

AM SYLLABUS (2008-2010)

ITALIAN

AM 20

SYLLABUS

**Italian AM 20
Syllabus**

(Available in September)

Paper I (Oral/Aural :60 mins)+Paper II (2 hrs)+Paper III (2½ hrs) +Paper IV (3 hrs)

1. AIMS

Advanced specifications should:

- develop students' ability to understand the spoken and written forms from a variety of registers;
- develop students' ability to understand a wide range of texts of a certain complexity at the lexical, syntactic and content level;
- develop students' ability for extended listening, speaking, reading and writing;
- develop students' ability for appropriateness in oral and written production at the socio-linguistic and socio-cultural levels;
- encourage students to communicate confidently, clearly and effectively through both the spoken and written word, using increasingly accurate, complex and varied language;
- develop students' insights into, and encourage contact with, through newspapers and TV/radio news bulletins, the contemporary society, cultural background, literature and heritage of Italy;
- provide a suitable foundation for further study and/or practical use of the foreign language;
- provide a sufficient basis for further study at degree level or equivalent;
- develop students' ability to write critical appreciation of literary texts.

1. SUBJECT CONTENT

In order to study the subject at Advanced level, students should normally have acquired the knowledge, understanding and skills equivalent to those specified for SEC and/or Intermediate.

Advanced specifications should require candidates to:

- understand and study in greater depth aspects of the contemporary society, cultural background, literature (prescribed texts) and heritage of Italy, demonstrating a high level of critical awareness;
- use the target language to analyze, hypothesize, evaluate, argue a case, justify, persuade, rebut, develop arguments and present viewpoints, in speech and writing;
- demonstrate their capacity for critical thinking, to see relationships between different aspects of the subject and to perceive their field of study in a broader context;
- understand and apply grammar and syntax;
- apply a considerable enlargement of vocabulary expressing specific notions in the thematic areas specified for SEC and be sensitive to shades of meaning, implications and overtones in speech and writing;
- show knowledge of meta-language.

3. ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

3.1

- understand and respond, in speech and writing to spoken language;
- understand and respond, in speech and writing, to written language;
- show knowledge of grammar and syntax and the ability to apply these;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of aspects of Italian society.

3.2

Language Skills.

3.2.1 Listening

Students should be required to:

- understand longer and more complex utterances than is expected at the SEC/Intermediate level;
- understand speech at normal conversational speed even in somewhat noisy environments;
- understand texts relevant to any communicative situations/topics.

3.2.2. Speaking**Students should be required to:**

- show more developed communication strategies (describing, narrating complex events/experiences) and discourse strategies (formal, semiformal, informal, colloquial) than at SEC/Intermediate level;
- show less hesitation, make few false starts and utter complete sentences with good phrasing and intonation;
- account for their views/opinions;
- make less use of compensation strategies to enlist aid of interlocutor.

3.2.3 Reading**Students should be required to:**

- deal with unstated implications, euphemisms, irony and metaphoric usage;
- understand a newspaper/magazine text intended for the general public.

3.2.4. Writing**Students should be required to:**

- show an ability to deal with private and public correspondence;
- show an ability in handling those structures to satisfy the criteria of accuracy, fluency and appropriateness;
- show a sense of audience and style using a wide range of cohesive/anaphoric devices and logical connections.
- Show knowledge and understanding of the prescribed textbooks.

4. SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT (200 points)

WEIGHTINGS	READING	WRITING	LISTENING	SPEAKING	CONTENT
<i>PAPER I (Aural/oral) Listening/Communicative task/Topic Presentation and Discussion</i>			15	10	5
<i>PAPER II (Writing) Essay</i>		50			10
<i>PAPER III (Reading) Comprehension and Précis</i>	25	25			
<i>PAPER IV (Literary/Cultural Topics)</i>		20			40
TOTAL	25	95	15	10	55

The examination will consist of three written papers and an aural/oral test:

Paper I

Aural/Oral (I hour) 30 marks

- **Listening Comprehension** (A text/texts of approx. 600 words will be read three times to the students who can take notes during the listening phase. Candidates will be asked to summarise the contents of the passage read in about 200-250 words). Names of persons and places will be written on the board (where possible) or spelt out.
- **Topic presentation:** candidates will select an **Italian novel** from the list provided below * and present it during the oral test in about 5/10 minutes.

- **Interactive conversation:** The candidates' verbal communication skills may be tested by such stimuli as a text for reading and comment and/or pictures for description and discussion.

* **List of novels:**

- Luciano De Crescenzo, *Nessuno*
- Andrea Camilleri, *Gli arancini di Montalbano*
- Dacia Maraini, *La nave per Kobe*
- Stefano Benni, *SaltaTempo*
- Primo Levi, *La Tregua*
- Giuseppe Pontiggia, *Nati due volte*
- Roberto Pazzi, *Il Conclave*
- Susanna Tamaro, *Anima Mundi*
- Antonio Tabucchi, *Sostiene Pereira*
- Alessandro Baricco, *Barnum*
- Luciano De Crescenzo, *La Distrazione*
- Fruttero Lucentini, *Il cretino in sintesi*

Paper II (2 hours)

- A) Essay on a general topic. 40 marks**
B) Language Exercises. 20 marks

A) A choice of titles will be given which may include a letter, a dialogue, a report, comments on general aspects of life in Italy and Malta. Candidates are expected to write about 450-500 words on the topic of their choice. **B)** Languages exercises (approx. 5) will be set to test the candidates' competence in : i) spelling ii) punctuation, iii) range of vocabulary, iv) application of grammar rules, v) syntax, vi) familiarity with registers, vii) familiarity with metalinguistic terms and viii) using a dictionary. The exercises set may include multiple choice, cloze tests, word sets, transformation, substitution, joining phrases, jigsaw, sentence completion, matching, recognition of functions, gap filling, editing, etc.

Paper III (2½ hours)

A précis of about 200 words on a set text of approx. 600 words. 25 marks
A reading comprehension test. The text will contain approx. 800 words 25 marks

Textbooks:

Balboni-Mezzadri, *Rete 3*, Guerra Edizioni, Perugia.
Chiuchiù-Pace Asciani, *Ambienti*, Alia Edizioni, Assisi.

Paper IV (3 hours) **60 marks**

The following texts are set:

- 1) *Europa e Italia, Libro per l'allievo; Prove di valutazione*, Zanichelli. (pages: IT2 to IT144).
- 2) *Storia e testi di letteratura italiana per stranieri*, Guerra Edizioni. (anthology)
- 3) *La voce del Violino*, Andrea Camilleri (novel)
- 4) *A ciascuno il suo*, Leonardo Sciascia (novel)

There will be three sections and candidates must answer one question from each section. Each question carries 20 marks. In Sections A and B, candidates may be asked to choose between an essay question and a reference to the context question.

Section A - *Europa e Italia, Libro per l'allievo; Prove di valutazione*. Zanichelli. (pages: IT2 to IT144).
There will be two sets of questions to choose one.

Section B - *Storia e testi di letteratura italiana per stranieri*, Guerra Edizioni. (anthology)

On this anthology only the following will be set : Dante, Petrarca, Boccaccio, Ariosto, Tasso, Goldoni, Foscolo, Leopardi, Manzoni, Verga, Carducci, Pascoli, Pirandello, Quasimodo, Ungaretti, Montale.

Section C – The Novels

The following two novels are set: *La voce del Violino*, Andrea Camilleri (novel). *A ciascuno il suo*, Leonardo Sciascia (novel).

The questions will be of the essay type. Two questions will be set on each book. Candidates are to answer on only one of the set novels (either *La voce del Violino* or *A ciascuno il suo*).

Grade Descriptions

1. Oral Component

1.1. Communicative Task:

Completion of Task:

Grade A: The whole task is successfully completed without difficulty. The candidate can cope with complications. Well-sustained performance within limits of resources. Prepared to take initiative. Able to respond and react appropriately to almost any question or comment. Shows good conversational skills (e.g. ability to react, to maintain and direct the conversation, to use appropriate tone and level of directness). Uses imagination and tact where appropriate. Able to convey some subtleties (e.g. reluctant acceptance, compromise).

Grade C: Nearly all the task is successfully completed with a good level of initiative and response most of the time. Capable of responding at some length, keeping the momentum going. Able to qualify statements and responses and to react appropriately to the examiner on most occasions. Can usually cope with complications. Generally fluent. A good range of vocabulary.

Grade E: Capable of a reasonable response but some clarification may be needed and the candidate may not always convey meaning clearly. Candidate's response may reveal occasional misunderstanding of the examiner's comments. A patchy performance. Still has a tendency to rely on the examiner and to be rather brief in reply. Vocabulary range reasonable but still a little limited.

1. 2. Language:

Grade A: Very few grammatical errors. Able to handle quite complex language, including range of structures.

Grade C: Mostly accurate. Obviously has a sound grasp of grammatical elements in spite of the occasional lapse. Some success in attempting more adventurous structures (e.g. passives, conditionals, subjunctive, adverbial subordinate clauses).

Grade E: Fairly accurate. Some inconsistency involving some serious elementary errors. Some attempt to use wider range of structures (e.g. adverbial subordinate clauses, passives, conditionals) but not necessarily always successful.

1. 3. Topic presentation and discussion:

1. 3.1. Range of expression:

Grade A: Confident use of articulate language appropriate to conveying well-developed and thoughtful ideas. Very much at home in the language.

Grade C: Uses more ambitious linguistic structures, verb tenses with some confidence (e.g. passives, subjunctives). Clear attempt to link. Sounds unforced. Good knowledge of topic-specific vocabulary. Beginning to use idiom.

Grade E: Able to vary sentence construction (e.g. beginning occasionally with qualifying clauses). Attempts to use more complex structures (e.g. object pronouns, common use of subjunctive). Some

maltesisms/anglicisms in expression and perhaps some clumsiness and weakness in linking ideas, though vocabulary mostly adequate to task.

1. 4. Content:

Grade A: Gives a fluent and confident rendering of the subject matter. Obviously knows the subject well. Shows initiative and shares some responsibility for keeping the momentum going. Is able to react to examiner's questions and interventions, and is able to adjust utterances in the light of these. Can express complex and abstract ideas if appropriate to the subject. Shows some ability to present arguments and evidence in support of claims, and to present counter-arguments to examiner's comments where appropriate. Able to demonstrate some awareness of distinction between fact and opinion. Able to extend topic well.

Grade C: Able to talk at some length about the subject, not merely on a factual level. Can give opinions and defend them, although not always with complete consistency. Able to react to examiner's questions and interventions appropriately and with some imagination. Takes some initiative. Able to extend topic well, e.g. apply ideas to a new but related situation. Knows the subject quite well.

Grade E: Patchy. Able to converse on a descriptive, factual or narrative level, but revealing some gaps. Some attempts to give an opinion, but rather inconsistent. Not always able to respond appropriately to the examiner's questions. At the lower level, still tends to rely largely on the examiner and is rather brief in response to comments or questions. Finds it difficult to extend topic in response to questions, e.g. to apply ideas to a new but related situation. A competent performance which does not go beyond the descriptive, factual or narrative.

2. Writing Component

2.1. Language:

Grade A: Good knowledge of idiom. Rich and sensitive use of language (adjectives, adverbs, verbs). Displays ability to select unexpected words. Demonstrates thorough knowledge of topic-specific vocabulary.

Grade C: Varied and interesting vocabulary. Some evidence of appreciation of idiom. Nearly all vocabulary correctly used. Sound topic-specific vocabulary.

Grade E: Some variation in choice of vocabulary/ability to produce synonyms. Sound general vocabulary, but limited topic-specific vocabulary.

2.2 Range of expression:

Grade A: Confident use of complex sentence patterns and linguistic structures. Uses articulate language appropriate to conveying well-developed and thoughtful ideas, without the style appearing too forced.

Grade C: Uses more ambitious linguistic structures, verb tenses with some confidence (e.g. passives, more complex use of subjunctives), or very creditable attempt to use ambitious language but style very cumbersome or heavily overworked. May include some rhetorical devices such as exclamation, question. Clear attempt to link. Essay reads easily.

Grade E: Able to vary sentence construction (e.g. beginning occasionally with subordinate clauses). Attempts to use more complex structures (e.g. object pronouns, common use of subjunctive) but some weakness in linking. Some maltesisms/anglicisms in expression and perhaps some clumsiness.

2.3. Accuracy:

Grade A: Can handle quite complex language with few errors.

Grade C: May contain a few basic errors and show weakness in one or two specific areas, but none the less generally accurate in handling of more complex areas of grammar (e.g. irregular verbs, difficult tenses – passives, conditional perfect, word order in complex clause structures).

Grade E: Quality of accuracy is inconsistent. Basic grammar generally mastered (verb endings, adjectival agreements), but weakness in more difficult areas (e.g. tense and mood, irregular verb forms, prepositions). Or, very accurate but simple language.

2.4. Content:

2.4.1. Structure of essay/paragraphing:

Grade A: Well balanced and coherent piece, with good sense of overall perspective. Ideas clearly linked throughout.

Grade C: Competent structure, with logical progression of ideas/presentation of material.

Grade E: Ideas generally expressed in an appropriately structured form, but not always linked.

2.4.2. Relevance to question title:

Grade A: Clearly relevant throughout.

Grade C: Relates comments on the subject clearly to the question/title and answers it thoroughly. Some omissions but most areas covered adequately.

Grade E: Has a competent, even thorough, knowledge of the subject area, but only loosely connects it to the question/title. May refer to the question in the introduction and conclusion or may give good coverage of a limited number of points.

2.4.3. Analysis and development of ideas:

Grade A: All ideas well developed. Understands implications of subject and draws sensible conclusions, where appropriate. Work likely to demonstrate interesting/unusual/original insights into subject.

Grade C: Most ideas developed. Some attempt to examine implications/draw conclusions where appropriate. Can give opinions and develop them although not always with complete consistency.

Grade E: Contains well worn ideas, occasionally expanded with some qualification. Unlikely to contain analysis of implications. Rather dull and pedestrian. Analysis tends to be tortuous. Some attempt to give an opinion, but rather inconsistent.

2.4.4. Factual content/illustration:

Grade A: Very detailed fully supported answer, demonstrating thorough knowledge of the subject. Non-discursive work illuminated by imaginative use of detail. Occasionally uses unusual/less obvious illustrations.

Grade C: Points nearly always supported by factual information (e.g. statistics, precise references, specific examples, quotations). Imaginative/descriptive work well supported by detail.

Grade E: Covers the basic factual content of the subject adequately with a reasonable range of examples/illustrations/detail.