TOLC-SPS syllabus

Reading comprehension

The questions in this section test the mastery of the Italian language with particular focus on reading comprehension both overall and in the various logical progression of the passages.

The texts will be split into categories: non-fiction and journalistic. The first category includes texts selected from scientific books or journals published since the second half of the 20th century.

The second category includes texts selected from current topics from newspapers or periodicals published in the last decade. The questions will test not only a vocabulary knowledge appropriate to a course of study in political and social sciences, but also deductive and abstraction skills, the ability to grasp the formal and semantic relationships between the parts that make up the text, as well as the ability to orient oneself correctly in space and time.

Knowledge acquired

Candidates should demonstrate the ability to orient themselves in time and space, as well as adequate knowledge of the major issues under discussion in contemporary society.

The questions will test the candidates' reasoning skills on the basis of the cultural knowledge acquired in secondary school studies and notions learnt independently within their own social context.

The test will encompass three different categories of knowledge in the following areas:

1.   Historical-geographical, with a focus on the general understanding of the most important historical processes and awareness of the main geographical, economic and social characteristics of the Italian, European and world contexts

2.   Civic-institutional, to assess the learning of the fundamentals of Italian and European public institutions and the ability to navigate the proposed solutions to the civil coexistence issues.

3.   Current matters and major social and political issues, as it is expected that anyone wishing to study political and social sciences will have a basic knowledge of them.

Logic, reasoning, and mathematical language

This section includes 15 questions encompassing three topics: logical-deductive reasoning; elementary mathematical language; and reading graphs/tables and statistical elements. The questions test the ability to reason logically-deductively and to use mathematical language, in particular to understand texts and solve problems that may arise in the study of political-social disciplines and in everyday life.

The knowledge and skills required to answer the questions in this section are included in the learning objectives for middle schools and the first two years of high school. However, such knowledge and skills need to be solidly mastered, as they are supposed to be attained by the end of high school.

Logical-deductive reasoning skills concern the understanding of connections and logical implications between available information, as well as the ability to make logical deductions.

Skills related to elementary mathematical language focus on calculating with whole numbers, decimal numbers and fractions, the use of Cartesian coordinates, elementary algebraic modelling, solving equations and calculating probabilities.

Skills related to reading graphs/tables focus on the ability to extract information from a non-continuous text containing tables, graphs or formulas, linking them together by reasoning and schematic representations.

Analytical list of knowledge and skills required to answer the questions.

- Logic-deductive reasoning

    – Understanding the use of common language words that function as logical connectives or quantifiers

    – Establishing whether or not certain other statements follow from certain premises

    – Obtaining immediate information from short texts, even non-continuous ones, requiring accurate use of language and attention to references within the text and its logical structure.

- Elementary mathematical language

    – Calculating, mentally and in writing, sums, differences, products, divisions between whole numbers, decimal numbers and fractions

- Using coordinates to identify points and subsets in the plane. Plotting and reading the graph of a function
  Translating a relationship expressed in words into an equation (algebraic modelling)

- Transforming equations and systems into equivalent and easier to solve ones

- Recognising the graphical representation of equations
  Algebraic modelling of percentage change

- Calculating probability of an event in very simple situations.

- Reading graphs/tables and statistical elements

  - Reading qualitative data on one- and two-entry tables and graphs of various types

  - Understanding the description of a specific set of objects or a system of relations, using the information contained in a text with tables, graphs or formulas, reasoning and using appropriate schematic representations.

English section

Depending on the result obtained in the test, the grid below shows the initial preparation level and how to improve your results, if necessary.

POINTS	RECOMMENDED ENGLISH COURSE
≤ 6	Take a beginner English course (A1)
7 – 16	Take a first level English course (A2)
17 – 23	Take an intermediate English course (B1)
24 – 30	Take the B1 level English exam with no need to take a course