

13271 Lingua Inglese

13271 Lingua Inglese was held for the last time in the academic year 2014-15. Exams are still held (six times a year), but there are no longer any classes or laboratories. It follows that students needing to sit this exam have to prepare for this on their own. Below we offer some guidance on how best to go about this.

As a course, Lingua Inglese was designed to do two things: (i) offer the student a chance to greatly extend and refine his/her knowledge of English grammar (through a systematic approach based on classes and exercises done in the computer laboratory), and (ii) give a certain amount of practice in reading texts of a more complex (non-narrative) type.

Two levels

The course was held at **two different levels** (with different exams): ‘**intermedio**’ & ‘**medio-avanzato**’. The first thing you have to do is decide which level you intend to do - this is entirely up to you, but if you need some help in deciding, there is a ‘placement test’ available on AlmaDL (you can download it and do it on your own).

Whichever level you choose, from the formal point of view the result is the same: a grade (‘in trentesimi’) registered as ‘Lingua Inglese 1’ - the level chosen is not specified in the exam registration.

Why, then, choose the ‘medio-avanzato’? Because it is somewhat easier - *ceteris paribus* - to score a high mark (for more details, please see the official course programme - *Guida dello studente*).

Course structure

The course (whether at intermediate level or at advanced level) is divided into two modules:

1. Grammar
2. Text Comprehension

Important

Like other university courses, 13271 Lingua Inglese has a series of course contents (for detailed information, see the original course programme), and the function of the final exam is to determine whether the student has covered these. In other words, Lingua Inglese is *not* an ‘idoneità’, and the final exam is not a language test designed simply to determine whether you have reached a given level - B1, B2 etc - in English.

For this reason - whatever your present level in English - you need to obtain the course materials and work through them systematically.

If you work through the course materials, you should find the exam quite straightforward. The grammar exercises that you will find in the exam are very similar to the ones contained in the course materials. Regarding the Text Comprehension, the text you will see at the exam will be an extract from one of the five Text Comprehension units (all available on AlmaDL). It follows that you should study these carefully before signing up for the exam.

Both for the Grammar and the Text Comprehension, **model exams** (with solutions) are available on AlmaDL (you will need to look through the long list of items until you find them). You are strongly advised to work through the model exams (there are several available for each level): the final exam which you sit will be VERY SIMILAR to these. It is a good idea to look at one of the model exams right at the beginning: it will help you to get an idea of what you are preparing for.

Course materials

All the course materials are available on **AlmaDL** but you need to select **a.a. 2014-15** (no materials were posted in 2015-16).

Proceed as follows, selecting: a.a. 2014-15 → Scuola di Lettere → Corso di laurea in Scienze della Comunicazione → Insegnamento 13271 Lingua Inglese → docente Peter Taylor.

The Grammar Module

This consists of a number of different grammar topics (numbered from 1 to 10).

You choose **5** of these and study them using the materials provided on AlmaDL (more details below). Normally, if you have chosen the Intermediate Level, you will study Grammar Topics 1-5. If you have chosen the Advanced Level, then you must choose among the Grammar Topics numbered from 5 -10.

Materials for the Grammar Module available on AlmaDL

These are organised by topic (Grammar Topic 1, 2, 3 etc).

For most topics, you will find 4 files:

- a. **Class Materials** - the class handout. This gives the most important examples and some brief explanation. It usually also contains some of the most important exercises. Use it to get an overall idea of what the topic is about (do not worry too much about the details), and then move on to the Laboratory Exercises.
- b. **Laboratory Exercises** - this is the complete set of exercises that were made available to students during the grammar laboratories. You should download these and work through them. For each topic there are usually *too many* exercises, so it is a good idea to be selective: after you have done 5 or 6 items of a given exercise, you will probably have understood the main point and will not need to do the remaining items. Similarly, you may find that the immediately following exercise centres on the same points, so that you can skip it and move on to something new. Always read the instructions for each exercise, and look carefully at the example item (if there is one).
- c. **Solutions to Laboratory Exercises** - use these to check your answers (it is recommended that you do 4 or 5 items of the exercise and then check your answers - this is a good way of making sure that you are on the right track). Quite frequently you will find that the correct solution is accompanied by a short explanation which discusses common errors. It is usually a good idea to read these short explanations.
- d. **Grammar Reading** - the aim of this is to give a full explanation of the content. But there is a price to pay: often the explanations are quite long and full. We recommend that you use these Grammar Readings selectively; in many cases the solutions to the laboratory exercises will provide enough explanation for your needs. For certain advanced-level topics, there is no separate 'Grammar Reading'; in these cases, you should look in the Class Materials, where some explanatory material is provided.

In essence: the Laboratory Exercises are the most important thing. Work through these, consulting the answer sheets, and you should have no problem with the grammar sections of the final exam.

Other grammar materials

You probably possess a grammar of English or a coursebook with grammar exercises

(bookshops are full of such books). These can of course be used to prepare for the Lingua Inglese exam, but please be aware that you will probably find considerable differences of approach (and sometimes different terminology). 13271 Lingua Inglese is based on a 'contrastive approach', meaning that emphasis is given to those areas where English Grammar contrasts with Italian. The course materials available on AlmaDL were specifically written with this approach in mind. Commercially available language courses are generally designed for an international public and do not follow this contrastive approach.

The Text Comprehension Module

The idea of this is that you read through five (multi-page) texts in English (completely authentic texts for the Advanced Level and texts that have been very slightly simplified for the Intermediate Level), and that, by doing so, you considerably improve your reading ability (as well as your lexical knowledge and your familiarity with various text-organisational elements).

You simply go to AlmaDL, find the items marked 'Modulo di Comprensione del testo/Text Comprehension Module' (making sure you have got the ones that correspond to your level), download them, and READ THEM.

Materials for the Text Comprehension Module on AlmaDL

For each level, you will find 5 Text Comprehension units (Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 for the Intermediate Level, and Units 1A, 2A, 3A, 4A, 5A for the Advanced Level).

For each unit (Intermediate Level), you will find:

- a. **Orientation sheet** (this prepares you for the text you are going to read)
- b. **Reading Text** (the plain text - use this for your first readings)
- c. **Version of the Text for study of grammar & lexis** (the same text again with grammatical constructions and lexical items highlighted. Read this through AFTER your initial readings)
- d. **Completion sheet**: this contains a few questions that you might like to answer after reading the text

For the Advanced Level, you will find the one file per Unit, containing the text itself, some preparatory comprehension questions, and occasional lexical glosses).

Please note that the text which you will see in the Text Comprehension section of the final exam will be **an extract from one of the texts contained in the materials**. For a model of the Text Comprehension section of the exam, please see AlmaDL.

The exam

At the exam you need to complete **5 Grammar Sections** (each carries a maximum of 8 points out of a total of 60), and the **Text Comprehension Section** (maximum 20 points). Your final grade ('in trentesimi') is the result of adding together your score in the 5 Grammar Sections (say 36/40) and your score in the Text Comprehension Section (say 17/20), and then halving it ($53/60 = 26.5/30 \rightarrow 27/30$).

Students who choose the Advanced Level exam are allowed to complete 6 Grammar Sections, i.e. Sections 5 - 10.

Model exams

Model exams can be viewed on AlmaDL (to find the right page, see indications above).

Please note that the exams are intended to be straightforward and self-explanatory for those who have gone through the course materials. They are not necessarily straightforward and

self-explanatory for those who have not.