2024 VCE Italian oral external assessment report

Refer to the [VCE Italian study design](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/italian/Pages/Index.aspx) and [examination criteria and specifications](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Italian.aspx) for full details on this study and how it is assessed.

Section 1: Conversation

What students did well

In the 2024 examination, students:

* engaged in a general conversation about their personal world and their interactions with the language and culture as learners; for example, Studio l’italiano perche’ amo la cultura italiana, in particolare il cibo. Il cibo unisce le persone e anche se non sono italiana mi piace imparare a cucinare cibi tradizionali con la mia famiglia. (I study Italian because I love Italian culture, in particular food. Food unites people and even if I am not Italian I like to learn how to cook traditional dishes with my family.)
* provided a range of relevant information, ideas and opinions with an appropriate depth; for example, Siamo una famiglia molto unita. Ci piace fare tante cose insieme, come guardare film a serie televisive italiane e in inglese e andare nei ristoranti italiani dove posso immergermi un po’ nella cultura che sto studiando. Fare queste attivita’ italiane insieme mi fa sentire il loro supporto nelle mie scelte scolastiche e so che vogliono il meglio per me. (We are a very united family. We like to do many things together, like watch movies and TV shows together both in Italian and English, and go out for dinner in Italian restaurants, where I can immerse myself a little in the culture I am studying. Doing these activities together makes me feel their support in my academic choices and I know that they want what’s best for me.)
* elaborated on, clarified and defended ideas and opinions; for example, Quest’anno e’ stato molto difficile. Mi piace andare a scuola per vedere i miei amici e gli insegnanti sono spesso simpatici e mi aiutano, ma di certo ho scelto delle materie difficili e gli esami sono molto stressanti! Vorrei poter dormire e rilassarmi ma devo sempre studiare! A volte per risolvere un problema di matematica ci vogliono ore o quando studio italiano perdo tanto tempo a cercare le parole nel dizionario. (This year was very difficult. I like going to school to see my friends and the teachers are often nice and they help me, but I certainly chose difficult subjects and exams are so stressful! I wish I could sleep and relax, but I always have to study! Sometimes it takes hours to solve a maths problem or when I study Italian I waste so much time looking up words in the dictionary.)
* demonstrated an excellent level of understanding by responding readily and communicating confidently, and carrying the conversation forward with spontaneity; for example, Studio l’italiano perchè la mia famiglia è italiana. Per me è importante poter comunicare con la mia nonna in italiano dato he lei non parla bene l’inglese. Amo cucinare e soprattutto mangiare il cibo italiano, quindi poter parlare in italiano con la nonna mi aiuta a capire le sue ricette e poi posso preparare i piatti con lei per la nostra famiglia. Spesso, come tanti italiani, ci piace mangiare insieme per le occasioni speciali, così posso anche aiutare la mia famiglia a continuare le nostre tradizioni. (I study Italian because my family is Italian. It is important for me to be able to communicate with my grandma in Italian since she doesn’t speak English well. I love cooking and especially eating Italian food, so being able to speak in Italian with Grandma helps me to understand her recipes and I can prepare dishes with her for our family. Often, like many Italians, we like to eat together for special occasions, so I can also help my family to continue our traditions.)
* responded confidently and were able to advance the conversation, including the use of appropriate repair strategies as needed
* used appropriate vocabulary
* used appropriate grammar and sentence structures
* used appropriate expression, including pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Areas for improvement

In preparation for the examination, students could:

* ensure adequate preparation for the conversation with relevance, depth and range of information, ideas and opinions. Students are clearly aware of the topics relevant to the general conversation part of the oral exam, but it is crucial that they are ready to not just relay information to the assessor, but to discuss it and give their opinions, big or small. This will also allow them to expand the range of vocabulary and grammar they use in their performance
* practise answering a range of questions to be able to advance the conversation. Students should be prepared to answer any type of question that could be related to their personal world. They are advised to practise answering a range of questions (including questions worded differently from what they prepared) to be able to adapt the materials they studied to the specific questions asked. Students are reminded that there is no set of questions that assessors are required to ask, and that often assessors will ask questions that link to the information provided by the student
* build confidence through practising interactions in the language. Students are encouraged to practise with their peers and teachers. Working collaboratively with a range of people will help them build their confidence using the language and answer a broad range of questions
* practise using more complex sentence structures and syntax
* practise using repair strategies to advance the conversation when needed
* revise grammar. Students are advised to revise and practise the conjugation of verbs, the use of auxiliary and modal verbs, and agreements (noun–adjective, but also subject–verb)
* build vocabulary specific to the student’s personal world and their interactions with the language and culture as learners
* practise pronunciation, intonation and stress and tempo. Students are encouraged to revise pronunciation of Italian words (especially on which syllable the accent falls in the word) and practice speaking in Italian out loud in order to demonstrate correct intonation and tempo that resembles a conversation.

Section 2: Discussion

What students did well

In the 2024 examination, students:

* clearly introduced the focus of their subtopic, alerting assessors to the image brought to support the discussion of the subtopic
* demonstrated in-depth knowledge of their subtopic
* used the image skilfully to support the discussion on the subtopic; for example, L’immigrato tipico italiano degli anni ‘50 era giovane e veniva da una famiglia contadina, probabilmente con pochi soldi. Come si vede dall’immagine, questi erano giovani uomini forti e portavano con sè solo una valigia con poche cose perchè non potevano permettersi molto. Spesso nella valiga avevano alcuni beni essenziali e gli strumenti di lavoro, che erano la cosa più importante per loro per sopravvivere in Australia a mandare soldi alla loro famiglia in Italia. Nella foto si vedono anche I loro vestiti che non erano di certo all’ultima moda, ma erano sporchi e vecchi. (The typical Italian immigrant in the ’50s was young and came from a peasant family, probably with little money. As you can see from the image, these were young, strong men and they brought with them only a suitcase with few things because they could not afford much. Often in the suitcase they had some essential items and their work tools, which were the most important things to survive in Australia and send money back to their families in Italy. In the photo you can also notice their clothes which were not fashionable but were dirty and old.)
* engaged in a discussion using relevant information, ideas and opinions
* clarified, elaborated on and defended opinions and ideas
* communicated effectively with assessors throughout the discussion, including through the use of repair strategies
* used appropriate vocabulary
* used appropriate grammar and sentence structures
* used appropriate expression, including pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Areas for improvement

In preparation for the examination, students could:

* choose an appropriate subtopic to suit ability and interests and an image that supports discussion about the selected subtopic. The topic chosen has to be selected from either of the prescribed themes ‘The Italian-speaking communities’ or ‘The world around us’. It is crucial for students to choose a topic that they can be passionate about, so they are able to discuss it in depth and develop their own opinions and ideas about it. Students are advised to introduce their topic for discussion in a clear and specific manner, in order to avoid confusion and questions from assessors they did not prepare for, causing them further stress. For example, Ho studiato la dieta mediterranea e gli effetti sulla salute (I studied the Mediterranean diet and its effects on health) rather than just *Ho* studiato *la dieta Mediterranea* (I studied the Mediterranean diet). Broader unrelated questions about the general topic might be asked at a later stage to prompt the student to discuss ideas and opinions on the topic, but it is important to provide a clear starting point
* prepare a wide range and depth of information, ideas and opinions with an original perspective on the subtopic; for example, Quest’anno ho studiato Dante e la Divina Commedia, e in particolare ho studiato la storia di Paolo e Francesca. Questa è una storia così appassionante e sembra quasi una soap opera che si vede in televisione. Francesca era sposata con Gianciotto ma lo ha tradito con Paolo, il suo cugino più bello. Io sono d’accordo con Dante perchè il tradimento non è mai giusto, ma la punzione che Paolo e Francesca hanno ricevuto è ingiusta perchè lei semplicemente non amava suo marito dato che era un matrimonio combinato e non è giusto che loro siano stati puniti per l’eternità. (This year I studied Dante and The Divine Comedy, and in particular I studied the story of Paolo and Francesca. This is such an interesting story, and it almost seems like a soap opera that you can see on TV. Francesca was married to Gianciotto but she cheated on him with Paolo, his handsome cousin. I agree with Dante because cheating is never fair, but the punishment that Paolo and Francesca had to endure was unfair because she simply didn’t love her husband as it was an arranged marriage, and it was not fair to punish them for eternity.)
* avoid listing facts without expressing a point of view, or presenting general knowledge as research. Students can express their opinions and ideas in many ways, some simple and some more difficult from a grammatical point of view. Students are encouraged to practise including their opinion in the form of *Mi piace/non mi piace* (I like/I don’t like) or *Sono d’accordo/non sono d’accordo* (I agree/I disagree), or using the subjunctive *penso che sia* … (I think …) as much as possible. These are not the only ways to express an opinion, but it is crucial for students to attempt to include and justify their ideas. This can also support them in expanding the range of grammar and vocabulary they include in their responses
* convey information learnt from sources but also express an opinion with an original perspective on the subtopic
* use the image to support the discussion on the subtopic
* avoid relying on pre-learnt responses that do not address an assessor’s question. Students are encouraged to practise with their peers and teachers. Some students included pre-learnt responses and were therefore unable to effectively address follow-up questions from the assessors and continued to return to pre-learnt information
* practise using repair strategies
* revise grammar. Students are advised to use a range of tenses and grammar structures in their discussion and to revise and practise verb conjugation, the use of auxiliary and modal verbs, and agreements (noun–adjective, but also subject–verb)
* build vocabulary specific to the selected subtopic
* practise describing the relevance of the image to the subtopic
* practise pronunciation, intonation and stress and tempo.