

IM SYLLABUS 2026

ITALIAN

IM 20

SYLLABUS

**Italian
Syllabus**

IM 20

1 Paper: Aural/Oral (1 hour: 45 minutes + 15 minutes) + Written (3 hours)

1. AIMS

The aims of a course in Italian leading to the Intermediate examination are to:

1. develop the candidates' ability to understand the spoken and written forms from a variety of registers;
2. encourage candidates to communicate confidently, clearly and effectively both through speaking and writing, using accurate linguistic forms which are appropriate in the context in which they are used;
3. develop candidates' insights into, and encourage contact with, the contemporary society, cultural background, literature and heritage of Italy;
4. provide a suitable foundation for further study and/or practical use of the foreign language.

2. SUBJECT CONTENT

In order to sit for the Intermediate level examination, candidates should normally have acquired the knowledge, understanding and skills equivalent to those specified in the Italian SEC syllabus.

Candidates will be examined on the following aspects pertaining to the four language abilities (listening, reading, speaking, writing):

1. their extent of understanding of the Italian contemporary society, cultural background, literature and heritage of Italy;
2. their extent of knowledge and understanding of the prescribed literature textbooks;
3. their listening and comprehension skills and their ability to respond and interact after being exposed to a variety of spoken/oral texts;
4. their ability to read and comprehend and to respond to questions based on written texts;
5. their ability to use appropriate linguistic forms when communicating both in speech and in writing;
6. their ability to use appropriate registers, both in spoken and in written communication;
7. their accurate use of Italian in order to organize facts and ideas, to explain oneself, to express opinions and to provide information both in speech and writing;
8. their understanding of grammatical structures and their ability to use them correctly, especially in writing.

3. ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

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

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

WEIGHTINGS	READING	WRITING	LISTENING	SPEAKING	CONTENT
<i>PAPER I (Aural/oral) Listening/Communicative task/Topic Presentation</i>			10%	10%	10%
<i>PAPER II (Writing and Reading) (Cultural/Literary Topics)</i>	20%	20%			30%
TOTAL	20%	20%	10%	10%	40%

The examination will consist of two papers:

Paper I – Aural/Oral (1 hour: 45 minutes + 15 minutes) 30%

- A) **Listening Comprehension** A text of approx. 400 words will be read three times to the candidates who can take notes during the listening phase, as from the first reading. Candidates will then have to answer to a set of questions on the text. 10%
- B) **Conversation (5 minutes):** Verbal communication skills may be tested by such stimuli as a text for reading and commentary, pictures for description and discussion, or a choice of topics to be discussed further by the candidate. 10%
- C) **Topic Presentation* (10 minutes):** Candidates will select a topic of their choice related to **Italian Culture and Civilization** and present it during the oral test. During the presentation, candidates can present visual material and/or notes in point form. Topics include:
- a) *La politica italiana*
 - b) *Il cinema italiano*
 - c) *Sviluppi tecnologici e scientifici in Italia*
 - d) *Un pittore o un movimento artistico italiano*
 - e) *Un musicista o un genere musicale*
 - f) *Il turismo in Italia*
 - g) *L'industria in Italia*
 - h) *L'ambiente in Italia*
 - i) *Un'epoca della storia italiana o un personaggio storico italiano*
 - j) *Lo sport in Italia*
 - k) *La gastronomia italiana*
 - l) *La televisione italiana* 10%

*(Only the above topics are accepted for oral presentation)

Part II – Written (3 hours)

A) Language:

- Comprehension Test.** The exercise will contain two texts for comprehension of approx. 300-350 words each. 20%
- Essay:** A choice of titles will be given which may include a letter, a dialogue, a report, and comments on general aspects of life in Italy and Malta. Candidates are expected to write about 300-350 words on the topic of their choice. 20%

Suggested Textbooks for Comprehension:

J. Eynaud, *Ciak, si legge!*, Cesati, Firenze.

T. Marin, *Nuovo Progetto Italiano 3. Libro dello studente*, Edilingua, Roma.

Suggested Textbooks for Language and Grammar:

M. Silvestrini – C. Bura – R. Pavese – E. Chiacchella – V. Giunti Armanni, *L'italiano e l'Italia. Grammatica con note di stile*, Guerra, Perugia.

M. Silvestrini – C. Bura – R. Pavese – E. Chiacchella – V. Giunti Armanni, *L'italiano e l'Italia*.

Esercizi e prove per la Certificazione. Medio e superiore, Guerra, Perugia.

B) Literature: The following three texts are set. Two reference to the context questions will be set on each text. The candidates will have to answer **one** question, either from text 1, text 2 or text 3.

30%

Text 1: Niccolò Ammaniti: *Io non ho paura*.

Text 2: Carlo Cassola: *La ragazza di Bube*.

Text 3: Stefano Benni: *Margherita Dolcevita*.

5. GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

Grade A

Speaking

Candidates are able to respond readily and to speak fluently. They are willing to take the initiative and to develop their answers. They have a good command of idiom and vocabulary and deploy this naturally.

Reading and Listening

Candidates show clear understanding of a wide range of complex spoken and written texts in a variety of registers. They have a very good understanding of grammatical markers, and a high level of awareness of structure, style and register. They not only understand the detail of the text but also show an ability to infer and appreciate.

Writing

Candidates are able to communicate information, concepts and opinions clearly. Language and expression are generally appropriate to the subject and sufficiently varied and mature to convey effectively their thought and argument. They use a wide and varied range of syntax and lexis, including idiom and specialized vocabulary with a high level of accuracy and fluency. Errors, which do occur, will normally be of a minor nature.

Cultural Component

Candidates demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the literature/topics studied while focusing appropriately on the aspects of the texts/topics to be dealt with. Detailed knowledge, views, arguments and insights are presented clearly and logically.

Grade C

Speaking

Candidates have few problems of comprehension and respond without undue hesitation. They show competent use of relevant idiom and vocabulary and avoid significant influence from the mother tongue. Grammar accuracy is adequate. Errors are more frequent when they attempt to use more complex language.

Reading and Listening

Candidates understand a range of spoken and written texts in a variety of registers. They show understanding of grammatical markers and show some awareness of structure and register. They grasp the significant details of the text and are able to identify points of view, attitudes and emotions.

Writing

Candidates are able to communicate information and opinions clearly. Language and expression are generally appropriate to the subject, and although limited in range and variety, are adequate to convey their thought and argument. There are relatively few errors of a serious kind and the general quality of the work tends to demonstrate that errors are due to lapses of attention or incomplete recall, rather than ignorance or failure to understand the problem involved.

Cultural Component

Candidates demonstrate a sound knowledge of the literature/topics studied. Detailed knowledge is presented clearly and logically although there is a preponderance of 'content' and limited evidence of insight.

Grade E

Speaking

When speaking, candidates' production is often hesitant and lacking in fluency and their vocabulary is restricted. The message is clear despite a high frequency of errors, particularly if an attempt is made to use more complex language. They are not willing to develop responses beyond the minimum.

Reading and Listening

Candidates respond to straightforward questions competently. They may experience difficulties with abstract or complex language. In the case of answers in the target language they may resort to copying parts of the texts because of their lack of comprehension.

Writing

Candidates communicate their ideas in a style which is unsophisticated but appropriate to the purpose, e.g. giving factual information and narrating events. Over a limited range of expression, spelling and grammar they are often inaccurate and inconsistent and include even some very basic errors. Their vocabulary is likely to be restricted and repetitive and there may be excessive use of simple sentences. They use a limited range of tenses and are prone to native language interference. They have a tendency to use stereotypical phrases.

Cultural Component

Candidates display adequate knowledge of the literature/topics studied but do not always focus on the aspects under consideration. Narration rather than analysis tends to characterize the work of such candidates. References to factual information may be vague or at times inaccurate.