

GCE

Classics: Latin

Advanced GCE **H439**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **H039**

OCR Report to Centres June 2015

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Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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F361 Latin Language

General Comments

Once again the overall standard was high. The first passage proved accessible to the great majority of candidates, who were able to follow the storyline to the end. The Cicero passage provided a more substantial challenge, with weaker candidates having little idea what the passage was about. More candidates than previously rose to the challenge of English-Latin translation and mostly showed a sound grasp of vocabulary and constructions, though there were many weaker attempts. Few candidates attempted all three questions.

Generally speaking errors were mostly the result of vocabulary deficiencies, which often led to errors over syntax. As so often before, pronouns were the scourge of all but the strongest candidates.

Comments in individual questions

Question 1

nonnulli duces Romani domum amici cuiusdam advenerunt, ut cenam consumerent.

This section was mostly handled well; the most frequent error was over *cuiusdam*, which often had to be guessed.

forte Collatinus quoque aderat. dum cenant de multis aliis rebus loquebantur et de uxoribus suis.

'Brave Collatinus' was mercifully rare. The main error here was the mistaking of *aderat* for *advenerat*. A few retained the present tense of *cenant*, but this was counted a minor error.

cum vino incaluissent, suam quisque magno studio laudabat.

Nearly all translated the first three words correctly, but the two pronouns wreaked havoc, with only the best candidates grasping their roles. Weaker candidates could not think of a sensible rendering for *studio*.

certamine orto, Collatinus silentium postulavit negavitque verbis opus esse.

Only a small minority rendered the ablative absolute correctly; most recognised the construction, but both words were unknown to most. The other very frequent error was ignorance of the force of *opus esse*.

'in equos ascendamus,' inquit, 'Romamque festinemus!'

About half the candidates failed to identify the present subjunctive.

ibi uxores nostras visitare possumus, quae nos non exspectant.

This section was handled very well. Many weaker candidates did not know *ibi*.

tum videbimus quis earum dignissima sit laude.

Many could not handle the two pronouns, though nearly always the indirect question was noted. *Dignus* was unknown to many, and this fact led to many turning *laude* into a verb.

paucis horis cognoscetis quanto melior ceteris uxoribus sit Lucretia mea.'

Most identified the ablative of time and the future tense. Weaker candidates could not make sense of *quanto melior*.

quibus verbis incitati, omnes ad urbem quam celerrime equis vecti sunt ad uxores inspiciendas.

Weaker candidates thought the first three words formed an ablative absolute. Most but by no means all knew the force of *quam* + superlative. Many had to guess at the meaning of *vecti sunt*; fortunately a wide range of meanings was acceptable. Most identified the gerundive of purpose.

postquam urbem prima noctis hora ingressi sunt, Collatinus amicis persuasit ut primum ceteras uxores, deinde suam visitarent.

Many muddled the time elements here: 'after the first hour of night' was very frequent, counting as two errors. The rest was translated correctly.

amici irati erant ubi uxores suas in convivio splendido vinum bibentes viderunt.

Nearly all translated this sentence correctly. The only recurrent error was to take *convivio* as plural.

deinde Collatinus amicos domum suam duxit.

This of course was by far the easiest sentence in the whole paper, and very few made mistakes.

ibi, quamquam nox erat, Lucretiam deditam lanae inter ancillas invenerunt.

Despite the glossing of *deditam* and *lanae*, fewer than half the candidates saw the relationship of *lanae* to *deditam*: 'with wool' and 'of wool' were very common. Apparently this generation of candidates does not recognise the notion of someone being dedicated to something. Some weak candidates did not know *invenio*.

hoc solum amici dicere potuerunt – Lucretiam maxime laudandam esse.

Many failed to see *hoc* as the object of *dicere* and treated it as ablative. Many also failed to note the superlative form of *maxime*.

Question 2

hunc enim virum in ea civitate, in qua sit natus, gentis insignis esse concedis

Nearly all candidates fell into the trap of insisting on beginning their translation with 'for this man', after which they had no idea of the syntax, often making 'man' the subject or placing him outside the syntax. Most chose the inappropriate *citizenship* for *civitate*, despite nearly always getting the relative clause correct. The descriptive genitive was rarely recognised. Most guessed that *concedo* means 'concede', but few saw it as second person singular present.

et multos annos, relictis rebus suis omnibus, in nostris bellis cum nostris imperatoribus pugnasse,

Most, but by no means all, recognised the accusative of duration of time. Most also recognised the ablative absolute, though few understood what it was saying. Many made *bellis* and *imperatoribus* singular. Few appreciated that *pugnasse* was continuing the indirect statement, and simply made it a main verb.

nulliusque laboris, nullius proelii expertem fuisse.

Again most failed to see that this was still part of the indirect statement. Most coped with the glossed meaning given for *expertem*, but failed utterly to make sense of *nullius...nullius*.

haec sunt omnia plena laudis, nec in iis rebus crimen est ullum.

This section caused far fewer difficulties. The main error was treating *rebus* as singular.

ubi igitur est crimen? quod ei Pompeius civitatem dedit.

Most translated this correctly. This time ‘citizenship’ was correct for *civitatem*.

huiusne crimen? minime, nisi honor ignominia putanda est.

Only a tiny minority made any sense of *huiusne crimen*; as before it was the pronoun that caused the damage; ‘is this a crime’ was the commonest rendering. About half the candidates knew that *minime* can mean ‘no’. Many were unfamiliar with *nisi*. Half treated the gerundive of obligation as a simple passive.

Question 3

- (a) ‘Whom’ was often *qui*. ‘Did not depart’ yielded many malformations of perfect tenses.
- (b) Many omitted *se*. Some did not know *malo*; those that did usually could not form the infinitive correctly. *Apud* was accepted for *among*, fortunately for many candidates.
- (c) Most could not form the comparative of *fortis* correctly. *Vir* was thought to be a 3rd declension noun by nearly all candidates. Very few coped with ‘our’ (*nos* and *nostrum* were the commonest offerings). *Vox* was usually treated as masculine.
- (d) ‘Man’s’ was rarely correct. Few realised the need for an indirect command construction following ‘beg’. Very few remembered that *persuadeo* takes a dative.
- (e) Many did not know the Latin for ‘husband’. Scarcely any knew how to translate ‘whether’. Most failed to use the subjunctive as required by the indirect question.

Conclusion

The above focus on errors should not overshadow the fact the standard achieved was high, for which Centres and their candidates are to be congratulated.

F362 Latin Verse and Prose Literature

General Comments

Examiners felt that this examination was a fair and rigorous test of candidates' understanding of the new set texts. Candidates had clearly worked hard and seemed a little more confident in analysis of Cicero and Ovid's language this year than last. A few candidates still needed to do more with their discussion, relating it to the question set. A minority of Ovid essays again seemed slightly rushed, which highlights the importance of practice under timed conditions.

Candidates handled the new texts with intelligence and perception. Centres are thanked for all their hard work in preparing candidates for this unit.

Some points of advice for candidates

This year's advice is similar to the advice from 2014. Examiners feel it will still be useful to centres and candidates.

- 1 Note the requirements of the question: give Latin when asked and include at least one style point when asked.
- 2 In content and style questions candidates do need to demonstrate clearly that they understand the meaning of the Latin. Candidates can translate or can simply show understanding through discussion. For instance, it is not enough to give an example of a rhetorical question from the Latin and then make a generic point about why authors use rhetorical questions. Candidates must explain the purpose or effect of the particular rhetorical question being used in the example given.
- 3 Try to focus quotations from the Latin in discussion of style points. Avoid just giving the start word, three dots and the end word if the style point relates to Latin within the ellipsis. The whole sentence is rarely needed, but do aim to give a decent Latin chunk; even if the style point is primarily based on a single word, candidates should show knowledge of the clause/phrase which contains it for the text mark, and explain relevant context, and how it relates to the question, for the discussion mark.
- 4 In translations, omissions of words (including 'little words') will usually lose a mark, so be careful to learn complete translations. Examiners are of course more open to 'style' in verse, but all the words which appear in the Latin still need to be conveyed in the translation.
- 5 10-markers test understanding of the whole story, not just the printed passages, which may be used as a starting point. When candidates prepare for these questions, think of what the themes in the text might be, and trace them through. To earn a top-level mark candidates will need a wide range of detailed references across the text, coherent argument and tight focus on the question actually set. At times this year it was felt that lengthy introductions and conclusions could have been made much more concise.

Comments on individual questions

Section A Prose Literature

Question 1

- a) Generally this was well-answered. Candidates need to remember to explain the relevance of their quotations to the question.

As an example, the following response does not give a satisfactory explanation, instead just repeating the wording from the question:

“Cicero uses a rhetorical question, asking what kind of war there could be in which the fortune of the republic has not given that man practice (quod denique ... rei publicae). This shows his respect.”

A better answer might be:

“Cicero uses a rhetorical question, asking what kind of war there could be in which the fortune of the republic has not given that man practice (quod denique ... rei publicae), implying that Pompey has a great deal of experience.”

- b) As is usual, translations were largely fine. Omissions continue to be the biggest problem, with candidates missing out *enim, vulgo, hoc, uno, omnibus, reliquis* and the ‘either...’ in *aut...aut...*. Only the last of these was considered to be a minor error; the rest were seen as serious and automatically lost a mark.

Some candidates missed out one of the paired phrases, which unfortunately brought the mark for the middle section down to 3/5.

In the final section, several found *tanta ... quanta ...* difficult to express. Examiners felt this was a tricky piece of Ciceronian expression and erred on the side of generosity where the candidate had clearly had a good stab at it.

- c) Candidates who did not know (i) were still able to get their mark on (ii). In (ii) the most common error was thinking it was Sulla who was freed not Italy.
- d) Most had no difficulty with this if they knew their translation.
- e) Many nice points were made here. Discussion of *veneant atque venierint* showing the ongoing corruption of the generals was generally good, although a few thought *venierint* was Future Perfect Indicative. More could have been made of the *aut...aut...* structure, as there were some rather vague comments on ‘showing that there were two reasons the generals used the money’, without addressing the question itself on disapproval. A few also tried to form points based on alliteration, which had to be particularly convincing and well-focussed on the Latin phrase to earn full credit.
- f) The vast majority of candidates received full marks here.
- g) This question was answered well overall. Some candidates did forget to give Latin in support of their answer.
- h) Candidates knew their text well on the whole and were able to draw on relevant examples to prove the effectiveness of Cicero’s case. Most remembered to discuss the pirate war, although a significant minority did not. Centres are reminded that candidates must go beyond the printed passages to earn the higher marks in Levels 4 and 5. This question is a test of knowledge and understanding across the whole of the text studied.

It was good to see some very specific references, well-focussed on the question, such as Pompey's early start in the military, corn prices, the republic's food sources etc.

There was sometimes a tendency of vagueness. Candidates often made valid points about technique (usually rhetorical questions) but quite a few omitted to give specific examples, in order to demonstrate their understanding of Cicero's use of them in the speech.

Section B Verse Literature

Question 2

- a) i) Generally correctly answered.
- ii) Not many problems here either. As in 1g, a small number omitted Latin references from their answer.
- b) This question was generally well-answered. Nonetheless a number of candidates was not quite precise enough with their analysis of the Latin and there were some misunderstandings.

There was a great deal of confusion over the accusative 'hunc' and while examiners were often forced to give benefit of the doubt over whether the candidate genuinely understood it, it was sometimes very clear the candidate thought 'hunc avus' meant 'this grandfather' (or 'his grandfather') in the nominative.

Some candidates didn't seem comfortable linking Pentheus's anger with his 'stubborn determination'. They were not always confident about what the simile was showing or what it meant.

- c) This question was generally correctly answered.
- d) Common omissions for Ovid were *modo*, *pontum*, *adunca*, occasionally the phrase *flenti similis*, *mihi*, *poenam*, *facto* and *vestra*.

Most remembered the *tum*.

Some noticeably confused this scene with the earlier passage in which Bacchus pretended to wake up.

- e) *tam me ... fide* caused a few difficulties in expressing fluently.
- f) Examiners were looking for some greater balance than was found in the responses this year. Successful candidates sought to find justification in Pentheus' actions as well as commenting on his obvious rudeness and arrogance. The best observed that one of Pentheus' primary motivations for rejecting Bacchus was to save Thebes and its traditions.

Unfortunately quite a few candidates made sweeping judgements on Pentheus, along the lines that because he was rude to Teiresias, he therefore deserved to be ripped apart by his family. This was felt to be a rather harsh conclusion!

F363 Latin Verse

There were many good candidates for this paper who performed well in both language and literature.

For the literature, most centres chose Virgil and answers on both authors were of a good standard. There were encouraging efforts at commentary questions, most of which favoured a chronological approach but thematic answers were also well done and duly rewarded. It was pleasing for examiners to see that fewer essay answers were adaptations of pre-learnt essays. For the most part answers to the commentary passage showed a good level of text knowledge and understanding, only let down by the incorrect use of literary terms such as alliteration for repeated vowel sounds and by factual inaccuracies (for example Ovid in Book 4 tells the story of Aeneid). The best answers avoided the tendency to use literary labels alone without connection to the question and vague references to unsupported literary features (e.g. the alliteration of 'a' (sic) in this line shows the deep angst of the character) were not seen in the best candidates answers. The best answers mentioned these effects and made good use of them to relate the point to the question.

In answers on Propertius, most of the commentaries were done in a linear way and the best candidates could identify appropriate elements from the text and explain why they were vivid or connected to the senses and the connection to the pleasures of love. Essays would have been improved by a careful definition of imagination and high emotions. Many candidates could refer to the text well, but answers would have been improved by relating examples to the definitions and the question.

Section A

Translation and Comprehension

The vocabulary proved challenging for a number of candidates but most were able to provide a good effort at the sentences. The best answers followed constructions and accident through constructions through carefully, showing an understanding of their interrelation. The best candidates ensured that each Latin word was covered in the answer, thus avoiding omissions.

1ai. Most candidates answered this section well, but the tense of *sparsurus erat* caused most errors.

1aii. Omission of *forte* and *tot* occurred more than its mistranslation. There were also difficulties in rendering *conciperet* and good answers avoided mixing up *flammas* and *ignibus*.

1aiii. Most candidates were able to give a good paraphrase of this section but the omission of the first *esse* and hence the loss of constructions was costly here. *tempus* = storm was another regular error.

1aiv. The best candidates saw past the literal translation of *quo* (by which etc). There was some confusion of *tellus* for *talis*. A number of candidates also made *mundi moles* accusative.

1av. Again *tela* was mistaken for *talis* or *tellus*. Many candidates were able to put *tela* with *fabricata* and *manibus* with *Cyclopum* but no means all.

1avi. There were some good renditions of *placet* for a style point, but the translation of *perdere* as to lose spoilt a number of answers.

1avii Good answers placed *omni* with *caelo* not *nimbos* in this clause, which was generally well done.

1aviii. The passage did not lend itself easily to conscious improvements but good renditions of *placet* (1avi) and *fabricata* showed the value of effective teaching of alternatives and improvements.

1b. This question was generally well-answered but assigning the North Wind to Aeolus and referring to only one cave without reference to Aeolus was penalised.

1ci. Most candidates answered the first half of the question very well but found more difficulty in precisely rendering the *covered in pitch black darkness* accurately.

1cii. The most common error here was to render *gravis nimbis* as ‘heavy rainstorms’ rather than ‘heavy with rainstorms’ or refer to the white colour.

1d. The scansion was handled very well by a majority of candidates with the main errors coming in the first two feet of each line turning the dactyl / spondee order the other way round.

1e. The main requirement of this question was for candidates to show that they had identified a particular literary feature, quote it and connect it with the question. The vague reference of the type ‘polysyndeton creates a loud atmosphere’ even with correct quotation will not earn full marks.

1fi. This question was very well-answered by most candidates.

1fii. Only very good candidates made reference to the aspect of ‘feeding the clouds’ to gain 2 marks here.

1gi. A number of candidates had difficulties with the vocabulary item *sternuntur* here and flattened / destroyed / ruined rather than drowned was needed.

1gii. Most candidates gained marks for the second part of the answer rather than the complex prayers section.

Virgil – commentary

Most candidates had a very good knowledge of the content of the text and could quote and translate their examples well, showing a very encouraging engagement with and understanding of the original Latin. Most candidates could choose the appropriate parts to comment upon and show their appreciation of how those examples reflected the requirements of the question. This passage particularly lent itself to a chronological answer and most candidates followed this format with success. Improvements on answers would have come with clearer reference to the contribution of examples to the presentation of Iarbas’s actions and feelings showing that they understood why Virgil chose a particular way to express the point. Although there were many good interpretations of the use of rhetorical questions and other literary devices, candidates must try to avoid vague explanations such as ‘the chiasmus here clearly shows his anger’.

Virgil – Essay

Generally this question was answered with thoroughness and a wide-ranging appreciation of the complexities of the blame in Book 4. There were some excellent essays and a number of very good ones, though quite a few candidates were weaker on this than the commentary. Most candidates correctly identified the gods and Dido and Aeneas, but the better answers also considered the other possibilities and weighed up the pros and cons of each very effectively.

The majority used a clear structure (one paragraph per character, for example) and more able candidates cross-referenced the passage with the whole book confidently. Most candidates dealt well with Juno and Venus, referencing their earlier conversation or relevant material from book 1; Jupiter was discussed less well, though his agency via Mercury was often mentioned; Anna was also often discussed. Dido was usually held partially to blame, as signalled by the last line of the passage. Aeneas sometimes cursorily dealt with, with little textual back-up. The latter part of the book seemed better known than in previous years, with some relevant comments e.g. Dido blaming Anna, Mercury's second visit. Only the most able candidates addressed the parallels with Greek tragedy.

Overall most candidates were also able to balance their answers to cover the passage and the Latin prescription and the rest of the book to provide thorough answers.

Propertius – commentary

Most of the candidates answering this question again had good knowledge of the text and quoted the opposite examples appropriately. The main challenge was to tie the examples clearly to the words *vivid* and *sensuous*. The best answers were clear in their interpretation of these words and their meaning in this context and used the quotations to support their definitions. Reference to *sensuous* as being concerned with the senses made an answer easier to make convincing and the lively element of *vivid* led good candidates to connect the actions and the choice of expression for them with the question. There was also good appreciation of the religious aspect too.

Propertius – essay

Most candidates who answered this question showed a very good knowledge of the content of the other poems and could quote well from each poem. The consideration of the printed passage was also done well in terms of knowing the content and candidates managed to balance their answers well. The major factor that marked out a good answer was again the ability to identify carefully what is meant in Propertius by imagination and high emotion. The best answers saw that these are different in the different poems and are used to different effect in each, but still have a consistent effect on the reader over all the poems. Violence and the primeval nature of love alongside the varying emotions of love and the use of mythology to put the everyday situations beyond the ordinary were well identified and the candidates obviously enjoyed their reading of this author.

Conclusion

The examiners wish to congratulate both the candidates and their centres on their preparation of the set texts which obviously engaged most in debate and discussion and this showed through in the answers written. Candidates had also worked hard on the language element showing overall a good knowledge and an ability to work through the passage and encouraging appreciation of scansion.

F364 Latin Prose

General comments

The various options within the paper seemed to even out well in terms of difficulty, offering much that was accessible to the majority of candidates as well as plenty to challenge the strongest. For Section A, approximately 7/10 of candidates selected the Unprepared Translation/Comprehension. Those who opted for Prose Composition seemed much more variegated than in previous years - many of whom seemed not to have had sufficient training and experience for this speciality. For Section B, as usual Tacitus was much the more popular author and Sallust attracted no more than 20% of candidates. The quality of work seen on both authors covered a similarly wide range.

Really polished performances seemed less in evidence this year and, unless they strictly rationed the time available, candidates sometimes struggled to complete both sections of the paper to the best of their ability. In Section B many candidates might have achieved more if they (a) wrote less, (b) focused on the question from the first word they wrote, and (c) analysed the passages along more intuitive, less straitjacketed lines.

It is hoped that the comments below may help to guide those engaged in training the next cohort of candidates.

Section A:

Q1: Unprepared Translation and Comprehension

The tripartite division of the passage into introductory comprehension questions, translation, and style question seemed to help most candidates to maintain a firm grasp on the development of the story. The fairly even gradient of difficulty in the translation section itself also produced fewer casualties until candidates were well into the passage. The ablative absolute *igni iniecto aedificiis* in the opening sentence was generally well handled - sometimes in ways that counted towards reward for fluency of English. Early mistakes were the failure to associate *illi qui in arce relictii erant* with the verb *adsecuti sunt*, or to render it as a passive; *morarentur* also from time to time came out, predictably, as 'died'.

In the second sentence ('When Scipio ...'), *graviter* had a habit of being carelessly left out, and 'faith' was, of course, the reverse of what Scipio was complaining about in the Locrians. An opportunity here for idiomatic translation was frequently grasped by those who unpacked the subordination into two separate English clauses.

Mistakes began to proliferate in the third sentence ('He carried out the death penalty ...'), not helped by the fact that many candidates failed to pick up the whole phrase *supplicium sumere de* from the glossary, and instead tried to fit in something bizarre such as 'suppliants'. 'He carried out the death penalty on the leaders **and the citizens**' was a common wrong turning, which easily led to further disruption such as making *mitterent* passive, sometimes with 'Roman legates' as its subject. *quicquid* was not always recognised, nor the concept of 'deserving well or badly' (familiar on slaves' tombstones, for example), and *habeo/habito* were indistinguishable to some candidates' eyes. It was pleasing that the majority grasped the comparison between the 'angry' Romans and the 'nice' Carthaginians - another good opportunity for some idiomatic English phrasing.

The final sentence, however - very 'textbook' in its construction - often fell apart, not so much because of the gerundive, which was generally handled without difficulty, but because of inappropriate translation of *praesidio* (e.g. fortification, defences) and *relicto* (e.g. 'abandoned' works well earlier in the story but gives the opposite sense to what is required here) and *discessit* ('left' in the sense of 'left behind'), plus mangling of the relative pronoun into any shape that the candidate found handy (e.g. 'he left the forces which had come with him'). In addition to examples mentioned above, the majority of reasonable translators found plenty of other places where an apt word or phrase led to their qualifying for either 1 or 2 marks of extra credit for the use of idiomatic English.

Responses to (c) were much less haphazard than in previous years and many scored all six of the marks available here. There are always some, however, who try to short-cut reading the paragraph properly and instead guess at what might be important features, without having any real idea of what is happening. Single Latin words taken out of context or random items such as the alliteration of *vitiis viderentur* were sometimes claimed to have quite unwarranted significance. There are also those who become so engrossed in the content of the passage ('what he says') that they fail to make any explicit reference to the style of the Latin writing ('how he says it'). The best answers, in contrast, are often quite brief and focus on three aspects of style, together with their context: that approach covers all bases.

The grammar questions (d)-(h), generally turned out much better than has sometimes been the case. The gerund in (d)(i) was sometimes confused with a gerundive and for (f) a few hopefully wrote 'ablative absolute' twice, but it was pleasing to find the subjunctive constructions in (e) generally identified correctly and the reference of *ipsorum* understood in (h). The trickiest item to deal with was probably the ablative in (f)(ii), though here many did themselves a favour by providing a translation of the phrase as well as, or in addition to, giving the construction a name. A major complaint, however, ought to go to those candidates who thoughtlessly threw away two marks by quoting the first person of the present tense for the two verbs in (g) rather than the stipulated infinitive - as has been the norm on this paper for several years now. Of the two verbs concerned, *discedere* came out correctly more often than *relinquere*, but there were frequent spelling mistakes and sometimes complete gaps, despite the fact that these are extremely common examples which should have been familiar from GCSE if not before.

Q2: Prose Composition

Though the passage perhaps looked superficially less challenging than some of previous years, beneath the surface there was plenty that only the most expert were able to handle convincingly. The best (and they were not numerous) found opportunities for idiomatic writing without indulging in the exotic or engaging in wholesale rearrangement of sections. More than in previous years, however, examiners were struck by the number of candidates who seem to be attempting this option without having an adequate grasp of basic Latin grammar, let alone subtleties of phrasing or knowledge of choice vocabulary.

The first sentence would often have been enough to differentiate between the different calibres of candidate. Quite apart from frequently turning Drusus' name into 'Drursus', candidates struggled to incorporate *cupidus* or *studiosus* properly (answer: with the genitive of a gerund/gerundive, not with an infinitive) and many failed to see the need for a subjunctive in a result clause or knew about the rules of sequence or how to form a deponent verb! In view of these hurdles, it was odd that the fairly straightforward, and idiomatic, approach used in the mark-scheme was hardly ever seen.

In section (ii) some produced an impressive ablative absolute, regardless of the fact that the reappearance of the Germans later in the sentence makes this route syntactically impossible. For 'tribes' many could only hypothecate a Latin word '*tribus*' and there was often doubt regarding the gender of *gens*.

In (iii), the need to agree the present participle 'holding' with its subject, the 'barbarian woman', was often forgotten. 'Stopped' showed up many who did not sense that the meaning here is intransitive, and therefore tried to use *consisto* or *obsto*.

In (iv) many were not aware that *monere* falls into the Indirect Command category and therefore completed the sense with an infinitive rather than a subjunctive.

Other unexpected errors at this level included writing *in castra* for 'in his camp' (v) and *arcum* (sometimes *arcem* or *arcam*) to complement *erat* (vii). The saddest example, however, was the high proportion of candidates who supplied an accusative for 'him' in the phrase 'gave him many honours' - a construction that in almost any language candidates might have studied (apart from English) would certainly require an indirect object.

The final section, 'and the name Germanicus ...' – superficially so straightforward in English (and surely crying out for a gerundive in Latin?) – turned into a minefield for the majority, who unthinkingly wrote a passive infinitive and were generally unaware of the combination of pronouns required here.

Examples of idiomatic vocabulary and neat phrasing, which scored bonus marks for 'style', are given in the mark-scheme. There were perhaps fewer opportunities than usual in this passage for combining phrases or sentences into one, but plenty of instances where knowing just the right word or phrase for the job (e.g. *prohibere*, *lingua Latina*, *principes*, *triumphum accipere* - **not** *recipere*) enabled experienced candidates to pick up extra credit.

Section B: general comments

Candidates generally seemed to have studied their chosen text thoroughly, but many let themselves down by the piecemeal method they used to construct their response. This year all four questions, to a greater or lesser extent, required attention to style as well as content. The most successful candidates are invariably those who select the best material from anywhere in the passage to build up a response to the question, rather than allowing the passage itself to dictate the shape and length of the essay. Devoting a few minutes to prioritising likely points to answer the question set is time well spent. The danger of working relentlessly through the passage line by line is the temptation to place great importance on *minutiae* in the first few lines of each passage which have very little relevance to the central issue of the question - the result of which is often quite unnecessary length and the loss of any focus on the initial question.

As mentioned repeatedly in previous years' reports on this unit, there is a tendency for candidates to pick on isolated scraps of Latin, rather than to give quotations in full that properly match the comments being made about them. Simply appending the occasional Latin word or sentence in a bracket is not the same thing as choosing a quotation out of which an observation or comment is then developed. Making reference to the text by quoting first and last words or by using line numbers is an acceptable method if the section quoted is lengthy, but full quotation of the Latin is generally preferable – and is really essential if the candidate is trying to discuss details of an author's style.

'Style' itself is often interpreted on too small a scale – often no more than a claim that this or that word is particularly significant – and for some candidates seems to amount to a rather mechanical search for exemplars of technical terms. Too many seem to feel they have dealt satisfactorily with 'style' by collecting individual literary items, like coins or stamps – an approach that by itself says nothing about what these features add to the overall argument of the passage. Examiners would prefer to see fewer claims to have spotted chiasmus or polysyndeton and more evidence of sensitivity towards balance and contrast between adjacent clauses, for example, or the attitude conveyed by an author's phrasing, or the tone or positioning of significant words.

Q3: Tacitus

For the majority, interpretation of the passages seemed sadly blinkered by a single, uniformly negative view. Thinking candidates had the flexibility in (a) to see that there might be two ways of judging Nero's response as a politician to the demands of his people, and in (b) did their best to see Nero's building activities as a coherent and practical programme of improvements rather than the brainchild of a megalomaniac. As another example of more wide-ranging thinking, a few astutely observed that the comparison of the rebuilding programme after the fire with the circumstances of the Gallic invasion seems designed to cast aspersions over Nero's achievements, which essentially even Tacitus cannot deny.

Most followed the clear hints given in the questions and included at least something on style as well as content - though the former was often not given sufficient consideration beyond a few perfunctory asides. Many were inclined to make much of minor and sometimes dubious details such as, in (a), the coincidence of certain letters (e.g. *volentia/voluptatum*) or, in (b), the unwarranted assertion that *pollicitus est* implies that Nero did not carry out his promises. More substantial points regularly picked up included, in (a), Tacitus' provision of two explanations for Nero's panic-attack in the temple of Vesta but with weighting clearly placed on the second and less creditable one; the deliberate contrast between Nero's highfalutin expressions of affection for and from his people and their main interest in Nero as the provider of cheap corn; in (b), the criticism implied by Tacitus' opening words *usus est patriae ruinis*, followed later by *urbis quae domui supererant*; the ambiguous characterisation of Severus and Celer as masters of *ingenium et audacia*; and the sneering final comment on Nero's canal project, *manent vestigia inritae spei*.

Q4: Sallust

Examiners read some impressive analyses of both passages from candidates who had clearly acquired both a detailed knowledge of Catiline's conspiracy and a deep appreciation of Sallust's attitudes and methods. In (b), for example, successful responses appropriately featured Sallust's demolition of Curius' credentials as a conspirator, the ambivalent position of Fulvia, and the startling transformation of Cicero from beyond-the-pale *novus homo* to saviour. In (a) there was plenty of good detail about the wide social range and high political ambitions of the conspirators – generally quite different from the down-and-outs described in other parts of the story – and about Catiline himself, who was rightly presented as a gifted organiser. Points here which were often skated over or misunderstood included Crassus' motives for (allegedly) taking an interest in the conspiracy and the reason why Catiline could not stand in the election of 66 BC - sometimes said (wrongly) either to be because he already been found guilty or to demonstrate his own incompetence in applying too late.

As with Tacitus candidates, however, 'style of writing' tended to take very much a back seat to content. Many responses became wholly engaged in picking out dramatic moments in the story, which was certainly an important part of the exercise but tended to block out the need to incorporate aspects of the 'how' as well as the 'what'. Passage (a) should have given many opportunities to point out typical features of Sallust's writing - the use of ascending lists, emphasised by asyndeton, the provocative emphasis on the word *nobilis*, sharply contrasting phrases such as *incerta pro certis*, *bellum quam pacem*, and the promotion to the status of established fact of what is really no more than rumour! Items which solid candidates frequently mentioned in (b) included the alliteration drawing attention to the phrase *flagitiis atque facinoribus*, the comic presentation of Curius' promises to Fulvia with the expression *maria montisque*, the carefully graduated language and word order which build towards the mention of Cicero's name, and the striking sound and choice of the words in the final sentence, *primo popularis coniurationis concusserat*.

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