

Classics: Classical Greek

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **H040**

Advanced GCE **H440**

OCR Report to Centres

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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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Overview

As is generally the case, we can again report that the very great majority of candidates in Classical Greek did very well, with many A2 candidates gaining A grades, and a substantial number getting well-earned A*s. Most candidates coped well with the demands of the linguistic options, though at AS a small number did less well. These candidates might have done better overall, had had they focused more on basic grammar. The Chief Examiner saw a few AS unseen versions which made no attempt to come to terms with what the piece was really about, but fell back on guesswork and vague story-telling, without regard either to syntax and accidence, or sometimes even to elementary vocabulary. However, these same candidates had in some cases done better on the literature component; but in the end, this qualification is in 'Greek', not 'Greek Literature in Translation', and, as such, the language element is vital. Our aim is that students' approach to literature should be an informed one, such that they can make their own judgments, and this requires, in the end, knowing what the Greek words mean.

At A2, most candidates do show a reasonable level of grammatical understanding, but even here some candidates struggled with the short questions on the F374 unseen. We don't expect them to know all the optatives of ἵημι, but it is not unreasonable that an A2 candidate should be able to recognise, for example, μάθου as an optative (rather than, say, a nominative plural masculine noun), and to have an idea why it is being used. Such vagueness affects the literary commentary questions at A2, too. The standard of these is in general very high, but some candidates shoot themselves in the foot by saying intelligent (or potentially intelligent) things about bits of Greek and then translating them wrongly. Translation of set texts as such is not tested at A2; but candidates who know what the Greek means, exactly, do better than those who have only a general idea. There was some evidence this year that some candidates had 'prepared' certain passages of the set texts, or perhaps done them before as practice exercises and used them as revision aids. This can be useful preparation; however, candidates need to be aware that the commentary questions do not all ask the *same* question, and make sure they are answering the one they are asked rather than the one they'd like to answer.

Candidates should also be careful, especially at A2, in the use of terminology. The best advice to those who can't remember what that word for clauses beginning with the same word is, is not to guess at it, but simply say 'these clauses begin with the same word...' Examiners will not be fooled by apparently sophisticated terminology; labelling literary devices can be useful, but the fact that there are several instances of anaphora in some passage is an observation, rather than analysis; what do they actually *do*? The best candidates know their texts thoroughly; they have thought about what they mean, and understand what writers do to create their effects; and they read the question carefully and apply to the passage the techniques they have learned. Many do indeed do this, and do it very well; this is a considerable achievement, and that they achieve this, and a considerable grasp of the Greek language as well, is – despite the critical nature of some of the above – a matter for congratulation.

F371 Classical Greek Language

Overall, the standard of responses was very high and centres should be congratulated for preparing candidates so well. Q1 proved more challenging than the equivalent question last year, but this was offset by Q2, where candidates felt more at home with Xenophon. The final two sections of Q1 were the only area which was tackled less well, while many candidates scored full, or nearly full marks in Q2. Some of the best translations showed understanding not only of the words, but also of the humour. The relatively small number of candidates attempting Q3 did at least as well as those who attempted Q2. Centres should remind candidates to follow the rubric in writing their translation on alternate lines and recording the questions they have attempted at the front of the answer booklet. Equally, candidates are advised to avoid offering alternative translation versions in brackets, as in almost every case, the alternative explanation was worse than the literal translation.

Question 1:

Candidates are advised to read the English caption carefully, as it contains important clues to the passage. In this case, candidates would have been clearly guided as to the person of the first verb. The person of ἐξήλθον was frequently taken as 3rd plural instead of the correct 1st singular. Likewise, the final two sections caused problems where candidates lost track of the syntax and forgot that the sentence had begun with the pronoun ἐγώ.

Candidates are reminded to note easily confused words, for example, ἐπειδὴ was too often confused with ἐπειτα.

Most constructions were correctly identified, with the exception of indirect statements. The indirect statement with the participle and accusative in sections 3 and 4 proved misleading for several candidates, who failed to recognise that Theodotus was the subject of the participles. The participle ἤκουσα was often mistranslated as 'willing' or 'hearing'.

Compound verbs caused occasional difficulties. The usual rule applies, and candidates are advised to analyse prefix and main verb and translate them literally. συνεξαμαρτεῖν was well rendered if candidates knew the meaning of the main verb. παριῶν was frequently mistaken for παρων. τῶν παραγενομένων was additionally mistaken as a genitive absolute instead of a genitive partitive and the meaning of the prefix was often ignored.

Pronouns caused some problems, and the common οὗτος was often translated in the wrong case, or translated as 'himself', 'which', 'thus' or 'where', or omitted altogether. On the issue of omissions, candidates are encouraged to offer a translation at all times rather than omit an inconvenient word – however short. The same principle applies for particles like δὴ in the first sentence.

The last sentence of the passage with the double indirect statement confused several candidates, offering the opportunity for clear differentiation. Candidates should pay attention to the indirect statement with the accusative and the infinitive and should note the tense of the infinitive. The participle ἡγούμενος was frequently mistranslated as 'leading', causing candidates to lose track of the syntax in the remaining sections.

This is a good example demonstrating the need for candidates to learn all the meanings supplied in the DVL and use their common sense in selecting the most appropriate one for the context. The same principle applied in the word ἱκανός, which was usually accurately recognised as 'sufficient', but was occasionally mistranslated in the context as 'capable'.

It is also important that candidates pay careful attention to glosses, as they were occasionally misread or ignored. For example, several candidates translated 'Piraeus' as 'Persia' while the other glossed characters were sometimes treated as interchangeable.

Question 2

In a similar vein to Q1, candidates are advised to observe personal endings carefully, as marks were lost by those who failed to observe the 2nd person plural of ἐβόατε.

Candidates should also be reminded how to translate participles with the definite article, since τοῦ ᾄδοντος was often translated as 'the singing.' The most common problem in section 3 was failure to identify the indirect statement after ὠμνυετέ, although the vocabulary was well known for a reasonably rare word.

The verb ἔλεγε proved a challenge; generally translations made sense, but not in very good English. The reflexive ἐαυτου was often omitted, while confusing ἔπειτα with ἔπει caused frequent avoidable problems with the syntax of the ensuing conditional. Simple words like that should be known. The future tense of ὀρχησομενοι was often missed, although many of the best responses translated it as the expected purpose clause. The easy οὐδ' was too frequently mistakenly translated as 'never' or 'no one.' This section was best rendered by those who stuck to a linear translation, while those who changed the order of words around tended to lose the thread of the meaning. Overall, a linear translation is the safest option when candidates are unsure of the meaning of a sentence.

The prefix ἐπελαθεσθε was sometimes ignored by candidates, causing them to mistake the word for a form of λανθανω, despite the difference in voice.

Candidates must once more ensure they include every Greek word in their translation, however apparently inconvenient, since many omitted γουν or even τοτε in the final section. Many thought that ἔγωγε was a verb, though without serious consequences.

Question 3

This question was very well attempted, although a large number of candidates did not seem to know the Greek word for 'Greece'. Common problems included the use of the accusative case after προσβαλλω instead of the correct dative, and ignorance of the neuter gender of τειχος. The greatest difficulty was caused by the rendering of 'they rejoiced' in the last sentence if translated as an aorist. An easier translation was possible in the imperfect and candidates should be advised to consider the most straightforward form of irregular verbs.

F372 Classical Greek Verse and Prose Literature

General comments

The majority of candidates were clearly extremely well-prepared for the demands of this paper, and had a very pleasing understanding of the two sets texts. In a number of cases, candidates had a significantly better grasp of one of the texts, but most candidates coped very well with the paper as a whole. The best answers revealed an impressive depth of knowledge, and there was some outstanding work in the commentary questions, the translations and the essays.

The context questions proved challenging, especially for those whose grasp of the Greek texts was less sound; this was particularly the case for the longer Homer question (2(c)). The translations were generally done effectively, though there were some minor errors in a considerable number of responses. Some centres clearly had worked to a common translation, which was generally very sound; however a very few candidates seemed to have learned a very old-fashioned and, arguably, unhelpful translation. As last year, a few candidates in the Section A question chose to begin their translation at an earlier point in the passage; this was of course not penalised. However, it remains the case that those who struggle with translation also struggle with the precision required in other questions that focus on particular parts of the text. It remains very important for candidates to have a confident mastery of the texts they have studied.

As noted in previous years, examiners are always pleased to encounter answers that are clearly presented, where it is obvious how the candidate is answering the question. This is particularly helpful where candidates are asked to make a number of points (as in 2(c)), often best developed in separate paragraphs. Most candidates were well able to make clear reference to the Greek texts to support their argument (though relatively few included breathings and iota subscripts), though a small number of candidates remain who obscure their argument by excessive and unnecessary use of ellipses. In some cases this affected the mark that could be awarded, especially where it was unclear from what they wrote whether they actually understood the passage of Greek (translation is often a very effective means of supporting critical discussion), and the words actually quoted in Greek had no relevance to the point being made. The very best responses were precise and clear in their references to the text, and were able to support their argument very effectively. Some candidates included references to the Greek text when this was not asked for in the question (there is no penalty for this), and a few included excessive amounts of quotation without making clear how the quoted words were relevant to the question. In a very few cases, this appeared to put candidates under time pressure by the end of the exam.

Although it does not affect the mark, candidates should be aware that examiners expect the Greek text to be recorded accurately and with appropriate breathings (there is no need to include accents). Omitting breathings creates a negative impression.

As was noted last year, there are still some candidates who fall back on excessive use of technical vocabulary, which can in some cases render what they write unclear, particularly if not well directed at the question. For example, writing "polysyndeton of *καί*" without any further comment is unlikely to be very helpful, though a more developed discussion explaining the relevance in context can achieve full credit. Examiners are happy to reward clear discussion of the significant details of the Greek text without recourse to technical terms, which are no substitute for an effective response to the question.

As last year, the final mark of a very few candidates was reduced because of the omission of a question. It is very important that candidates always check that they have worked through the paper in full, and this is much easier where the questions have been answered in order and the answers have been set out clearly. A small number of candidates do tackle the questions out of order, generally without any problem; but this is an issue that all candidates should be aware of.

Section A: Prescribed Prose Literature

1(a) This question proved more challenging than expected, and relatively few candidates scored 3/3.

1(b) (i) This question was generally well answered, though what candidates wrote often betrayed some misunderstanding of the Greek.

(ii) The majority of candidates scored full marks here, though some lost a mark for translating τῶ θεῶ as 'the gods'.

1(c) Most candidates secured full marks for this question. Many chose Xenophon's piety and his determination, though there were some other suggestions accepted as well, provided they were supported with reference to the text. Some candidates also lost a mark for inaccurate citation of the Greek or failure to match the point they made with an appropriate Greek phrase. A very few candidates omitted the Greek text completely.

1(d) This question was generally very well done, but a few lost marks by failing to work through the text closely.

1(e) The translation question was generally very well done, as one would expect. Common omissions included ἤδη and ἄνω, and ἐλέγετο was not always well rendered. The middle section, including the genitive absolute, was often not well translated, though examiners accepted a range of variations. There were a few very old-fashioned translations from centres; candidates might better be helped by a translation into clear modern English.

1(f) This question was generally effectively answered, with most candidates focusing on the depth of snow, the deaths and the dispute over fires. Relatively few made much of διεγέγοντο δὲ τὴν νύκτα πῦρ καίοντες. Most candidates were able to deal with style effectively in this question, though there were a significant number who ignored this aspect of the question. Some candidates chose to focus on impressive polysyllabic technical terms of dubious value, but most were able to highlight relevant and important aspects of the passage. There are still some candidates who choose to present quotations with an ellipse (marked by '...') which often obscures, or at least does not support, their argument. This can undermine an otherwise promising answer where the discussion focuses on words hidden within the ellipse.

1(g) The essay question was in many cases very successfully attempted, and the best answers showed an incisive understanding of the text of Xenophon which was used to excellent effect. Even those essays that were less successful generally showed a very pleasing grasp of Xenophon's account, and illustrated what they had to say effectively. Many candidates discussed to good effect Cyrus' role in battle, Xenophon's dream and the climactic scene as the Greek forces gained their first sight of the sea; there were also some interesting references to the celebrations at the end of the journey. Attempts to focus on aspects of Xenophon's style and language were less successful unless suitably supported; candidates can be encouraged to make some (but not excessive) use of the passage on the paper for this purpose; the second passage was used in this way by some. There were a few over long responses, which in some cases put pressure on the final stages of the paper.

Section B: Prescribed Verse Literature

2(a) This question was generally well answered.

2(b) This question proved quite challenging. Most candidates gained credit for the repeat use of *θάμβησαν*, but there were some unsuccessful discussions of the simile and its meaning. There were some interesting discussions of the relationship between Priam and Achilles and the individuals mentioned in the simile, but this at times became rather convoluted and unclear.

2(c) This was a demanding question because of its length, though there were many features to pick out of the passage, and the majority of candidates were able to do so to good effect. There were a few who did not address the issue of style, and so limited the mark they could gain. The best answers were extremely good, and many answers were effectively organised so that it was clear to the examiner where different points were being addressed. The best answers dealt effectively with the way that Priam used references to Peleus to evoke a sympathetic reaction from Achilles, though some interpreted some of what he said as if it referred directly to himself (e.g. *ὄλοῦ ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῶ*) rather than Peleus. A range of stylistic comments were made, including tautology (*ἀρήν καὶ λοιγὸν*) and enjambment (*τείρουσ'*).

2(d) This was generally very well done. Relatively few candidates rendered the *παν-* in *πανάποτος*, and there were a few very old-fashioned translations which seemed to the examiners unhelpful to candidates. A number translated 'ὑῖες' in line 19 as 'ships', and the repeated *μοι* in lines 20-1 were omitted by some.

2(e) Candidates were able as a rule to pick out three elements from this passage to good effect, though some struggled to find a third point. Weaker responses struggled over the meaning of some of the passages selected.

2(f) The essay was generally of a higher standard than the essay in Section A, and there were some excellent discussions of the relationship between Achilles and Priam that revealed a very sound understanding of the text as a whole. Illustrations were taken from the set book as a whole, and there were some very good discussions about the way the relationship between the two men changed during the line studied. The best essays were able to reflect this development in a well-organised answer, but even weaker answers often showed an excellent grasp of detail, even if the essay itself was rather disjointed. Relatively few candidates made use of Achilles' references to Zeus' urns and Niobe, though there were some interesting discussions of both.

F373 Classical Greek Verse

Three years into the specification, candidates seem to have become habituated to the way in which literature and language elements are now combined in the two A2 papers, and to be ever more skilful in executing answers which will maximise the numbers of marks they achieve. There were very few indications of candidates who may have had a problem with timing: many wrote at great length on the set text questions and did good work on the language sections. At least three-quarters of the candidature decided to answer Section B, the Unprepared Translation and Comprehension section, first and this approach generally served them well. As one would expect, there was by and large a good correlation between performances on the two sections of the paper, though there were of course those candidates whose literary skills or interests outweighed their linguistic ones, and a few *vice versa*.

Examiners were again slightly disappointed that those candidates opting for Euripides vastly outnumbered those who chose to answer on Aristophanes, so much so that there were not really enough Aristophanes scripts to pinpoint any recurring trends or problems. Outcomes on the two texts were broadly comparable, although there was, given the larger entry, a much greater variation in quality in the Euripides answers, and a higher proportion of the Aristophanes scripts were very good. Perhaps centres which have previously been shy about reading Aristophanes might finally be encouraged to give him a try next year. It is the Examiners' impression that one of the factors which might discourage centres from teaching Aristophanes is a perception that their candidates would be perplexed by all the topical references or literary jokes. These centres should be assured that the level of background knowledge required for the exam is only enough to explain the jokes in their very broadest terms, something which most of the Aristophanes candidates hitherto have manifestly enjoyed doing, and have done very successfully.

Comments on specific questions and sections will be found below, and should be read in conjunction with the Mark Scheme for the component.

Section A: Prescribed Literature

Some general points about approaches to literary questions:

- Greek *must* be quoted and translated (or its meaning made clear). Some candidates, who may be well-informed and able, fail to do themselves justice because they do not make clear that they understand fully the examples they quote. Candidates are not explicitly asked to translate the texts in the examination papers; but those who rely on a knowledge of the text in English and a vague awareness of what the Greek says tend not to do as well.
- Care must be taken with the way in which the Greek text is cited: other than direct mistranslation, there are two main things candidates do which reduce the effectiveness of their answers. The first is to quote some Greek but fail to translate all of the words quoted, or translate more words than are quoted, or to otherwise mismatch quote and comment in such a way that it is obvious the candidate is not absolutely precise on the meaning of the Greek text. The other is 'bitty citation', when candidates tend to cite and then spin a comment around familiar words and short phrases, without giving a clear sense that they know what the words actually mean in their context. They are far more likely to make convincing points if they base their discussion on whole phrases, clauses or sentences. The worst kind of 'bitty citation' is a comment that starts like this, 'The author uses words like ...', and then quotes a number of words from different parts of the passage (often but not always tenuously linked) which give no sense of context or overall meaning whatsoever. This year, for example, on Q.1(a), many candidates (not inappropriately) seized upon the fact that there were a number of words in the passage to do with speech or silence, but not every candidate showed that they knew what the sentences in which they occurred meant.

- There is no requirement to analyse passages line by line, but candidates, unless very adept, tend to write better structured answers this way and to avoid missing important points. They are also in a better position to trace the sequence of thought through a passage or demonstrate their knowledge of the context of their citations than those who look – for example – for instances of ‘emphatic positioning’ of words throughout the passage, and then start again to look for something else. This year, many candidates made comments, not without justification, about the number of times the Nurse used imperatives in the passage, and listed some or all of those imperatives in Greek, but they did not always translate them or explain their immediate context. Those who did this did not always give a full sense of the way in which the Nurse’s speech developed.
- Coverage of the whole passage is important. (This is *not* the same as ‘making every point in the Mark Scheme’ – the mark scheme is only intended to illustrate the range of points that could be made.) Making brief notes on points to refer to in an answer, or highlighting important points on the question paper, might well be helpful. Some candidates start well, write very fully on the first half of a passage, and then run out of steam, or time. What happens at the end of a passage may be at least as important as what happens at the beginning. The Examiners do not expect absolutely every line or sentence to be commented upon, but they will look for coverage of most of the passage and the majority of its most salient points or examples when deciding how many marks to give, and the shorter the passage involved the more important this will be. For example, in Q.1(a) this year, the main stages by which the Nurse’s speech develops are lines 1-5 (conciliatory), 6-9 (help available to Phaedra from women or doctors), 10-12 (an attempt to limit Phaedra’s options so that she has to speak), 13-16 (an expression of frustration and/or emotional blackmail) and 17-23 (the threat to Phaedra’s children), and one would expect an answer receiving full marks at least to have touched on all of these.
- A list of points shows some knowledge, but no more: rhetorical figures (for example) do not just happen to be there; they are supporting some important point, which should be mentioned as the reason for their use.
- Unless otherwise specified, answers should make reference to both content and style. Although there are similarities between Greek and Latin, Greek on the whole tends to be less ‘rhetorically dense’ than Latin on a line-by-line basis, and even within Greek some passages, necessarily, will contain fewer potential ‘style points’ than others, but nevertheless answers which concentrate wholly on the one to the exclusion of the other will not reach the top level. (See the Marking Grids in Mark Scheme: ‘Characteristics of Performance’.)
- Technical terms should be used with care. Examiners have (regrettably) come to acknowledge that ‘alliteration’ and ‘assonance’ are apparently indistinguishable from one another, and that nearly every vocative provides an example of ‘apostrophe’; but the wrong use of a technical term may (slightly) spoil an answer which is otherwise going in the right direction. This year (as in others) the term ‘polyptoton’ was widely applied to refer to all parts of speech, and even to words which were merely cognate, as opposed to being different forms of the same word, which is the correct usage with inflected languages. If a candidate notices that, for example, several clauses begin with the same word, thinks that this is significant, and quotes them and says so in straightforward English, this is better than calling it by the wrong name (although it is certainly a bonus if he does use the term ‘anaphora’).
- Candidates should make sure that the literary devices they discover in passages actually work. A plural genitive absolute, for example, is quite likely to have several words ending in -wn, because that is the only way in which it can be done, so it is very unlikely to mean very much, in literary terms. A special favourite is always ‘emphatic position’, which (apparently) can be either (1) the beginning of a line, or (2) the middle of a line, or (3) the end of a line. Not everyone can be right: the fact is that a word in ‘emphatic position’ is a word where one wouldn’t expect it to be – which may be by no means easy for the average A-level candidate to spot; so this, like all other ‘rhetorical devices’, has to be handled with care.

Note that specific examples of textual points expected to be referred to in answers are in general not listed in the remarks below, but may be found in the Mark Scheme for the component.

Q.1(a)/2(a)

Some candidates felt obliged to start their answers with unasked for 'The Story So Far' paragraphs, thereby delaying the earning of marks. Teachers are advised not to promote this as good practice.

By and large, candidates understood the point and the humour of Q.2(a) very well. Almost all candidates could see what was going on in Q.1(a) at one level or another, although the sophistication of their analyses varied widely.

Q.1(b)/2(b)

Essays were generally competently done, though there was a higher concentration of 'virtuoso performances' on Aristophanes rather than Euripides. Candidates had relatively few problems judging how much to write on the printed passage and how much on the rest of the play. For Q.1(b), the most salient points in the passage were probably „raren, àj >oiken in line 1, àj o;da mšn ta0t', o;da d' oIc Ipwj fr}sw (line 2), and the final two lines of the passage, although candidates did (with varying success) wring tragedy from every other part of the passage, too, and used the reference to Artemis as springboard for a wider discussion of the role of the two goddesses in the play.

As to discussion of the rest of the play, nearly all the answers would have benefited from the inclusion of more direct textual reference, i.e., quotation in English or Greek, or explicit referencing of lines/sections of the text. There were a lot of bald statements about the various characters and themes of the play which really should have been given supporting evidence. While accurate quotation in Greek is of course impressive, the inclusion of odd Greek words (unless in themselves significant) is completely pointless, e.g. 'he wants to wash out his ears (èta)'. The vast majority of this year's candidates quoted in Greek when citing the passage printed on the paper, and in English when using material from the rest of the play (whether it was the portions prescribed for reading in Greek or parts they had only read in English).

Section B: Language

Q.3 Unprepared Translation and Comprehension

(a) (Numbers refer to the seven sections into which the passage was divided.)

Relatively common errors:

1 Candidates often neglected to translate ka,, making {f°j the apodosis of the conditional rather than nÇmize in the next section.

2 ta0t- was often treated as the object of nÇmize, which was in turn often treated as a third person singular. The ka- in k{me was either ignored or used to link this section to the previous (especially by the candidates who had ignored the ka, there), rather than adverbially, to emphasise ÷mš. b-Š was confused with b-oj. Some candidates took xunarpasqe-san as third person plural.

3 paid, was often translated as if plural. doul-an was often translated as if dative, going with tī sī .

4 tij was often translated as if agreeing with prÇsfqegma, then despotān would often be taken as dependent on prÇsfqegma. tij was also occasionally taken as 'who?'. ÷re1 was often translated as 'ask' or 'love', and often in the wrong tense.

5 tαn Αμευντιn was occasionally translated as if vocative ('Look, lover of Ajax!') »scuse was taken by some as part of >cw, and by others as present tense.

6 Candidates did not always make a distinction in meaning between *oʻan* and *ʻshj*, or confused the two. There were continued problems with *re*¹, but repeated errors were not penalised, of course.

7 This section acted as an excellent discriminator, being something that only the A* candidates tended to get right. *l ũ* was reasonably well recognised, if not its tense, but *ph* remained hidden or unknown to many, and the fact that the verb to be was understood in line 10 meant that *t, ph* was often taken as the object of *l ũ*. *g^mnei* was often regarded as being part of *g-gnomai*.

Overall, though, the translation was well done, perhaps even exceeding the Examiners' expectations, with a good number of correct or almost correct versions. On the other hand, the Examiners frequently found it impossible to award both of the 'fluency of English' marks, as many translations tended to be stilted and over-literal, or just not hang together as passages of understandable English in their own right.

(b) A number of candidates managed to identify style points from the text whilst clearly misunderstanding what the text meant, and only received partial credit as a result. *a»desai* was not known by all, nor was *l ugrî*. Some candidates expected the anaphora of *„idesai, mšn ... dš* and *pat^mra ... mht^mra* to count as two or even three points.

(c) Despite the help of three glossary items, a large number of candidates did not convey a precise enough understanding of the text to attract three marks.

(d) Most candidates scored full marks, either completely on their own merits or because they were allowed one mistake. There were one or two only who really struggled with the scansion question, scanning every syllable as long, or marking half of them as *anceps*. The most common error was to scan the last syllable of *kakĒn* as long rather than short. *k{mo*, caused fewer problems than one might think, and candidates seemed happy with *q}n-j*.

(e) (i) Lack or confusion of vocabulary caused a few problems here. *patr-d'* and/or *patr-j* were often translated as father, *>fqeiraj* sometimes as 'captured', and *pl o0toj* as 'voyage'. The final phrase was sometimes rendered rather sloppily as 'I save everything in you' *vel sim*. (Examiners decided not to make a fuss about whether *ʻ ti* was translated as neuter or masculine, 'what' or 'whom', as accuracy here conflicted with normal English usage.)

(e) (ii) Some candidates lost marks for not adequately translating and/or explaining their examples.

F374 Classical Greek Prose

General

The number of candidates for this component was slightly greater this year. In Section A, more than two-thirds opted for Thucydides in preference to Plato, and in Section B about 40% did Prose Composition. More does not necessarily mean better, and in Section B those who offered composition generally outshone the unseen doers. Some candidates who took the latter option seem to have assumed that, having done an unseen at AS, they would be able to negotiate an A2 one satisfactorily without much more expenditure of effort, but were found wanting on the content, literary and (especially) grammatical questions which required detailed knowledge of the kind which becomes second nature to those trained in composition. The two exercises are to be seen as comparable: it is not possible to write in Greek without being able to do, for example, purpose clauses, and is therefore reasonable that those who take the unseen option should show detailed understanding of similar structures: candidates at A2 level, whatever option they take, really should be able to recognise them, and if they cannot, they have failed to make the necessary step up.

Similar thinking may affect choice of set texts in Section A: it may be that some steer clear of Plato because of the philosophy; but the argumentation of this section of the *Republic* is not complex, and students often find Plato's style and technique easier to pin down and write about than Thucydides'. Everyone knew that the description of the massacre at the Assinaros was horrific, and had some general idea why: actually working out in detail how Thucydides makes it so, and explaining it, was a stiffer test than some perhaps anticipated. There was, further, more evidence this year that some candidates for Thucydides (particularly: Plato seemed to suffer less in this respect) were relying to a disproportionate extent on notes they had made or been given during the course, rather than reading closely the piece of Greek in front of them. It is, of course, commendable that A2 candidates know what Sir Kenneth Dover or Simon Hornblower think about a passage of Thucydides, but it is not, specifically, what they are being asked to do here, and at times it can be distracting. What is really required, is to be able to *translate* the Greek wholly accurately, and therefore focus correctly on those places where, for example, words appear in unusual positions, or an imperfect or present tense is used when an aorist would seem adequate, etc. It is always clear to examiners when candidates rely chiefly on knowing the text in translation and try to flesh this out by quoting and (inaccurately) translating odd groups of words. Perhaps another consequence of relying on learned information rather than translating the text was that more candidates this year pursued a 'thematic' approach to the passages: for example in 2(a), saying that 'hope' is a central theme of Nicias' speech and then quoting the instances of ÷l p·j/÷l p·zw etc, rather than working through the passage from beginning to end. Sometimes this worked, but it tended to work for the very best candidates, with the more average ones leaving too much out. In any case, a thematic approach necessarily neglects the narrative or rhetorical development of a passage, which are hard to encapsulate thematically but emerge naturally if it is taken 'chronologically'. More generally (and this may have affected Plato more than Thucydides), some candidates this year did not write enough on the commentary questions: passages chosen for comment will necessarily have plenty of significant content, and an answer which, say, outlines the argument set out by Plato in a side or so of writing and then says 'Plato reinforces his argument by repeating words such as „ rcontej' is unlikely to score high marks.

As usual, it is easier to focus on shortcomings rather than successes – not least, of course, in the hope that next year's candidature will have a clearer idea what to do and what to avoid – but it is also the case that the overall standard remains encouragingly high. Very few candidates were wholly out of their depth, and very many more clearly knew a good deal of Greek and had evidently enjoyed acquiring it.

SECTION A

(See also 'general remarks' above)

Questions 1(a) and 1(b); Plato

1 (a) Better responses said more than 'Plato enlivens this encounter by...' and then pick out what they saw as (sometimes isolated) words that backed up their claim. The wolf image was universally identified, but sometimes with unjustifiable elaboration involving lambs, lions, and other fauna. Here and elsewhere those who took Socrates' protestations literally produced limited responses, as opposed to those who read between the lines and understood Plato's irony. Most *did* see that the encounter is more than a simplistic one between the good philosopher and the nasty sophist, but there was still a tendency to polarise which coloured other aspects of their accounts, and to undervalue the seriousness of Thrasymachos' points about *elenchos* in the second paragraph (which received less attention than it deserved, some limiting themselves to remarks on Thrasymachos' sardonic reaction). Some neglected to give the 'search for gold' analogy due weight, or indeed did not mention it at all. Language points were well made by some, virtually ignored by others, even obvious ones: many, for example, observed that ÷I ee'sqai is at the beginning of a sentence, but did not then register that it is equally significant that caI epa-nesqai is at the sentence's end.

1 (b) Most seemed to find this easier to write about than (a). Some dealt with the argument separately, then went back and investigated how Plato's use of language reinforced his message; others combined the two, with equal success, though there were those who relegated 'style' to a brief appendix limited to a few points. The argument was generally well known, (though not many noted Socrates' questionable conflation of oñ „ rcontej with oñ kre-ttonej) most noting the way that Socrates invites assent, receives it (briefly, maintaining narrative pace), then moves on, repeating key points either in the same or similar ways. Some neglected obvious repetitions and variations in favour of examples of (sometimes questionable) 'alliteration'; in some cases they meant assonance; in any case there were many more palpable points that might have been more safely made.

Questions 2(a) and 2(b); Thucydides

2 (a) Most candidates knew what Nikias was trying to say, those who realised that his speech was not simply 'encouraging', but acknowledged his reservations and the weakness of his position doing best. Surprisingly, few commented on the first word of the passage, ka·, many choosing to begin with ÷I p·da crª >cein or, less effectively, è [Aqhna'oi ka, xðmmaco·, stating that Nikias' calling them this shows 'togetherness' or 'inclusiveness', and sometimes continuing by pointing out that he 'uses imperatives' and 'calls them Īme'j (etc)'. Well, yes, he does, but as he is talking to his men it is hard to see how else he would do it, or that it is especially significant. Much better were those who looked at the first sentence carefully and noted (amongst other points) the position of |dh, the effect of „gan, or the two instances of m£te which strengthen the mhd™ (this is not just 'polysyndeton', which appeared to be one of this year's buzz-words). Some did not make enough of Nikias' protestations of weakness, or simply said that he was 'putting himself on the same level as his men', whilst others did note such significant words as toi and d£, and the parallelism of the o£te clauses. Some pointed out that calling some of them faul Çtatoi did not say much for Nikias' powers of diplomacy, which may not be quite right, but showed commendable attention to the text and encouraging freedom of thought. Surprisingly few noted how ka·toi and then {nq' én shape the direction of his thought (some reverting to the 'hope' theme without showing why it surfaces again here), and more could have been made of the striking pol I ~ m™n ... pol I ~ d™ clauses. Some thought t}ca d™ ktI . was more hopeful that it actually is (it doesn't mean 'soon they will stop, anyway'). {kan} and its position afforded a clear opportunity to comment simply on a word in emphatic position, but by no means all did: analysis of style is often a matter of stating the obvious, and indeed looking for the obvious; in some

places, some candidates got their carts before their horses by not doing this, instead choosing a word or idea that they felt *should* be ‘emphatic’, and making up reasons why it might be (‘because it is in the middle of a sentence’ is emphatically *not* a reason.) Most candidates were happy with why Nikias felt that their luck would change, but not all seemed to understand what ἀλqon g}r pou ... {nekt~ >paqon meant, or why it was worth saying here. The parenthetical o»ktou ... fqÇnou was another golden opportunity to comment safely on word-order, which was seized by many, spurned by some. The pÇI ij figure in the last sentence always received comment, though bringing Athens in here was not necessarily the right course; better to look at the sentence structure and how he is saying it rather than invoke vague thoughts of home/patriotism, etc.

2 (b) It must be said that the examiners were a little disappointed with the generality of answers received to this question, which is unusual: perhaps their hopes were unduly raised by the fact that it is so famous a passage; and perhaps candidates were a little daunted by having to write about it. Some did it very well, of course, but others did seem to find the density of the Greek hard to cope with, and whilst there were many superficially effective discussions, relatively few engaged closely enough with the text to produce really incisive accounts. Thus in the first sentence most identified τμα m™n as suggesting that something significant was afoot, but then picked out the odd word such as pantacÇqen as being significant without putting the other pieces together with it, and then often made no comment on the answering τμα d™ and its development (very few noticed that biazÇmenoi has to be taken with both clauses). Verbs were important in this passage, but the sheer fact that ‘there are a lot of verbs’ means nothing on its own (nor do participles necessarily have any magical effect because there are a lot of them): what *did* matter was their tenses, which many realised but few expressed clearly. Even at the beginning, i pe-gonto was picked out by many as significant, but then translated as ‘they hurried’, without reference to its function as a scene-setting imperfect – of which there were a number in the passage, most of which were not given their full value. Similarly, many noted that ÷sp-ptousin oÎden, kÇsmê was worth talking about, but failed to comment on its tense, though the p, j ... tij clause was well treated. The position of |qrÇoi did elicit quite a lot of comment, as did the Athenians trampling on each other and their entanglement with their own equipment, but again the tenses of diefqe-ronto and kat™rreon did not (some seemed unsure as to what kat™rreon meant). The brief topographical reference to the Syracusans’ position was important, as was the use they made of it. The desperation of the Athenians still drinking {sm™nouj received good comment, but there was again some carelessness: ‘very many were slaughtered’, for example, for m}I ista >sfazon is inadequate, and wrong. The details of the befoulment of the water evoked horror; not all added the last detail that it was even then still perim}chton ... to’j pol I o’j.

SECTION B

Question 3

(a) The only prevalent mistake at the beginning of the passage concerned gast™ra, which many did not know. In the second sentence it was not always clear who was thought ‘to be going to come to the camp’, or whose the camp in question was. This affected the question of where Ariaios and Mithridates were going/coming; but the commonest error here was simply to write down their names without regard to syntax: ‘they did not all come, Ariaios and Mithridates, who were ...’, when what was needed was something like ‘*but* Ariaios and Mithridates, who were ... *did*’. Many wrote ‘an interpreter’, despite the article. The only real syntactical issue was ÷k™I euon e» tij e»h ktl ., which, however, was well done by many, and produced some effective English. t~par~ basil™wj was badly done, often as something like ‘[so they could tell] these things to the king’.

(b) Usually correct.

(c) ἄσθμι usually correct, ἀφ᾽ ἑνὸς sometimes as if from φημι.

(d)(i) Nearly everyone knew that he had been killed, not very many knew exactly why.

(ii) Similarly, most knew that they were in a state of honour, but not all why.

(iii) Not all connected the three parts: the King demanded their weapons they had belonged to his slave Cyrus, so they now belong to him.

(e) Almost all found one thing to say, usually that Kleonor calls Ariaios κῆκιστε, and what it means. The commonest second point was the negatives on line 17, again provided that it was translated and explained. Many did not find a satisfactory third point, though if they had looked a little further {ἄνω} τὴν τε καὶ πανούργον} τὴν would probably have jumped out at them: not all candidates *do* look far enough in questions such as this, instead trying to find all the answers in the first few words, and thus missing the obvious.

(f) Just about everyone could do ἐκαστὸν, but not all explained {ἑκάστῳ} adequately; 'it means *to* or *with* each other' was not sufficient.

Question 4

The composition was generally well done, some versions achieving near full marks, with very few weak versions. Vocabulary caused few problems, though some struggled to find a way to say 'finish', 'sword' was often taken as a second declension noun, and some did not know 'wonderful'. Generally candidates who did not know a particular word were able to find some suitable periphrasis. Knowledge of syntax, including effective use of the optative, was encouragingly good, as was that of the many common irregular verbs in the piece. Everyone could find some opportunity for 'style' marks, particularly through effective subordination, some used particles well, and those few phrases where something beyond a literal translation was required (such as 'was led away to death') were usually spotted and coped with effectively. Hardly any breathings were missed, many versions were carefully written out in clear Greek hands, and not a few read like something approximating to real Greek. Candidates who attempted this section could be well pleased with their efforts.

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