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          Paper 7164/01
            Listening
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Key messages

- It is not necessary for candidates to write full sentences in answer to the questions.
- Some candidates need to be more aware of the number of boxes ticked in **Question 16**. A few candidates ticked only four boxes instead of the six required.

General comments

The paper presented texts with increasing length and level of density and difficulty. Virtually all candidates could answer correctly most of the questions in **Part 1**. **Part 2** was also well answered by the bulk of the cohort, but **Part 3** discriminated well between levels of performances.

It must, however, be emphasised that the nature of the task can make an exercise more or less difficult regardless of the complexity and density of the text. On average, candidates performed better with the multiple choice task in **Section 3** than they did with **Section 2 Exercise 2**, which required candidates to write their own answers.

The quality of Italian only affects credit when the answer lacks clarity. The mark scheme specifies some of the main issues when allowances are made, always within the parameter of unambiguous communication.

Questions requiring a written response are generally worded in a way to require a short answer. Answering in full sentences is not necessary.

Candidates should be encouraged to read the questions properly and take account of all details. For example, if a question (**Question 17**) asks with whom Giulia and her sister celebrated, the answer cannot be '*sua sorella*'.

Also, candidates should be aware that any redundant material, if wrong, will invalidate the answer. For example, answering **Question 22** with '*la famiglia, gli amici*' does not pay dividends: if two answers are provided, the right answer will be invalidated by the wrong one.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Exercise 1 Questions 1–8

This exercise offered a gentle lead-in. Almost all candidates were able to recognise the eight targeted items from a short conversation and to choose the correct option from the four visual ones for each item. Only a handful of candidates failed to recognise '*pallavolo*'.

Exercise 2 Questions 9–15

This exercise was based on a longer passage, a welcoming message from a youth hostel receptionist. The task was still multiple choice of visual options or writing numbers. Although generally well answered, this set of questions was found challenging by the lower end of the cohort. Some candidates did not recognise *'armadio'* and ticked the bedside chest of drawers instead. **Question 10** (*portafoglio*) was occasionally missed. **Question 14** was sometimes misinterpreted, and instead of writing '*sabato*' some candidates put adjectives to describe what the trip was like.

Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Section 2

Exercise 1 Question 16

This exercise was based on statements by four young people talking about money. Candidates were expected to select six correct statements out of twelve. Most candidates were able to identify at least five of them. Wrong answers seemed to be at random. Once more, marks were lost by candidates only ticking four statements instead of six.

Exercise 2 Questions 17–25

This exercise was based on interviews with two young people talking about celebrations.

The first part (**17–21**) asked candidates to correct an incorrect detail in each of the answers provided. The incorrect detail was clearly indicated in bold. The questions which proved more challenging were **Question 20** (*tardissimo*) and **Question 21**, which was either answered wrongly (*vestito rosso*) or, because a number of candidates were not familiar with the word '*dischi*' or could not spell it, produced an array of answers including '*disci*' , '*diski*' , '*wiski*' , '*biscuit*', '*bisci*' and many more.

The second part (**22–25**) required candidates to write their answers. Most candidates managed to answer **Question 22** correctly. Surprisingly '*patatine*' (**Question 23**) was very seldom spelt correctly, nor was '*bicicletta*' (**Question 25**).

This set of questions did differentiate between abilities, but more because of difficulties with spelling the words rather than because of comprehension or lack thereof.

Section 3

Exercise 1 Questions 26–31

This exercise was based on an interview with Maria, a student of an international school.

The format of the questions was multiple choice, with four written options. In spite of the text being more complex than the previous exercise, candidates found it easier to choose the right answer than to have to write it themselves.

Exercise 2 Questions 32–40

This final exercise was based on an interview with a young writer. This was the most challenging set of questions of the paper, as candidates were expected to write their own answers in Italian and the text was the hardest in terms of density and complexity. In spite of this, most candidates attempted to answer the questions.

For **Question 33**, a great number of candidates answered '*17 anni*' without a preposition and it was decided to accept this.

Question 34 '*orgoglioso*' and **Question 39** '*fantascienza*' were not always understood and attempts to transcribe them were not always successful.

Questions 35–38 were either not understood or candidates found it difficult to word their answers.

Question 40 was generally answered correctly but a handful of candidates took '*ballo*' to mean 'football' rather than 'dancing'.

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> **Paper 7164/02**
> **Reading**

Key messages

- Candidates should keep answers brief and focused, while ensuring that they have included all relevant elements that are necessary to gain the mark.

- Candidates should not lift large chunks from the text and should seek to demonstrate that they have understood the question and are able to locate and communicate the correct answer.

- Where candidates introduce extra, irrelevant material, particularly in the ***terza parte***, this will often invalidate an otherwise correct answer as the Examiner cannot be sure what the candidate has understood.

- Candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the style of the paper and its various sections and exercises (through practice of specimen and past papers). This could be particularly useful for ***seconda parte esercizio 1*** and ***terza parte esercizio 1***.

- All sections should be attempted and candidates should, where possible, ensure that they leave themselves time to check that they have both completed all questions and checked their answers for accuracy.

General comments

Candidates seemed mostly very well prepared and appeared to approach the questions with confidence.

Almost all candidates attempted the full set of questions. Several candidates left a few answers blank, most notably in multiple choice sections. Candidates should be advised to attempt to answer all questions, particularly where the answers are multiple choice.

Levels of grammatical accuracy in some of the responses were variable, although given that this was a Reading paper, where the Examiner was able to identify genuine comprehension and an unambiguous, clear message, marks were awarded.

Comments on specific questions

Prima parte

Esercizio 1 Domande 1–5

Most candidates scored well in this section, demonstrating familiarity with the items of vocabulary tested. The answer for **Question 1**, *chimica*, was identified universally well. In **Question 2** most candidates correctly chose the picture of a rucksack, although there were a notable number of instances where candidates opted for one of the other pictures (usually the map or the hat). **Question 3**, *ho un gatto*, was answered successfully by almost all candidates, although there were some errors here. **Questions 4** and **5** did not seem to cause any problems for candidates, who all successfully identified *funghi* as mushrooms, and the picture of a church (*ci vediamo davanti alla chiesa*) respectively.

Esercizio 2 Domande 6–10

Questions in this exercise were answered very successfully by candidates, with only very infrequent errors appearing in **Question 6** (*Alice pianta la tenda*).

Esercizio 3 Domande 11–15

Many candidates performed well in this exercise (particularly in **Question 11**), locating the correct answers from the multiple choice options. However, marks were sometimes dropped in **Question 14** when it came to identifying the type of films that Matteo and his friends prefer.

As stated above, candidates should attempt every question in the *Prima parte*, even if they are unsure that they have the correct answer.

Seconda parte

Esercizio 1 Domande 16–20

In this exercise, candidates were asked to read an advert for an international food festival, in which details are given about the time, location, festival activities and tickets. Five statements with gaps that are based on the text then follow and candidates were asked to choose the correct word from the ten options provided. For every statement there are only two words that could fit grammatically in each gap, so candidates have to understand the actual content of the text and then transfer their understanding to the gap-fill statements by choosing the word that gives the correct meaning.

Many candidates performed well in this exercise in which the ability to locate the correct meaning in the text and transfer this to the statements was being tested. **Questions 17** and **18** were the most successfully answered. *Cibi* (instead of the correct answer, *mangia*) was occasionally given in **Question 16**. More often, mistakes were made in **Question 19**, with *moderni* in place of *conosciuti*, and also sometimes in **Question 20**, with *libri*, instead of *cibi*.

Esercizio 2 Domande 21–29

Esercizio 2 was based on an email from Carolina to her friend, Greta, in which she talks about her recent birthday and what she did to celebrate it. This was followed by questions that tested the candidates' comprehension of the email/text.

Generally, all questions in this exercise were well attempted, with most candidates demonstrating understanding of the majority of details of Carolina's birthday weekend. Some candidates found **Questions 23(i)**, **24** and **29** challenging, but most were able to locate the correct answers in most instances. **Question 23(i)** was overall less successful than **Question 23(ii)** due to the fact that some candidates answered that Carolina and her friends went to the *giardini pubblici*, in response to the question of what they **did** in the park (before then going on to mention chatting and/or playing football in **Question 23(ii)**).

The question that proved to have the most difficulty in this exercise was **Question 28** (*Perché hanno deciso di camminare la domenica?*). Unsuccessful candidates gave a variety of incorrect responses here, usually lifting irrelevant material from the text.

Terza parte

In Section 3, candidates are asked to demonstrate a more precise understanding of Italian, and as such, responses should be focused. Additional material copied from the text may obscure understanding and consequently invalidate an otherwise correct answer.

Esercizio 1 Domande 30–34

In **Questions 28** to **33**, candidates were asked to read an interview and indicate whether each of the statements that followed were true or false and, where false, correct the statement according to the text.

A good number of candidates correctly chose the three false and the two true statements. Where candidates chose the incorrect true/false statements and therefore ticked the wrong box, it was often in **Questions 30** and **31**.

A small number of candidates answered **Question 30** unsuccessfully, giving a variety of incorrect responses. Candidates needed to convey the idea that Beatrice had wanted to travel for a long time/since she was a young girl, in order to gain the mark. Candidates had a bit more success in **Question 32**, although not universally. Candidates often lost the mark here by only stating that Beatrice finds travelling alone easier, instead of saying that this is something that she **prefers**. A number of candidates lost the mark in **Question 34** due to stating that Beatrice met the Ethiopian family *sotto un albergo* (instead of *albero*).

A small number of candidates failed to do more than merely change the statement to the negative (*...non è molto recente*) in **Question 30** and could not be credited. Practice of past and specimen question papers would help candidates avoid this.

Esercizio 2 Domande 35–41

In **Exercise 2**, candidates were asked to read a text about a boy, Samuele, who has a passion for playing the piano and decided to share this passion with his friends. Candidates were then asked to respond in Italian to the questions that followed, demonstrating understanding of the text and questions.

Almost all candidates were able to give a correct answer to **Question 35**. **Question 36** (*quando ha cominciato a imparare il piano, come era il comportamento di Samuele?*) proved to be the hardest question of the exercise, with many candidates dropping the mark due to the fact that they seemed to mistake the question for '**when** did Samuele start to learn the piano?'.

Questions 37 was challenging for some, with a common error being *sport*. **Question 38** was genera;;y answered well, with most being able to identify *diventa felice* as the correct answer.

Questions 39, **40**, and **41** were all answered well, considering this was the most challenging section of the question paper.

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│     Paper 7164/03       │
│       Speaking          │
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Key messages

●   Examiners should test the recording equipment prior to the exam to ensure that both the Examiner and the candidate can be heard.
●   Examiners need to be familiar with the format of the exam to avoid elements being missed out.
●   Examiners should follow the timings stipulated in the Teacher's Notes booklet.
●   It is important to follow the role-play cues carefully as written in the Teacher's Notes booklet without changing them.
●   To enable candidates to access higher language marks in the conversation sections, Examiners must consistently ask questions to elicit the past, present and the future tenses.
●   Examiners should check the addition of the marks carefully for each candidate.

General comments

The Teacher's Notes booklet provides detailed information for Examiners conducting the speaking examination. Examiners should read it carefully and familiarise themselves with the different components of the exam prior to starting. Omission of a section can disadvantage a candidate and the stipulated format should be carefully followed. Overall, candidates performed well and the majority of Examiners enabled them to demonstrate their best. In some instances, Examiners altered the role plays, changing and missing out cues. This limited the marks of some candidates. The conversations gave candidates the opportunity to show a range of language structures and vocabulary and most Examiners gave them ample opportunity to show what they are capable of. To allow candidates to achieve a mark of above 6 on scale (b), linguistic content, Examiners must ask questions that elicit past and future tenses in both conversation sections.

Clerical checks

The majority of centres carefully completed the addition of marks and the transfer to the MS1 mark sheet/computer printout. There were isolated errors and it is advised that centres continue to check marks carefully.

Cover sheet for moderation sample

The cover sheet provides a checklist to ensure that all required examination materials and documentation are correctly completed and submitted. It can be found at the back of the Teacher's Notes booklet.

Sample size

All centres submitted a correct sample and centres with more than one Examiner included recordings from each. The requirements for selecting the sample are set out in the Teacher's Notes booklet.

Recording quality and presentation of samples

In order for the centre to be moderated effectively, it is essential that the quality of the recording is clear. The microphone should be positioned in such a way as to favour the candidate, and the recording quality should be tested before the exam. There were some isolated cases of centres sending inaudible recordings.

Internal moderation in centre

If a centre with a large number of candidates wishes to use more than one Examiner, they should request permission from Cambridge International beforehand. Cambridge International will provide guidelines to

ensure consistency across the centre. The sample must include all the Examiners and the full range of candidate marks.

Duration of tests/missing elements

The timings are stipulated in the Teacher's Notes booklet and most centres followed them. In some instances, conversation sections were either too long or too short: they should each last approximately five minutes.

Application of the mark scheme

Most centres carefully applied the mark scheme as given in the Teacher's Notes booklet and no adjustment was required. Adjustment was required in the following cases:

● Marks were awarded for role play tasks that were omitted or not completed.
● Sections of the exam were missing.
● Candidates were not given the opportunity to use both past and future tenses in both conversation sections.
● Native speaker candidates were marked too severely.

Comments on specific questions

Role plays

Prior to the start of the exam, candidates have 15 minutes to prepare the role-play cards. To make good use of this time, they should make careful note of the number of details required at each stage and pay attention to when they are required to ask a question. In role-play A, candidates will be asked a question giving two options, and they should be trained to listen carefully and respond by selecting one. For cues where two details are required, both must be included otherwise a maximum of one mark can be awarded. This includes greeting, giving thanks and reacting.

A reaction must be articulated in the form of an expression: for example, *Che bello.* It is not always necessary to include a verb to score 3 marks but if a verb is used, it must be correctly formed, otherwise a maximum of 2 marks can be awarded. If a candidate struggles to answer a question, the Examiner may repeat the cue to support the candidate. In this case, the candidate can still score 3 marks if they give a suitable answer.

A role-plays

The A role-play is intended be less challenging than the B role-play. Most candidates followed the cues and scored well. Some Examiners changed or omitted cues. This limited the marks of some candidates.

B role-plays

For the B role-play, candidates must answer an unprepared question. Most candidates did this well. There is also a requirement to use a past or future tense. Most Examiners carefully followed the cues and enabled candidates to achieve their best. Candidates should be trained to make sure they use an expression when a cue requires a reaction.

Topic presentation and discussion

This section of the exam lasts up to five minutes and consists of two parts: a presentation by the candidate of up to two minutes and a discussion led by the Examiner's questions.

The candidate is invited to choose a topic for the conversation. Common topics this year included holidays, future plans and family. Some candidates chose 'myself' or 'my life', which is not a suitable topic as it limits options for the general conversation. Most candidates used the presentation to show a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures. If the candidate talks beyond the two minutes, the Examiner should interrupt with a suitable question to initiate a conversation.

The conversation should develop naturally and spontaneously in order for the candidate to score highly for communication. Candidates should not learn a set of pre-prepared answers. On rare occasions, Examiners

did not ask questions after the candidates' presentation, which limited the number of marks they could achieve.

It is essential that Examiners ask questions to elicit both past and future use, otherwise a candidate's mark would be limited to 6 on scale (b), linguistic content.

At the end of the topic presentation and discussion, Examiners should indicate a clear transition to the general conversation with a phrase such as 'ora passiamo alla conversazione generale'.

General conversation

The general conversation lasts for up to five minutes and it gives candidates an opportunity to talk about a minimum of two or three additional topics different to their presentation. Examiners covered a good range of topics that were appropriate for this level. Examiners should make sure they use open questions as much as possible to give candidates the opportunity to extend their answers. Centres are reminded of the need for a candidate to use both past and future tenses to access a mark of 6 or above on scale (b), linguistic content, and Examiners should ensure that they ask a number of questions to elicit each tense.

The best candidates responded naturally and spontaneously to the Examiners' questions. They consistently showed that they were able to use both past and future tenses accurately and used a wide range of vocabulary. They consistently gave and justified their opinion.

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Paper 7164/04
Writing
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Key messages

- Candidates should read the questions carefully.
- On **Question 2** and **Question 3** candidates should address each bullet point clearly and explicitly.
- Candidates should be discouraged from introducing extraneous or irrelevant material into their answers.
- Candidates should check their work carefully.
- Candidates should take care to ensure their handwriting is legible.

General comments

In general, candidates performed very well on this paper.

Among performances this year by candidates whose command of Italian was not as secure, it was noted that the more common mistakes were mixing up '*e*' (and) and '*è*' (it/he/she is), while '*ho*' (I have) and '*ha*' (he/she has) became '*o*' (or) and '*a*' (to). The correct conjugation of '*piacere*' in all tenses was problematic for many candidates.

It is worth reminding candidates that they will only be assessed for OLF for relevant material, so it is not advisable to write at length beyond the last bullet point of a task.

In some performances, candidates used a very narrow range of repeated vocabulary and structures and on occasions some candidates used some pre-learned vocabulary, even if it was not applicable. It should be noted that variety of language – both verbs and other grammatical structures – is rewarded on **Question 3**. Candidates should be therefore encouraged to learn synonyms for common words such as '*andare', 'arrivare', 'pensare'*. This means they would boost their vocabulary mark so long as it is all appropriate.

However, stronger candidates were able to use a variety of vocabulary and synonyms and in some cases used lovely idioms, especially when attempting **Question 3**. The '*se ipotetico'* was also rather overused, and not always appropriately, although it is an obvious way of enriching the OLF.

Centres should avoid giving extra exam booklets (12-page ones in some cases) for candidates to write a plan. They can do this on the blank pages in the exam paper.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 – List of things the candidate might find at a train station.

The majority of candidates were able to list five words which were recognisable as things that might be seen at a train station; a certain amount of leeway was granted here in terms of accuracy of spelling and gender (e.g. accepting portafolio, restorante) and 'sound alike' words (e.g. cafè, caffe, for caffè, aqua for acqua). The spelling of '*biglietto'* caused confusion (it was written as '*bilietto*', '*billetto*', '*billet*', which could not be awarded marks). Several candidates wrote *'stazione'* which could not be allowed considering also that there was a generous range of nouns available for marks in this exercise.

Words in languages other than Italian (particularly Spanish and English) did not enable candidates to get marks. A very few candidates only gave three or four items and therefore could not earn full marks.

Question 2 – Description of candidate's household chores

There were many detailed answers here, which gained full marks for communication. However, some candidates seemed to struggle with bullet point 1: those who struggled with this bullet point forgot to answer when ('*quando*') and did not give any information about when they did the household chores. Many candidates also answered this bullet point by using just an adverb like '*normalmente*' or '*di solito*', which was not enough on its own.

The third bullet point was also problematic for some candidates because they did not mention parents or family members anywhere in the answer.

Another issue for a few candidates was attempting answering the second and third bullet point by combining them, which meant they ended up losing communication points as the result was quite unclear.

With regards to the language used in this question, quite a few candidates lost points in communcation due to confusion between '*lavare'* and '*lavorare'*. (e.g. '*non mi piace lavorare i piatti*', '*non mi piace lavorare la macchina*').

Also, '*camminare/passeggiare il cane'* was used rather than '*portare fuori il cane'*, and in some cases candidates liked to '*fare la spessa*' instead of '*fare la* spesa'.

There were problems with the fourth bullet point as many candidates lost marks because they neglected to put accents on future tense verbs or use future expressions when a clear use of future tense or conditional was needed to get the mark. The most common mistakes were '*andro*', '*faro*', '*dovro*'.

Centres should encourage candidates to read the bullet points very carefully, to answer each one directly and to expand their answer with relevant information in clauses containing verbs.

Question 3
(a)   A visit to the park

Together with the second option, the most popular answer. These words were frequently confused: '*divertirsi/divertente', 'rilassarsi/rilassante', 'fuori/fiori'*. Talking about the weather in the past tense was challenging for some. There was confusion with the verb when *il tempo* was the subject, and also between '*pioveva'* and '*pioggia*.'

Common errors were occurrences of '*settimana prossima/scorsa'* without the article.

Most candidates followed the bullet points closely. In responses to the first bullet point, the vast majority of candidates mentioned '*giocare a calcio con gli amici*' as the activity they did when they arrived at the park and only few mentioned 'fare un pic-nic'. Some candidates wrote about 'fare una passeggiata con il cane' and then went on extending by describing what they saw in the park and using quite an interesting range of vocabulary.

For bullet point 5, a few candidates failed to make clear reference to what they would do the next time in the park and limited themselves to inviting the recipient of their e-mail to join them in the future.

(b)   An incredible concert

This was quite a popular choice for candidates in this section of the paper. However, for the first bullet point, a few candidates only scored one tick because they did not specify which concert they had been to.

Nevertheless the rest of the bullet points in this option allowed candidates to answer clearly and correctly. Some issues arose with the use of the verb '*piacere*' in the conditional and in the present tense and only a few candidates had problems with bullet point 3 because they tried to give a very complex answer as to why they liked or did not like classical music. Sometimes, keeping it simple might be a better choice for candidates trying to answer this section of the exam; they could aim for higher bands in the Other Linguistic Features criterion by using a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary accurately.

(c)   **Arriving late at school**

This was the least frequently chosen question in this section, but the majority of those who chose it seemed to have a good grasp of the language and so were able to write interesting, detailed and quite original responses to this more open-ended narrative task. As usual with this option of the third task, the stories written by the candidates were very enjoyable to mark, although harder to write. Nevertheless, there were some very good answers with excellent use of verbs, object pronouns and reported speech.

Those candidates who had a good grasp of the language produced fluent and vivid accounts of the problem that prevented them from arriving at school on time: examples ranged from witnessing a robbery, being caught up in a traffic accident, forgetting books at home or missing a train.

Those candidates who struggled the most did so on a language level as they had problems creating a coherent narrative: for example, some candidates seemed to have ignored the word '*ieri*' in the given text and moved the story to '*oggi*' and thus moved the whole narrative to the present tense. Marks (and verb ticks) were harder to achieve in bullet point 5 for those candidates who attempted to use indirect speech in the past unsuccessfully.