

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
MODERN LANGUAGES PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION
ITALIAN

This is some advice on how to prepare before the start of your first-year course.

1) Language

a) For those with A-level Italian or equivalent:

You should consolidate and extend your knowledge of Italian in any way possible, whether through regular reading of Italian newspapers, through reading of books beyond the preliminary course, or simply through careful study of the prescribed texts. You should also spend time building up in a systematic manner your knowledge of Italian grammar. To that effect, you are encouraged to use a good review grammar, such as G.Lazzarini-A.Moneti, *Da capo*, or K.Katerinov-M.C.Boriosi, *La lingua italiana per stranieri*.

b) For those starting from scratch, or from GCSE:

You will take the same language (and literature) examinations, at the end of the first year, as those under a). You therefore **MUST** make substantial progress with your language before coming to Oxford. You should follow the advice given in a), but give an absolute priority to acquiring a firm grasp of the grammar. You should use a good method, such as P.Frassica-A.Carrara, *Per modo di dire*, or K.Katerinov-M.C.Boriosi, *La lingua italiana per stranieri*, or Ch.Speroni-C.L.Golino, *Basic Italian*, or E.Lebano, *Italian: A Self-Teaching Guide*. A more traditional approach is used in F.J.Jones, *Modern Italian Grammar*, or D.Lennie-M.Gregg, *Italian for you*.

Recommended dictionaries:

- Monolingual (Italian-Italian): T. de Mauro, *Il dizionario di italiano compatto* (Paravia 2004).

- Bilingual (Italian-English): *Oxford-Paravia Italian Dictionary*, ed. by C. Bareggi (Oxford UP 2001).

Courses in Italy:

If you wish to attend a language course in Italy, you can obtain useful information from the Italian Cultural Institute, 39 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8NX, Website www.icilondon.esteri.it/IIC_Londra, tel.020.72351461, fax 020.72354618 (open Mon.-Fri., 10-12-5).

Past students have recommended the following courses:

- Gargnano, Lake Garda: <http://www.calcif-ateneo.it/>
- Università di Urbino: www.uniurb.it/CorStran
- British Institute, Florence: www.britishinstitute.it
- Scuola Toscana, Firenze: www.scuola-toscana.com
- Istituto italiano, Firenze: www.istitutoitaliano.it
- Università per Stranieri di Siena: www.unistrasi.it
- Università del Salento (Lecce): https://www.italianoperstranieri.unisalento.it/home_page
- Università per Stranieri, Perugia: www.unistrapg.it
- Cultura italiana (various cities): www.culturaitaliana.it/index.html
- Torre di Babele, Rome: www.torredibabele.com
- Istituto Venezia, Venice: www.istitutovenezia.com

N.B. Reading, speaking and/or going to Italy cannot replace (and will be much more rewarding if based on) a formal grounding in grammar. The need to work as hard as possible at this task cannot be emphasized enough.

We may be able to run a pre-sessional language course for beginners in September, during the week preceding the start of term. If so (and if deemed eligible), you will be informed. This course will not replace the individual preparation that you are expected to conduct prior to its start.

TEST: ALL NEW STUDENTS WILL SIT A LANGUAGE TEST WHEN THEY ARRIVE TO OXFORD.

2) Literature

In the first year, you will be working on two literature papers, each with prescribed works:

"Modern Italian Narrative and Cinema" (Paper IV)

Prescribed texts (any edition of the following, in Italian of course):

- 1) Primo Levi, *Se questo è un uomo*
- 2) Italo Calvino, *Il barone rampante*
- 3) Anna Maria Ortese, *Il mare non bagna Napoli*
- 4) Natalia Ginzburg, *Lessico familiare*
- 5) *I cento passi* (film directed by Marco Tullio Giordana)

Students will also be expected to have such knowledge of the literary, intellectual and historical background as is necessary for the understanding of these works.

"Aspects of Italian Lyric Poetry" (Paper III)

1) *The Italian Sonnet from the Middle Ages to the present*. A selection of sonnets, which will be available at a later date in the Modern Languages Faculty Office, will be studied as an introduction to poetry in general, and to the exercise of close critical commentary.

2) Giuseppe Ungaretti, selections from "L'allegria" and "Sentimento del tempo", in *Vita d'un uomo: 106 poesie (1914-1960)*, Mondadori Oscar, Milan. The work of this poet will be studied in detail for close commentary and essays.

Italian books can be ordered, among others, at any of these bookshops:

B.H. Blackwell Ltd.
Broad Street
Oxford OX1 3BQ
Tel. 01865.792792
www.blackwell.co.uk

Grant & Cutler Ltd.
55-57 Great Marlborough St.
London W1V 2AY
Tel. 020.77342012
www.grantandcutler.com

The Italian Bookshop
Cecil Court
London WC2N 4EZ
Tel. 020.72401634
www.italianbookshop.co.uk

See also: <http://italianbooks.co.uk> www.unilibro.it <http://shop.bol.it> www.internetbookshop.it

N.B. Before arriving in Oxford you should have read all the prescribed texts for the "Modern Italian Narrative & Cinema" paper, and as much of the Ungaretti as possible.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at St. Hugh's.
With best wishes,

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