

GCE

Biblical Hebrew

Advanced GCE **H417**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **H017**

OCR Report to Centres June 2016

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

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

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CONTENTS

Advanced GCE Biblical Hebrew (H417)

Advanced Subsidiary GCE Biblical Hebrew (H017)

OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

Content	Page
F191 Translation, comprehension and literature	4
F192 Translation, comprehension, composition and literature	5

F191 Translation, comprehension and literature

General Comments:

Most scripts were awarded marks of over 70% and this was in spite of a difficult unseen passage. The examiners feel the standard of the candidature was very good and that centres had admirably prepared their candidates.

- 1 a Some thought יתר was a name. Others confused מלאכה 'work' with ממלכה 'kingdom'. At the end of the passage, ונועצה 'and let us consult' was mistakenly translated as 'and let us meet' [ונועדה] which occurred earlier.
- 1b Most candidates did not know the word בודאם 'fabricated them' but since there were four other points available, they could have avoided this phrase and still gained the maximum for this question. Many candidates were unaware that the root ירא in the Piel acts as a causative and means 'to frighten'.
- 1c Many scripts had 'sly' or 'strong' as candidates confused עצור with ערום or עצום. Some candidates described him as 'the son of...' which was not awarded marks as it is standard Biblical style and not a description.
- 1g ii A number of candidates did not recognise the interrogative hé but thought it was a definite article.
- 1h i The word ונסגרה can have two possible meanings and conjugations depending on the context. The word must be Kal; if it were Niphal it would be in the plural to agree with דלתות ההיכל.
- 1j A number of candidates did not realise that בעלי שבועה means 'men of allegiance' or 'allies' rather than 'those who had sworn an oath'.
- 2b Well answered. Most candidates scored at least five of the six marks available.
- 2e Some candidates did not realise this was a question of grammar.
- 2g Well answered.
- 3e ii Some just translated the phrase without mentioning 'in war'. The question did, after all, ask for an explanation.
- 3i Some candidates were unaware of what an ellipsis was. Others pointed out that there was no verb to say that the idols 'were' on the bed. However, no mark was awarded as this is standard Biblical style.
- 3j Most candidates scored at least six marks though the order of the information was sometimes erratic.
- 4d i Surprisingly some candidates did not know who Ahaz was.
- 4g Some thought that הי הי was an expression of an oath. Others translated the word יודיע as a Kal word rather than Hiphil. Others still confused אמתך [Your truth] with אמתך [Your maid]. A number of candidates were unaware of the somewhat elliptical phrase יי להושיעני and translated it as an imperative.

F192 Translation, comprehension, composition and literature

General Comments:

Candidates showed a high level of technical knowledge in areas of grammar, the pointing of a blank Hebrew passage was mostly very well done. The English to Hebrew is always a challenge, which candidates dealt with very competently this year.

Improvement is required in the essay. Many candidates give lists of information, with no attempt to show how this information relates to the subject at hand. To earn more than 6 marks, candidates must reflect on the information they provide, as well as selecting relevant quotations from the sources to highlight their point.

Candidates should be reminded that a high level of accuracy in written English is required at this level, and accurate spelling and punctuation is important. Where candidates used 'Hashem', they were penalised. Use of such words at this level is not acceptable.

Comments on Individual Questions:

- 1(b) Most candidates displayed a high level of grammatical knowledge in answering this question.
- 1(c) Candidates translated this unseen passage very accurately, with one notable exception: הנה does not mean 'behold' as some candidates suggested. It means Alas! / Woe!
- 1(i) The pointing was mostly very competent, with the exception of the *dagesh* in the word ׀יִצְ, which most candidates omitted.
- 2 Examiners were pleased to note that all candidates attempted this question, with very many quality responses. There is room for improvement in the use of Biblical idiom, such as the use of *vav* conversives, correct placing of verbs and nouns, and using some of the many forms of emphasis.
- 3(e) The use of 'G-d' in this phrase either indicates a very deep sleep, or a sleep induced by G-d. Some candidates merged these two into one: 'A very deep sleep brought on by G-d'.
- 3(f) Many candidates were not aware that there is a change from singular to plural in this sentence, 'you [ms] have done... you [mp] deserve to be punished...'
- 5(b) Candidates should be encouraged to use formal grammatical references at this level. In pointing to the different forms of the word, some candidates noted: 'it is a regular / usual form'. At A level, candidates are expected to state 'absolute form'.

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