



Introduction

The *General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)* represents a critical step in the educational career of students in the UK, and the exams are taken during a decisive period of thorough assessment. The grades obtained during these years will have a significant impact upon their higher education and will ultimately determine their chances of attending university. For this reason – and I speak from experience – students, teachers and parents cooperate extensively during this time in order to ensure the best possible result through classroom tuition supplemented by additional study guides. This is done not only to facilitate study and practice through exercises, but also help students to become familiar with the style of the exam itself.

In the UK there is a specialised bibliography for use in the preparation of *Modern Foreign Language* GCSE exams, which is widely utilised by schools and private students. However, this is the first publication entirely conceived for the GCSE in Italian. For the explicit purpose of meeting the needs of students and teachers, I have adapted this guide specifically around the *AQA* and *Edexcel* specifications. The four chapters of the book (*Media and Arts*, *Sports and Free Time*, *Holidays and Geography* and *Education and Work*) are divided into different subsections, each of which presents a specific topic through an introductory text followed by a comprehensive list of words correlated to the general topic proposed. This guarantees that students develop a robust vocabulary, communicative abilities and a thorough comprehension of grammar so that they are easily able to fulfil the linguistic requirements of the GCSE exam in Italian.

The guide contains drills, exercises and tasks which will develop the reading, listening, writing and speaking skills necessary for both the controlled assessment portion of the exam (*Speaking and Writing*) and for the exam component (*Listening and Reading*). It also contains two complete GCSE practice exams in line with *AQA* and *Edexcel* (the latter is available in a specific online section on the Edilingua website) new specifications. In fact, after the introduction of the **GCSE reforms, which for the Italian occurred in 2017 (first teaching with the new reforms, first exams in 2019)**, a new updated version of this volume was needed. Thus, not only have important elements of the new curriculum been included (for example the final section dedicated to the Congiuntivo, which is one of the most challenging grammar topics), but also all the activities, as well as the tests themselves, have been readjusted to the new *Edexcel* and *AQA* exam structure. In this sense, students are introduced to some literary fragments from Italian classics in the reading sections, become familiar with certain Italian cultural aspects related to the Arts, Literature, History, Sports, etc., and practise translating small texts. In this way, far from being obsolete in its content and operational planning, this book keeps providing candidates with wide theoretical knowledge and effective practical strategies to perform the GCSE tasks. Furthermore, the writing and speaking strategies provided will allow students to cover a wide range of topics for spoken dialogues while improving linguistic ability and accuracy. In this way, readers can approach the GCSE exam through the use of strategic planning and creativity, which will allow them to tailor the design and speaking tasks to suit their topic preferences and ability level.

Preparazione al

GCSE in Italian



In order to implement the specific skills required for the controlled assessment, in each chapter there is also a *Tips* section, where students can learn useful and effective strategies to improve both their writing and speaking abilities.

At the end of each chapter there is also a comprehensive grammar summary followed by some exercises to reinforce the students' knowledge. The explanation of grammar is provided in both Italian and in English so that students may achieve a good understanding of key grammatical concepts in both languages.

While the idioms and colloquial linguistic structures are fully described alongside the topics, the order of the chapters does not follow a chronological progression of difficulty. For this reason, the guide can be used in a flexible way, such that students and teachers can focus on those language topics which they think are most useful to improve specific skills or to fill gaps in understanding. Such flexibility is ideal for the thematic planning of the *controlled assessments*.

The book includes an Audio CD and the keys to the exercises.

It is my hope that this guide might serve to assist students learning the Italian language at GCSE level. In particular, I am confident that it will assist students in achieving their full potential. Moreover, it is my wish that through the materials provided in this book they might develop a lifelong appreciation for the scope and diversity of the Italian language, culture and people.

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