number failing to express the idea of how they *met* the famous person.

#### Question 2

The majority of candidates completed one of the two topics satisfactorily. Most attempted topic (b) and attempted to write a response of an appropriate length. Many responses included a variety of expressions, vocabulary and idioms in keeping with the task. These responses were noteworthy for a good development of ideas and detail indicating good planning of content. Many candidates, however, had difficulty with the following grammatical points:

use of the auxiliary verb in the compound past;



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articulated prepositions,  
modal verbs; *ho andare* instead of *devo andare*;  
present tense - *io sono avere* instead of *io ho*; or  
*io sono scrivo* instead of *io scrivo*; and  
agreements.

Students should be encouraged to learn the correct spelling of common, everyday words, such as:

*spaggia*  
*giorno*  
*giornata*  
*diario*  
*ciao*

- (a) Although fewer candidates chose this topic, the answers were quite creative. It was pleasing to note that the majority used the correct register for an informal letter. Too many, however, showed poor knowledge of correct use of articles before possessives with family members, e.g. *il mio fratello/la mia cugina*.
- (b) Here candidates often tended to relate an interesting sequence of events. This enabled the better candidates to show not only their ability in using the past tense but also imaginative vocabulary appropriate to the task. Some problems still occurred with expressions with *fare*, e.g. *fare una passeggiata* and *weather phrases*.

### 2/3 Unit

## Section II : Writing Skills

### Question 3 : Short Writing Tasks

Generally candidates attempted the four short writing tasks with a certain degree of confidence. It was evident that candidates were well prepared for Writing Task (b).

The poorer candidates showed inconsistencies with register, often mixing different forms of address. Furthermore, many were not able to identify and use correctly the format required, e.g. the concise language/jargon required in advertisements, in formal and informal situations.

The better candidates managed to express the required message and response to all the cues satisfactorily within the word limit.

It was evident that candidates lacked basic cultural knowledge, e.g. The Colosseum in Venice, sending a cheque for 100 lire for a book, and so on.

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Some grammatical inaccuracies were:

misuse of *pacere*  
incorrect use of verb forms  
agreements (adjectives/nouns; definite article)  
misuse of nouns and possessives  
difficulty with the use of prepositions

Anglicisms:

*ho avuto un buon tempo/buona volta*  
*il managero*  
*cercare per/guardare per/aspettare per*  
*grazie per il suo tempo*  
*sendare*

Basic spelling errors:

*numbers*  
*libro*  
*Venice*  
*ringraziare*  
*auguri*  
*egregio*  
*grazie*

### Question 4

The responses reflected a wide range of ability in the 2 Unit candidature. The better candidates' responses were well organised, creative and made use of a variety of appropriate linguistic structures. The majority chose either (b) or (d), with (a) being the least favoured.

- (a) Most of those who attempted this question responded to the cues adequately and used the correct register.
- (b) Only a few candidates followed the required genre, i.e. an article for a school magazine. Although the majority offered a balanced argument, only the better candidates were able to develop their ideas further.
- (c) On the whole responses to this question were poor and lacked a logically sustained argument with a concluding statement.

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- (d) The better candidates produced a well developed and interesting narrative. Some failed to interpret *imbarazzante* correctly and tended to recount a *bad day*. A significant number of answers were very basic in both ideas and language, and failed to show a satisfactory development of ideas and language.

**It is emphasised that candidates should refrain from using vulgar language and slang.**

### 3 Unit

#### Section II : Writing Skills

As in previous years, there was evidence of solid language acquisition, especially when candidates planned their responses carefully. There was, however, also evidence of poor study habits which prevented candidates from reaching their potential, e.g. candidates showed a good command of the language yet failed to meet the demands of the question.

Those who scored well showed a good command of grammar, an excellent range of structures and lexis appropriate to the topic, as well as answering all parts of the question.

The poorer candidates had difficulty in expressing their ideas because of their poor knowledge of basic grammatical structures and a restricted range of vocabulary.

By far the most popular question attempted was (c) followed by (b) and (a).

- (a) The majority of those who attempted this question agreed that modern technology is the cause for the decreasing interest in reading among young people.

Most of these candidates presented a good range of valid suggestions for encouraging young people to take up reading.

- (b) This question proved challenging and most candidates failed to express their views in the correct register. They were unable to address the editor of the newspaper in the appropriate form. For example, they wrote:

*gentilissimo edito*  
*Caro La Fiamma*  
*Caro lettori de La Fiamma*  
*Egregio Signor ingegno.*

In most cases the candidates misunderstood the question and wrote about the *importance* of sport rather than investigating the *true significance* of sport.

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- (c) This was by far the most popular question. It was chosen by the better candidates, who answered it appropriately. They successfully offered a very good range of reasons explaining the importance of work in everybody's life.

The poorer candidates, however, limited themselves to exploring the materialistic benefits of work!

Problem areas:

Accents: *dicò, qualchè, perche, piu, dovra*  
wrong accent on *e*, *è* for *e* and *e* for *è*

Double consonants: *abbita, ricchezza, faceva, abiamo*

Spelling: *joia*  
*ch* in *giocha*, *che* instead of *c'è*

Cognates: *euphorismo, attituda, pagamento, aumentare,*  
*permettere*

Punctuation: *i giovani, d'oggi*  
*se, leggete più libri*

Verb tenses

Agreements, prepositions, etc.

The better students used a very good range of vocabulary and expressions in keeping with the topic, and obviously possessed an excellent command of the language.

### 2/3 Unit (Common)

### Section III : Options

#### Narrative

Question 5 : Italo Calvino: Marcovaldo

There was a marked increase in the number of candidates attempting this question compared with that in 1994.

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The questions were well understood by the students and the answers provided were generally fairly comprehensive.

A large number of candidates were able to recall successfully appropriate quotations from the other *novelle* and used these effectively in qualifying their arguments..

- (a) Many students successfully identified the images that contributed to Marcovaldo's constantly changing feelings of happiness and sadness.
- (b) As many students understood the term *calcio-balilla* as did not. The majority, however, correctly identified the significance of Marcovaldo's action.
- (c) A number of students showed the similarities between Marcovaldo and the boy even though they referred mainly to those that were physical in nature. Some, however, were able to provide a more thorough analysis by examining the intensive imagery evoked by Calvino's descriptive use of language.
- (d) A few candidates appeared to run out of time in answering this question.

Many referred to more than two *novelle* in this section, thus demonstrating a thorough knowledge of the short stories set for study.

### Drama

#### Question 6 : Dario Fo: **Non si paga! Non si paga!**

The number of candidates attempting the drama question was similar to that in 1994.

There was a marked improvement in the quality of answers, with a large proportion of students showing that they could provide liberal and appropriate quotations from the whole play, thus demonstrating a thorough understanding of the sequence of events in the play.

- (a) A very small number of students showed some confusion regarding the two characters Giovanni and Luigi.
- (b) The majority of students were able to identify correctly the significance of the quotation; a large number of these were also able to identify the political shift about to take place in Giovanni's mind.
- (c) Not all students were able to exploit this question fully by investigating the various levels of Antonia's (and to a lesser degree, Margherita's) powerful role as manipulator and instigator throughout the play.

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- (d) The notion of deception was poorly handled by a number of students who confused the levels of socio-political events behind the play.

### Songs

#### Question 7

The standard in this Option was satisfactory.

The main problem arose because candidates seemed rushed to complete the last two parts. The majority showed a sound knowledge of the songs and the better candidates showed a deeper understanding of their meaning. Many candidates gave information that was irrelevant, at times giving any information that they had acquired in their study instead of focusing on the question.

- (a) This was by far the best answered question, although the poorer candidates merely paraphrased the quotation without analysing it.
- (b) The first part of this question was well answered. Some candidates, however, failed to answer the second part of the question (Alessandro's attitude towards the soldiers). Most, however, quoted appropriately.
- (c) Some candidates were confused by the protagonist in the song and the song writer. The poorer candidates gave a superficial overview of Alessandro's achievements, repeating what they had said in (b), while the better candidates were able to interpret the words and imagery of the song. Some, however, failed to show adequately the way in which Vecchioni portrays Alessandro's achievements.
- (d) Some candidates related the story without identifying the human frailty in each song. Nevertheless, it was pleasing to see that most candidates had a good knowledge of the songs and the singer-songwriters, although a small number of poorer candidates confused songs and singers.