



**SOCIETÀ DANTE ALIGHIERI**

**THE WORLD IN ITALIAN**

# **PLIDA**

**Dante Alighieri Italian Language Project  
Certification of proficiency in the Italian language**

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**Approved by the Central Council of the Società Dante Alighieri**

**June 22 2017**

**Version 1.1**

# PLIDA RULES AND REGULATIONS

These Rules and Regulations, which all authorized PLIDA certification centers must follow, establish the general procedures for implementation of the exams required to obtain the PLIDA (Dante Alighieri Italian Language Project) certification of proficiency in the Italian language, awarded by PLIDA headquarters at the Società Dante Alighieri. PLIDA headquarters reserves the right to modify these rules and regulations as it deems necessary. These modifications will be communicated to all authorized certification centers prior to the publication of the updated text. In addition to the general procedures for the implementation of the exams described below, all organizational memos and other correspondence from PLIDA headquarters are enforceable as Rules and Regulations.

The PLIDA (Dante Alighieri Italian Language Project) certificate awarded by PLIDA headquarters at the Società Dante Alighieri is an official certificate documenting proficiency in Italian as a foreign language based on the six levels outlined in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* of the European Council.<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 Candidates.

The PLIDA certificate is intended for individuals whose primary language is not Italian. All Italian citizens or non-Italian citizens who speak Italian as their first language and need a certificate of proficiency in the Italian language for educational, professional or other purposes also have access to PLIDA. For example, the following groups are eligible for the exams required to obtain the certificate:

- Non-Italian citizens;
- Dual (Italian and Non-Italian) citizens for whom Italian is not a first language;
- Dual (Italian and Non-Italian) citizens who have not finished all grade levels of secondary school in Italian public or equivalent schools, in Italy, or in a foreign country;
- Bilingual or trilingual citizens;
- Citizens who want to participate in (civil service) entrance exams for employment in Italian Regions with special administrative status or in bilingual or trilingual areas in which the awarding of certificates of proficiency in the Italian language is authorized.

Other special cases will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by PLIDA experts.

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<sup>1</sup> *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of the European Council: Learning, Instruction, Evaluation*, Milan, La Nuova Italia — Oxford; [www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre_en.asp)

The PLIDA certification program requires a specific exam for candidates aged 13 to 18: PLIDA Juniores. PLIDA Juniores tests, despite sharing the same format and referring to the same linguistic and communicative competencies as the regular PLIDA test, include passages and use cases appropriate to the candidate age group, with the exclusion of passages, topics, dealings and situations that could fall outside of the common adolescent experience. PLIDA Juniores evaluates and certifies proficiency in Italian as a foreign language based on the first four levels of competence outlined by the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (A1, A2, B1 and B2).

PLIDA exam takers must be members of the Società Dante Alighieri. A candidate can sign up for membership when registering for the exam, thereby accepting the conditions laid out in the Bylaws and Regulatory Standards<sup>2</sup> regarding membership. Enrollment requires acceptance of the arbitration agreement and of the related bond of justice.

## 1.2 Exam sessions and dates.

PLIDA exam sessions are set every year for days specified by headquarters, and apply to all certification centers.

The annual calendar and deadlines for the submission of registrations by individual certification centers are communicated before the end of the previous year by PLIDA headquarters to all certification centers, and are published on PLIDA's website ([www.plida.it](http://www.plida.it)). Exam dates are set in consideration of the most important national holidays in Italy and abroad. Certification centers are, however, required to communicate conflicts between exam dates and local holidays or special events to PLIDA headquarters in the form of a written memo; and in these cases, it is possible for certification centers to work with PLIDA headquarters on rescheduling the session for one of the days immediately preceding or following the those previously established. Unapproved modifications to the scheduled exam session will result in the invalidation of all the exams taken in the certification center.

## 1.3 Exam venues.

Exams can only take place in venues run by certification centers authorized by PLIDA headquarters (the updated list of certification centers is published on the PLIDA website). If a candidate is unable to take the test at the venue at which he or she is registered, the candidate can take the test at a different certification center. In this case, the certification center at which the candidate was originally registered will transfer the registration fee received from the candidate to the new venue.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.ladante.it/chi-siamo/lo-statuto.html](http://www.ladante.it/chi-siamo/lo-statuto.html)

## 1.4 Enrollment.

Individuals seeking to take the exam to obtain the PLIDA certification need to register at a certification center, and must pay, to the certification center, the registration fee corresponding to the exam level requested. A portion of all registration fees is reserved for PLIDA headquarters at the Società Dante Alighieri. The certification center is required to post candidates to the registration tab of the extranet portal, in accordance with the deadlines and the procedures outlined by PLIDA headquarters at the beginning of each session, and to immediately send a photocopy of proof of the transfer of the portion of funds from the registration fee accruing to PLIDA headquarters. The fund transfer must be completed by the certification center in a single installment. Individual candidates cannot pay partial or full registration fees directly to headquarters, except in specifically authorized cases. The receipt must list the name of the certification center and the corresponding exam session. Receipts can also be sent by fax to the number +39.06.92932015 or by email to [plida@ladante.it](mailto:plida@ladante.it).

The manager of the PLIDA certification center is required to provide each candidate with the “Receipt for exam registration” generated through the extranet portal at the end of the registration process.

Eligibility for a specific level of proficiency does not require that a candidate has passed exams corresponding to lower levels: candidates can choose to register for the level they feel best fits their level of proficiency in the Italian language, and can also register for more than one level during the same session.

### 1.4.1 Cost of the exam.

Before the end of each year, PLIDA headquarters at the Società Dante Alighieri will provide certification centers with information on the budget and pricing provisions to follow in the year to come (pricing for each level of exam, funds accruing to PLIDA headquarters). PLIDA headquarters will establish the maximum prices that can be proposed to the public: certification centers are not at liberty to autonomously raise prices beyond limits specified by PLIDA headquarters.

Candidates taking a specific level of the exam for the first time are required to take the full exam. Candidates cannot enroll for individual sections if they have not previously taken the full exam.

Candidates seeking to retake one or more language skill sections of the exam that were not passed in one session (up to a maximum of three out of four) are required to pay a partial fee. PLIDA headquarters will specify these partial fee amounts, as well as the allotment of such partial fees payable respectively to PLIDA headquarters and the certification center.

## 1.5 The exam process.

The day of the test, candidates must arrive at least ten minutes before the scheduled start time with a valid form of identification. The PLIDA certification center is responsible for verifying the identity of the candidate and certain conditions for being admitted into the exam (cfr. 1.1). Only candidates who are properly registered through the registration tab on the extranet portal will be admitted to take the exam on the day of the exam. Those who arrive after the exam is in progress will not be allowed to take the test.

Exams must be conducted with the utmost rigor and in accordance with the procedures specified by PLIDA headquarters and the certification center, and failure to do so will result in the invalidation of individual exam sections or if necessary, of the entire exam session.

PLIDA headquarters reserves the right to send inspectors to monitor whether the required exam procedures are being followed.

## 1.6 Passing the exam and exam scoring.

The exam is considered passed if the candidate has received a score of at least 18/30 in each of the four linguistic ability sections (*listening, reading, writing, speaking*).

Candidates who pass one, two or three of the four skill sections of which the test is composed (*listening, reading, writing and speaking*) can elect to keep their scores, for the specific skill sections they have passed, for use in subsequent exams, provided that these subsequent exam sessions take place within eighteen months of the date in which the initial exam was taken. Tests for a single skill section or for multiple skill sections that were not passed can also be retaken in multiple sessions. If one or more new skill sections are passed, the new passing scores for these sections will be combined with the passing scores of other skill sections from prior exam sessions.

## 1.7 Results and certificates.

### 1.7.1 Results of the tests.

Results will be issued to certification centers within 60 business days from the date of delivery of all exam materials (Writing test booklets, answer sheets for the Listening and Reading sections, recordings of the Oral section, test records) to PLIDA headquarters. Let it be known that if said materials arrive in incomplete or incorrect form, the 60-business day deadline is no longer binding.

After reviewing test records to determine the compliance of the exam session and committee, and scoring exam materials, PLIDA headquarters will enter scores in the PLIDA

database and communicate the completion of the entry of these records to the responsible party at the PLIDA certification center, who can connect to the extranet portal and print the prospectus containing the exam results. The responsible party at the PLIDA certification center is prohibited from sharing any scores with candidates until he or she receives communication from PLIDA headquarters that records have been processed. The PLIDA certification center is required to modify any incorrect personal data prior to the printing of certificates. This operation must be performed within 15 days from the initial communication from PLIDA headquarters. After the deadline, PLIDA headquarters will print and mail the certificates.

PLIDA headquarters will make occasional random checks of oral test recordings. If problems or irregularities are found and are deemed significant enough to warrant a repeated evaluation of the oral test, the 60-business day deadline for the release of scores is no longer binding. PLIDA headquarters will communicate if evaluations are ongoing.

All judgements expressed by PLIDA headquarters are final.

If they wish, candidates can request an appointment at PLIDA headquarters to view their test. The request must occur within 15 days from the issuance of results. Tests will be available for 60 days following the issuance of results.

#### 1.7.2 Issuance of the certificates.

Headquarters will issue the certificate of each candidate who has passed the exam to the certification center. In addition to the candidate's personal information, each certificate will display the level passed, individual scores in each language skill section and the overall score obtained. Candidates' personal information is used for the printing of certificates and, in cases where permission to the treatment of such information has been granted, also in communications on the activities taking place at the Società Dante Alighieri, in accordance with the Italian law on privacy (D.lgs.196/2003).

Certification centers are tasked with entering all relevant personal information into the extranet portal, and for checking the certificates for errors prior to printing. Therefore, if errors are found on a recipient's printed certificate, the certification center is responsible for requesting a corrected certificate. At the time of the request, PLIDA headquarters will inform the certification center of the fees associated with the correction, which range from reprinting to mailing the corrected certificate, and vary based on the price of postage. These fees also apply to requests for replacement certificates due to misplacement, or damage to an already-issued certificate; in these cases, the fee reimbursing PLIDA headquarters shall be paid by whomever has requested the replacement certificate, and the certificate will not be mailed until PLIDA headquarters has received proof of payment.

#### 1.8 Reimbursement of registration fees.

Registration fees are non-refundable. Candidates who decide against taking the exam during the session for which they registered and paid, will receive a credit applicable to exam sessions scheduled on the PLIDA calendar within the following 18 months, provided that written notice has been given by the certification center to PLIDA headquarters at least 15 days prior to the exam date. The duration of the credit is calculated from the date that the first medical certificate is presented, and cannot be extended. Receipt of the credit does not change the period of eligibility for the re-taking of specific exam skill sections that were not passed during prior attempts. Candidates who are unable to take the exam will only receive a credit if they send a medical certificate, or other document proving their inability to attend the exam, within 15 days following the exam date.

If the credit is used to register for an exam at a higher level than the one for which the candidate was previously registered, the candidate is responsible for paying the difference between the two registration fees.

If the exams cannot take place due to circumstances beyond anyone's control (force majeure), the session will be rescheduled for a later date and candidates will retain their registration for the exam.

#### 1.9 Candidates with special needs.

If in need of specific equipment or materials in order to successfully take part in the exam, candidates with disabilities must notify the certification center in advance. In turn, the center must notify PLIDA headquarters of this request for any special measures at least 90 days prior to the scheduled deadline for exam registration, attaching a medical certificate attesting to the requirements.

As a compensatory measure, PLIDA certification offers extra time in the reading section to candidates with dyslexia; other measures which can be expected (based on MUIR guidelines attached to the DM (Ministerial Decree) of July 12th, 2011) include an assistant to read aloud during the delivery of each of the 4 exam sections, and to read aloud certain text portions of the listening and reading sections, as well as text inputs for the *Speaking* section. Text from the *Reading* section can only be read by the candidate, who will be afforded extra time, and who upon request, can be provided with the text sections in font sizes more appropriate for readers with dyslexia. Subject to the same deadlines for prior notification, candidates who are hearing or visually impaired can request special measures to facilitate their taking the exam.

PLIDA headquarters will communicate all guidelines regarding exam length and available additional arrangements to facilitate exam-taking after receiving the medical document.

#### 1.10 Invalidation of skill sections and of the exam session.

Exam sections must be conducted with utmost fairness and adherence to the procedures outlined in these rules and regulations (cfr. 3). Exam answers modified or corrected with any sort of concealing tool (whiteout in liquid form, tape, pen, etc.); answers written in pencil or erasable pen; answers modified with handwriting that differs from the candidate's; blank answers; answers that are clearly plagiarized from traceable sources, except, of course, quotes, which must be bracketed in quotation marks and sourced. Written answers to queries in the writing section must contain the number of words specified in the instructions: answers containing fewer words than the minimum required by each query and answers that address only one of two parts of the query will be invalidated. Answers in the *Speaking* section need to correspond to the time and format requirements described in the exam booklet, on penalty of invalidation of the answer.

A representative of the PLIDA certification center is required to confiscate and void the exam sections of candidates who possess electronic devices that are powered on and functioning (smartphones, tablets, e-book readers or computers) or other materials during the written section of the exam, and to log the details in the test records.

Clear violations of the exam instructions provided at the beginning of each exam section will result in the invalidation of the section.

If sections of the exam are taken on dates or in locations that differ from those approved by PLIDA headquarters, PLIDA headquarters will invalidate the entire exam session corresponding to the involved certification center.

If significant irregularities are brought to light regarding the implementation of the exam session, PLIDA headquarters reserves the right to invalidate the entire exam session corresponding to the involved certification center.

## **2. CERTIFICATION CENTERS.**

### **2.1 Conditions for authorization.**

Councils of the Società Dante Alighieri, as well as other Italian or foreign institutions, on request, can be authorized as certification centers. PLIDA headquarters' criteria for eligibility of a council or other institution to be authorized as a certification center are listed below. PLIDA headquarters reserves final and non-negotiable authority to evaluate the characteristics of the council or institution (experience in the field, reliability, potential, etc.) and to review the credentials of the persons forming the board of examiners: those responsible for awarding certifications, interviewers and exam proctors.

### **2.2 Authorization procedures.**

All councils of the Società Dante Alighieri and other legal entities (ie. Italian Institutes of Culture, Regional Centers for the Instruction of Adults, public schools, private associations or Italian language schools, societies, etc.) interested in certifying proficiency in the Italian language, are eligible to apply to become PLIDA certification centers. The procedures for authorization of new centers vary based on the type of educational entity applying.

## 2.2.1 Applying for authorization.

### 2.2.1.1 Dante Alighieri Councils.

All councils of the Società Dante Alighieri interested in becoming PLIDA certification centers must submit a formal application to PLIDA headquarters at the Società Dante Alighieri by fax: +39.06.92932015, or by email: [plida@ladante.it](mailto:plida@ladante.it).

Upon receipt of the application, the central office, by way of PLIDA headquarters, sends these rules and regulations as well as all relevant application forms for registration of the new center, and the board of examiners for the oral exam. Each section of the application forms must be signed by the president of the committee.

Once the eligibility of the organization has been approved, and the persons proposed as members of the board of examiners have passed all criteria of eligibility, the director of PLIDA will inform the president of the council of its authorization. This authorization to act as a certification center is valid for three years, and is automatically renewed for all certification centers that are councils of the Società Dante Alighieri. If the center fails to register candidates for a period longer than eighteen consecutive months, authorization will be revoked. PLIDA headquarters reserves the right to revoke authorization in the event of severe violations of rules and regulations.

### 2.2.1.2 Other legal entities.

All other legal entities (ie. Italian Institutes of Culture, Regional Centers for the Instruction of Adults, public schools, private associations or Italian language schools, societies, etc.) interested in certifying proficiency in the Italian language, must submit a formal application to PLIDA headquarters at the Società Dante Alighieri by fax: +39.06.92932015, or by email: [plida@ladante.it](mailto:plida@ladante.it). The application must contain a detailed description, on letterhead, of current and past activities and functions of the applicant organization; and the application must bear the signature of the organization's legal counsel. After evaluating the applicant organization, PLIDA headquarters will send a proposal for an agreement to establish a relationship between the two parties, as well as all documentation necessary for the new center's authorization. Once the eligibility of the organization has been approved, and the persons proposed as members of the

board of examiners have passed all criteria of eligibility, the director of PLIDA will inform the legal counsel of the applicant organization that its authorization has been granted. This authorization is renewed every three years on agreement between the parties. If the center fails to register candidates for a period longer than eighteen consecutive months, authorization will be revoked. PLIDA headquarters reserves the right to revoke authorization in the event of severe violations of rules and regulations.

### 2.3 Characteristics and criteria for eligibility of the Certification Center.

Centers serving as exam venues must be equipped with one or more classrooms containing sufficient tables and chairs for the number of registered candidates. Each candidate must have access to his or her own table: tables must be arranged at adequate distances so as to prevent candidates from copying off each other. The center must also be equipped with a device to play questions from the listening section with enough volume to fill the room. Staff at the PLIDA certification center must ensure that all candidates are able to hear the questions and oral comprehension prompts with the same volume and level of clarity. In addition, the center must have access to a digital recording device for responses to oral comprehension prompts.

### 2.4 Exam committees.

Each center is responsible for properly matching staff with the roles necessary to administer a compliant exam session. Each role is fundamental, complex, and must be approached with the utmost sense of responsibility: it is thus important that nominees be trustworthy staff members of the center, with proven experience in the roles they will be performing, and who preferably have the intention of residing permanently in the center's geographic proximity in order to support the continuity of their assignment. The roles necessary for conducting exams are the certifier, exam proctor, evaluator, and interviewer.

#### 2.4.1 The certifier.

The certifier is the staff member at the certification center responsible for guaranteeing that exams are conducted with the highest level of integrity and compliance to the processes outlined in these rules and regulations (cfr. 3). Deviation from these processes can be grounds for the invalidation of individual exam sections, or of the entire exam session.

The criteria for eligibility to fill the role of certifier are as follows:

- Established experience teaching Italian L2/LS
- Established experience as course director
- Excellent comprehension of the Italian language: mother tongue or level C1-C2
- Excellent understanding of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*
- Solid computer skills

Other academic titles, Italian or foreign, and previous professional experience (ie. continuous periods of Italian language teaching) will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the PLIDA data committee for certification.

#### 2.4.2 Exam proctors.

Exam proctors, nominated by the exam certifier, are responsible for handing out and proctoring the written sections of the exam. In a classroom, there must be one proctor for every 15 candidates. The proctor must be able to clearly see all candidates to guarantee that the rules provided within the exam booklets and on the exam room door are being followed, and to ensure that exam sections are correctly conducted. Corresponding to the exam room map, exam records will show the first and last name of all exam proctors present. In case of misconduct during an exam on the part of an exam proctor, the certification center can no longer nominate the exam proctor for the same role.

#### 2.4.3 Oral section committee: evaluator and interviewer.

The grading of the oral test is entrusted to a local committee composed of professionals with proven experience who operate based on an evaluation system provided by PLIDA headquarters. In cases in which certification centers have access to a person who fits the criteria to fill the role of interviewer but not that of evaluator (cfr. pp. 10-11), the center, at an extra cost, can request PLIDA headquarters to evaluate the oral sections.

PLIDA certification, like other prominent international certifications, considers it to be of fundamental importance that evaluation of oral exam sections be completed by those who are physically present at the test:

- first, because an oral text has specific and unrepeatable characteristics that are difficult to identify and evaluate outside of the physical context in which it is expressed, that neither a recording nor a transcription is capable of conserving (in fact, in a recording, many paralinguistic, body language-related and pragmatic characteristics of the text would be lost);

- second, because the specific characteristics of local and national cultures can only be taken into account by an *in-country* committee, which is uniquely capable of guaranteeing a direct account, which is always preferable to an indirect one;
- third, because the widespread network of certification centers throughout the world represents an undeniable opportunity: it is thanks to such a network that PLIDA can count on a large number of experienced and stable instructors who are deeply rooted in their unique local and national settings.

The committee, submitted by each individual center and subject to the approval and control of PLIDA headquarters, is formed of two members, an *interviewer* and an *evaluator*, both of whom can neither personally know the candidates nor be provided with prior information, whether direct or indirect, on their academic history and language proficiency. The two members of the committee fill distinct yet equally fundamental roles. The interviewer is tasked with interacting with the candidate and encouraging conversation during the oral section of the exam, as well as ensuring the candidate is comfortable.

The criteria for eligibility to fill the role of interviewer are as follows:

- Excellent comprehension of the Italian language: mother tongue or at least level C1 of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, as attested by a certification recognized by the Italian State<sup>3</sup>
- Excellent understanding of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, and of other tools for evaluation made available by the European Council
- Excellent understanding of the syllabus and of the criteria for evaluation of the oral exam sections, as well as PLIDA certification.
- Solid experience in the teaching of Italian L2/LS and in conducting oral exams

Other academic titles, Italian or foreign, and previous professional experience (ie. continuous periods of Italian language teaching) will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the PLIDA data committee for certification.

The evaluator does not intervene in the conversation, but rather attends in silence in order to evaluate the performance of the candidates. The evaluator is required to evaluate oral responses based on the specific evaluation criteria provided by PLIDA (*Criteria for evaluation of the oral exam section*, available on the website [www.plida.it](http://www.plida.it)).

In addition to excellent comprehension of the Italian language (mother tongue or at least level C1 of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, as attested by a

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<sup>3</sup> For level C1 and C2 exams, it is mandatory that the interviewer be a mother-tongue Italian speaker or possess a level C2 certificate of Italian comprehension.

certification recognized by the Italian State<sup>4</sup>) the evaluator must possess at least one of the following evaluation criteria:

- Master's Degree in Linguistics (LM-39) (or equivalent)<sup>5</sup>
- Master's Degree (or from the previous system) in Modern Philology (LM-14) or in African or Asian Languages and Literature (LM-36) or in Modern European Languages or Literature (LM-37)<sup>6</sup>
- A Degree from the Previous System in Letters or in Foreign Languages and Literature<sup>7</sup>
- A Master's Degree in another discipline<sup>8</sup>
- A Degree from the Previous System in another discipline<sup>9</sup>
- Eligibility to teach Italian in public schools in Italy or abroad<sup>10</sup>

Other academic titles, Italian or foreign, and previous professional experience (ie. continuous periods of Italian language teaching) will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the PLIDA data committee for certification.

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<sup>4</sup> For level C1 and C2 exams, it is mandatory that the evaluator be a mother-tongue Italian speaker or possess a level C2 certificate of Italian comprehension, with a certification recognized by the Italian State.

<sup>5</sup> With **at least 24 CFU** in the scientific-disciplinary L-LIN/01 sectors (Historical Linguistics), L-FIL-LET/12 (Italian Linguistics), L-LIN/02 (Education in modern languages) **or** with **certification** of competence in Italian education L2 (*CEDILS*, *DITALS II*, *DILS-PG*) **or** with **lecturing experience** in Italian at a foreign university lasting at least 1 year.

<sup>6</sup> With **at least 36 CFU** in the scientific-disciplinary L-LIN/01 sectors (Historical Linguistics), L-FIL-LET/12 (Italian Linguistics), L-LIN/02 (Education in modern languages).

<sup>7</sup> With **at least 3 annual exams between** Historical linguistics, general linguistics, History of the Italian language, Italian Grammar, Language Education, Education in modern languages **and** with **certification** of competence in Italian education L2 (*CEDILS*, *DITALS II*, *DILS-PG*) **or** with **lecturing experience** in Italian at a foreign university lasting at least 1 year.

<sup>8</sup> With **at least 36 CFU** in the scientific-disciplinary L-LIN/01 sectors (Historical Linguistics), L-FIL-LET/12 (Italian Linguistics), L-LIN/02 (Education in modern languages) **and** at least one of:

- **certification** of competence in Italian education L2 (*CEDILS*, *DITALS II*, *DILS-PG*),
- **master's level I or II** in Italian Education L2,
- **lecturing experience** in Italian at a foreign university lasting at least 1 year.

<sup>9</sup> With **at least 3 annual exams between** Historical linguistics, general linguistics, History of the Italian language, Italian Grammar, Language Education, Education in modern languages **and** at least one of:

- **certification** of competence in Italian education L2 (*CEDILS*, *DITALS II*, *DILS-PG*),
- **master's level I or II** in Italian Education L2,
- **lecturing experience** in Italian at a foreign university lasting at least 1 year.

<sup>10</sup> Obtained through a study program including **at least 36 CFU** in the scientific-disciplinary L-LIN/01 sectors (Historical Linguistics), L-FIL-LET/12 (Italian Linguistics), L-LIN/02 (Education in modern languages) **or 3 annual exams between** Historical linguistics, general linguistics, History of the Italian language, Italian Grammar, Language Education, Education in modern languages, **or** with **certification** of competence in Italian education L2 (*CEDILS*, *DITALS II*, *DILS-PG*) **or** with **master's level I or II** in Italian Education L2, **or** with **lecturing experience** in Italian at a foreign university lasting at least 1 year.

## 2.5 Modifications to exam venue and staff.

Exams must always take place in the location listed on the forms used for the center's authorization, and exams must be conducted by the people listed on such forms. In case of modifications to the venue or the nomination of new staff members responsible for certification, it is imperative to communicate this with PLIDA headquarters, which must newly ensure the presence of the conditions necessary for exams to be conducted properly<sup>11</sup>.

Exams conducted by non-authorized personnel or in venues other than those listed will not be considered valid.

## 3. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EXAM.

The certifier is responsible for adhering to the following steps to insure the correct implementation of the exam:

- a) collect registrations to the exam within the established deadlines;
- b) send PLIDA headquarters a receipt of payment of the portion of registration fees due to headquarters;
- c) enter the personal information of candidates who will be participating in the session in the online portal's registration tab and print the necessary roll-call sheets, referring to the *Extranet portal guide*;
- d) set a schedule for the oral section of the exam within the dates allowed by the calendar set by PLIDA headquarters;
- e) inform the committee appointed to preside over the oral test sections (composed of the evaluator and the interviewer) of the dates and the number of levels expected for the session (note that the committee must be composed exclusively of persons who are already officially authorized by PLIDA headquarters to fill the roles of interviewers and evaluators);
- f) choose the exam proctors: there must be one proctor per 15 registered candidates;
- g) print out answer sheets for candidates registered for the oral and written sections, referring to the *Extranet portal guide*;
- h) conserve copies of the exam booklets for the Listening and Reading sections and make digital or paper copies of all mailed materials;

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<sup>11</sup> Requests for the integration of new committee members must be presented by sending the resumes of the proposed replacements as well as all relevant forms (A, B, C, and D) available and downloadable from the website [www.plida.it](http://www.plida.it)

i) guarantee the privacy of all exam materials before, during and after exam sessions; ensure that no copy of exam materials remain in the possession of proctors, of the exam committee or of candidates; and at the end of the session, destroy all paper copies of materials not used, and delete digital copies.

If the requirements in the above or below sections are not met in full, the entire exam session conducted by the involved center can be invalidated.

### 3.1 Organization of the session.

The exam test sheets are sent to the certifier prior to the session. Instructions regarding the collection of all materials necessary for the exam session are communicated prior to each session by PLIDA headquarters to each certification center.

All materials necessary for the implementation of the exam session must be stored with the utmost confidentiality in a secure location. Under no circumstances is the duplication of audio or print materials for the purpose of distribution or playback to other persons prior to the exam permitted. At the end of the session, unused print materials will be destroyed and the digital copies erased.

To prepare test records, the officer of the PLIDA certification center is required to download from the extranet portal and print the list of candidates registered for each level: please use extreme caution when entering the personal information of candidates (first name, last name, and date of birth) as this personal information will be used in the printed certificates.

Below is an example of the table found in the exam records, with all information entered correctly:

ATTENDEES						
Candidate's exam code (as shown on answer sheet)	LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	written	oral	Date of Speaking section	Speaking section score
12345	Rossi	Mario	P	P	30/04/2014	28/30

The certifier must prepare the exam rooms for exam sessions, guaranteeing the following conditions:

a) there must be adequate space for the number of tables required based on the number of candidates, as well as a medium for audio playback, for each exam level;

b) the audio device must be sufficiently amplified so as to ensure that playback can be heard clearly everywhere in the room;

c) each candidate needs access to a private table, spaced at least 1.5 meters from other candidates; a sheet indicating the candidate's number must be secured to each table.

The instruction sheet for candidates must be affixed to the exam room door (a copy of these instructions will always be found among the exam materials sent prior to the exam: multiple copies must be created if the exam will be taking place simultaneously in multiple exam rooms) and the schedule sheet for the oral section of the exam.

### 3.2 Administration of the *Listening, Reading, and Writing* sections.

Before administering the written sections (the *Listening, Reading, and Writing* tests) the certifier must:

- a) take roll call and mark the attendance of candidates in the box of the table (contained in the test records) with a P (or an 'x') if the candidate is present and an A if the candidate is absent (candidates who arrive late while instructions are still being read can be admitted and therefore should be marked as present, making note of the tardy arrival in the test records; once the exam section has begun, late candidates can no longer be admitted);
- b) distribute an exam booklet and answer sheet to each candidate;
- c) ensure, in this phase of the exam, that all the candidates read only the instructions and title page: reading of the content of the test must begin at the same time for all candidates;
- d) give candidates a few minutes to fill out the title page with their personal information and ensure that all required sections are legibly filled out by the candidates.
- e) verify the identity of the candidates by cross-checking their form of identification with the information shown on the title page of the test: only people who are registered on the test record sheet have access to the exam;
- f) carefully explain the instructions of each section of which the test is composed, ensuring its comprehension by all candidates (in the case of tests for levels A1-A2-B1, translate instructions into the mother tongue of the candidates or into one or more common languages);
- g) clearly list all reasons for possible invalidation of the test, and ensure that each candidate has understood them (in the case of tests for levels A1-A2-B1, translate instructions into the mother tongue of the candidates or in one or more common languages).

Candidates are only allowed to leave the exam room for the restroom. Permission to leave the exam room can only be granted if the candidate hands over all exam materials to the certifier or proctors.

If a candidate withdraws from the exam section, the certifier is required to cancel all of the candidate's work completed to that point and note in the test records that the candidate's exam has been cancelled.

### 3.3 Oral test.

Committees are required to precisely follow the instructions provided in the test booklets while administering the oral test. Failure to adhere to the minimum requirements for the test's implementation (time limits, quality of the interviews, unrecorded responses, etc.) will result in the invalidation of all relevant oral tests.

The interactive oral test can take place in pairs, but the interaction must always take place in the presence of the interviewer, who will intervene, if necessary, to mediate the exchange. It is also important to ensure, whenever possible, that disparate groups are not created, as this can create difficulties or embarrassment for the test takers. Oral test sections must be taken in a calm and relaxed setting.

#### 3.3.1 Registration methods.

To enable the grading of answer sheets, and safeguard the accuracy and consistency of grading, all oral exam sections must be recorded (using any available free software on the internet compatible with Windows, Mac and Android, smartphones, tablets, etc.; files can be saved in mp3, mp4, wav, vlc, mediafile, cda, 3ga formats) and loaded, by the certification center, into the Dropbox folder specified by PLIDA headquarters. All physical support materials (CDs, DVDs, flash drives) can be mailed to headquarters along with the other exam materials; the audio files can also be uploaded using programs such as WeTransfer, Onedrive, etc.

The use and mailing of audio cassette tapes is strictly prohibited, on penalty of invalidation of the recorded Speaking exam sections.

#### What to record

- a) Every single section must be preceded by an **introduction of the personal information pertaining to the candidate, the evaluator, and the interviewer**, who form the committee (ie. "John Smith, code 12345, level A32, interviewer Mario Rossi, evaluator Francesca Russo");
- b) the **instructions** for the candidates (the reading and the explaining of these steps);
- c) the **oral test**.

Ensure that the recording is not interrupted in any way. In cases in which interactions between candidates occur, each section must be recorded in the same file in which the interviewer has specified the code of the candidate who is about to speak, before each section of the exam (presentation, conversation/interaction, description/monologue).

Closely monitor audio quality:

- turn the microphone toward the candidate;
- place the microphone (or recording device) near the candidate, so that when listening to the recording, the candidate's voice is clear (it is recommended that sound tests be performed);
- as much as possible, eliminate background noise.

Naming conventions for audio files

Certification centers must follow this naming convention for audio files:

Example:

- a level B1 exam taken in October 2014 by a candidate with exam code 7654 (v. extranet), is named using the last two digits of the year (14), the month (10), the exam level (B1), the exam code 7624 assigned upon registration, separated with an underscore: 1410B1\_7654.
- if an oral exam section is taken by a pair of candidates, the second candidate's exam code will be added after the first candidate's code, separated by an underscore: ie. 1410B1\_7654\_7655.

Audio materials must be sent in digital form to PLIDA headquarters following the required process. Centers which, for whatever reason, are unable to send the files electronically, can copy the files onto a CD or a flash drive and mail them along with the exam materials. In cases where the files sent by regular mail, the officer at the certification center must label the CD container, flash drive, or any other device containing the digital audio files with the name of the certification center, the exam section of reference (type of certification, month and year), the exam code assigned by the Intranet portal to the candidate, the first and last name of each candidate and the corresponding exam level. This information must also be provided in the digital folders.

Interviewers are asked to strictly adhere to the instructions provided by PLIDA headquarters for oral tests, which will be replayed at random; if during the replaying phase, it should be noted that the oral exam section was not conducted or evaluated in compliance with the provided instructions, PLIDA headquarters reserves the right to invalidate the exam sections

and to require the replacement of the commissioner. Oral exam recordings which cannot be graded because of damaged or low-quality recording will be invalidated.

#### 3.4 Ending the session and sending completed tests.

Officers of the certification centers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all exam materials, even after all exam sections have been completed. At the end of the session, the officers must destroy all paper copies of unused materials and erase digital copies.

No later than one week from the date of the oral exam, the items listed on the following page must be mailed to the following address:

Ufficio PLIDA (Progetto Lingua Italiana Dante Alighieri)  
Società Dante Alighieri - Sede Centrale  
Piazza Firenze 27  
00186 Roma — Italia

a single envelope containing a) original answer sheets corresponding to the oral and written sections (*Listening* and *Reading*) and original test booklets for the written section (*Writing*) in a sealed envelope signed by the officer of the PLIDA certification center; b) the test records in original form, fully filled out and signed by the certifier and by the authorized evaluators and interviewers; c) the devices upon which the oral exam sections were digitally recorded, appropriately labeled based on the guidelines set forth in section 3.3.1.

Concurrently, the certification center will record the scores received by the candidates on the oral tests in the online portal. Scoring for the *Listening*, *Reading*, and *Writing* sections can exclusively be provided by PLIDA headquarters.

The officer of the PLIDA certification center is responsible for diligently checking the accuracy of the materials mailed to PLIDA headquarters and conserving a copy of the exam records and of the prompts answered by the candidates. In case of accidents, such as the loss of the envelope or the incomplete arrival of the documents (parts of the test not attached, missing sheets, etc.) the officer of the PLIDA certification center will be responsible for demonstrating that the center is not responsible for such accidents, and for providing copies of all missing documents.

For any needs or questions, please refer directly to PLIDA headquarters:

**Ufficio PLIDA (Progetto Lingua Italiana Dante Alighieri)**

**Società Dante Alighieri - Sede Centrale**

**Piazza Firenze 27, 00186 Roma - Italia**

**Operator: +39. 06.6873694/95**

**Direct Phone: +39.06.6873787**

**Fax: +39.06.92932015**

**[plida@ladante.it](mailto:plida@ladante.it)**

## **GLOSSARY**

<b>Director of PLIDA:</b>	is the officer at PLIDA Headquarters of the Società Dante Alighieri.
<b>PLIDA Headquarters:</b>	is the organizational entity located at the headquarters of the Società Dante Alighieri dedicated to all procedures concerning PLIDA certification.
<b>Certification center:</b>	is an organization or a council authorized by PLIDA Headquarters to administer the exams necessary for earning PLIDA certification.
<b>Certifier:</b>	is the officer responsible for certification or of the certification center, and is the person in charge at the certification center, authorized by PLIDA Headquarters, who is responsible for the proper administration of exams.

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Translation by Pavoloni International, August 2021

The Italian Cultural Center offers this English version as a service to those who wish to better understand PLIDA's rules and regulations. Should any discrepancy occur between the English and Italian version of the documents, the Italian version shall prevail.