



L-Università  
ta' Malta

MATSEC  
Examinations Board



**Examiners' Report**  
SEC Italian

**Main Session 2024**

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## A. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

In 2024 there were a total of 1948 candidates who registered for Italian at SEC Level. 138 candidates were absent for the exam which amounts to approximately 7% of the candidates who registered for the exam.

Year	Total SEC registrations	Italian SEC registrations	%
2012	7295	2025	27.76
2013	6694	2026	30.27
2014	6599	1924	29.16
2015	5878	1839	31.29
2016	5830	1814	31.11
2017	5497	1611	29.3
2018	5145	1522	29.58
2019	5407	1730	31.99
2020	2967	389	13.11
2021	5017	1640	32.69
2022	5152	1629	31.62
2023	5077	1894	37.31
2024	5294	1948	36.79

Table 1. Registrations

## B. OVERALL PERFORMANCE

This year candidates sat for one graded paper to include Level 2 and Level 3 in the four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and there were no Paper A or Paper B. Grammar and culture component were not a separate component and were not tested as in previous years.

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	U	ABS
Total	120	218	283	329	160	215	129	356	138
% of Total	6.2	11.2	14.5	16.9	8.2	11	6.6	18.3	7.1

Table 2: Distribution of grades for SEC Italian 2024 Main Session

## C. GENERAL REMARKS

For this session, candidates had to sit for Controlled paper I and Controlled paper II.

Paper	Skills assessed	Percentage marks
Controlled Paper I	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing	80%
Controlled Paper II	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing	20%

## D. COMMENTS ON THE PAPER

### Speaking

Candidates were presented with four tasks for speaking: three tasks in the controlled assessment part I and another task for the controlled assessment part II. The total marks which could be obtained were 35 (25 from

the first part of the assessment and 10 from the second part). All tasks were related to the 12 topics listed in the syllabus and included verbal and visual cues.

Whilst most of the candidates participated in the required tasks and interacted with the examiner as required, some candidates still had difficulties in expressing themselves in basic Italian.

## Listening

As for speaking, the listening component carried a total of 35 marks. Paper setup included 4 exercises with a mix of typologies for the controlled assessment part I for a total of 25 marks and 2 exercises for part II which made up the other 10 marks. Part I and part II assessments were held on different dates. Audio recordings were provided. Candidates who required live speakers were accommodated.

Typologies used for the examination:

<b>Controlled assessment part I</b>	
Exercise 1	Matching with visual cues
Exercise 2	Matching with text
Exercise 3	Multiple choice
Exercise 4	Short answer/multiple choice

<b>Controlled assessment part II</b>	
Exercise 1	Matching with visual cues
Exercise 2	Short answer/multiple choice

Most of the candidates fared well in the listening component.

## Reading

The reading component carried a total of 35 marks with 25 marks distributed in the controlled paper I and the remaining 10 marks on controlled paper II.

Listening, reading and writing skills were held on the same day. Controlled paper I and controlled paper II were held on separate days.

The typologies used for reading are as follows:

<b>Controlled assessment part I</b>	
Exercise 1	Matching with visual cues
Exercise 2	Find the correct phrase (picture based)
Exercise 3	Matching (text to text)
Exercise 4	Multiple choice (individual texts)

<b>Controlled assessment part II</b>	
Exercise 1	True or false (to provide justification in writing)
Exercise 2	Short answer

Candidates proceeded well in the matching and multiple-choice exercises. Some found difficulties in choosing the correct phrase from a set of sentences and failed to provide the correct justification in the first exercise of the controlled paper part II.

## Writing

As with all other components, this part of the examination made up 35 marks with the controlled assessment part I totalling 25 marks and the other 10 marks were allocated to the controlled assessment part II paper.

The tasks which the candidates had to produce were communicative. There were no options – one title per task was provided.

Controlled assessment part I		Number of words
Task 1	Write a message/invite	40 - 60 words
Task 2	Write an email	100 - 130 words

Controlled assessment part II		Number of words
Task 1	Write an email (in reply to a poster/request)	90 - 120 words

Most candidates attempted all tasks, however examiners observed that many responses prove to be weak in the writing component. Some candidates attempted only one task, others left all writing tasks empty or wrote unintelligible words, some not even in Italian. Whilst there were flawless pieces of writing, others failed to reach the minimum requirement. Some observations from examiners included:

- Candidates copy writing task title
- Candidates copy from reading comprehensions
- Text not at the required length (including the short message)
- Lacking opening and closing (especially in the email)
- Task out of point
- Difficulty in making a string of sentences
- Lack of grammatical notions (verbs not at the correct tense, incorrect noun and adjective endings, misuse of articles)

## E. COMMENTS ON THE PAPER

The examination sessions held in 2024 offered the candidates the opportunity to show their knowledge in Italian in the four skills equally, since all components carried the same weighting. Reading and listening exercises typologies followed those expressed by the syllabus which enabled students to prove their abilities in comprehension skills without being tested on grammar. Challenges in the productive skills (speaking and writing) are always present, even though tasks set were guided, instructing candidates on how to carry out the task. As for any language, listening to audio/video clips in Italian improves one's ability to interact with others and helps in vocabulary building which is necessary both for comprehension and for speaking and writing.

Chairperson

Examination Panel 2024