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Examiners' report

LATIN

H043
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Contents

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

Paper 1 series overview

Examiners felt that candidates coped well with the Language paper this year and generally responded with interest to the selections of Latin chosen. They appeared for the most part to be well prepared for the paper and to have experienced no difficulties in completing the tasks within the allotted time.

Although many candidates showed themselves capable of producing accurate and fluent translations from Latin, those who did less well could improve their performance by attention to the following:

- learning all the vocabulary on the DVL and choosing the appropriate meaning for the context where there are alternatives

- learning the principal parts of verbs and declension of irregular nouns

- paying particular attention to pronouns and being familiar with their declensions

- reading carefully the English introduction to the passages and glossed vocabulary

- keeping in mind the storyline throughout the passages

Section A overview

This is the compulsory translation question, which is divided into 11 sections, each of which is marked out of 5. Most candidates kept some idea of the storyline in mind but were at times led astray by unfamiliar vocabulary which distracted them from the sense of the passage. Those who were able to make a guess at the unknown words and still keep on track with the rest of the section could still achieve a high mark.

Careful analysis of the Latin and attention to detail are all important in this question as many clearly capable candidates lose mark by careless mistakes. This is particularly true of pronouns as they occur very frequently in the passage and knowledge of their declensions is essential.

Before beginning their translation, candidates should read carefully through the introduction, and note in particular the characters in involved in the story. Highlighter pens can be used to advantage here to focus on important details. Glossed vocabulary should also be carefully noted.

Candidates are asked to write on alternate lines, but many forget to do this. It is important both for the candidate, as it gives apace for corrections, and for the examiner to be able to mark accurately. Legible handwriting is clearly very important also as marks may be lost if examiners are unable to read a word or phrase.

Question 1

1   Translate the following passage into English.

    Please write your translation on alternate lines.   **[55]**

Pausanias nonnullos Persarum nobiles ceperat. hos clam ad regem Persarum cum litteris remisit in quibus haec scripserat:

Most candidates made a good beginning here and followed the storyline with ease. Frequent slight errors involved translating *litteris* as plural rather than 'a letter' and missing the pluperfect in *ceperat* and *scripserat.*

'ego, dux Spartae, hos captivos libenter reddo quod me tecum foedere coniungi cupio.

This went well as far as *reddo* but there were few completely accurate versions from *quod* onwards. Some thought *foedere* was an infinitive but did not recognise the infinitive in *coniungi;* these mistakes often caused them to ignore the significance of *me* and *tecum.*

permitte mihi ut filiam tuam uxorem ducam. si id feceris, totam Graeciam sub tuam potestatem redacturum esse polliceor.'

Most understood what Pausanias was after here; 'let me marry your daughter' is an example of a thoughtful translation but some were confused by the juxtaposition of *filiam tuam* and *uxorem;* 'lead your daughter and wife' was not uncommon (although clearly not making sense of the storyline). If *polliceor* was known, the indirect statement was generally fairly accurate, even if candidates had to guess *redacturum.*

rex, hac re magnopere gavisus, legatum emisit qui Pausaniae promitteret omnia quae cupiebat.

Generally, well answered. *All could understand what was happening here.* This year all correctly chose 'ambassador' or 'envoy' for *legatum* rather than 'general'. Common errors were ignorance of *gavisus and* not recognising the purpose contained in the subjunctive in *promitteret.*

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interea Pausanias, alacrior ad rem gerendam factus, in suspicionem Lacedaemoniorum cecidit. domum revocatus, capitis accusatus est.

Although most got the sense here, the phrase *alacrior ad rem gerendam* contained several pitfalls. Most saw that *alacrior* was comparative but not everyone could connect it to *factus* or recognise the past participle; it was often given as 'deed' or ignored. Also, *ad rem gerendam* proved tricky for those who insisted on 'wage' as a translation; 'eager to wage the matter' or 'waging war' were not uncommon although they lost the sense of the story. The verb *cecidit* was often not recognised (showing the need to be familiar with all principal parts) and the significance of the accusative after *in* was sometimes missed.

quamquam iudices ei pepercerunt eum coegerunt ut multum pecuniae solveret neque ad exercitum suum reveniret.

This section was mostly correct but those who did not know *pepercerunt* often lost the sense and some did not realise that *neque* here means 'and not', and that both actions are part of the indirect command.

at ille brevi tempore Colonas navigavit, ubi vestem et mores Persarum sumere coepit.

Nearly all candidates scored well here, realising that Pausanias had sailed away. A small number did not know the phrase *brevi tempore* and rendered it as 'for a short time' or took *brevi as an adverb.* Some did not know *mores a*nd had to guess what else he might have adopted.

deinde servo cuidam persuasit ut epistulam ad regem Persarum ferret.

Another high scoring section with the only unfamiliar word to some being *cuidam* but this could be rendered simply as 'a slave'.

hic servus tamen animadverterat neminem eorum qui hoc officium suscepisset umquam revenisse.

This section proved challenging to some who lost the sense completely as they did not recognise *neminem* as from *nemo* and it was often given as 'the enemy'. The significance of *eorum* was also missed and *suscepisset* was often unknown. But there were many excellent translations.

veritus ne quid mali sibi accideret, epistula aperta cognovit se, simulac eam tradidisset, interfectum iri.

Most understood what was happening here with the letter and the only real problem was with *veritus,* often given as 'truly' or in 'truth'. More analytical candidates were able to recover from this by continuing 'so that nothing bad would happen…' Others remained confused but still grasped the contents of the letter; 'found out' here was the best translation of *cognovit.*

Spartam igitur progressus epistulam iudicibus ostendit qui sine mora Pausaniam ad mortem condemnaverunt.

Probably the most straightforward section and the majority scored 5, with the only vocabulary issue being *mora,* sometimes confused with 'death' even though *mortem* occurred in the same sentence.

Section B overview

Candidates choose between Question 2 Comprehension or Question 3 Translation from English into Latin. Most candidates chose Question 2 and this year only a small number attempted both questions. Examiners have found no significant advantage in attempting both questions and candidates who do so would have been better advised to spend their time more effectively.

Question 2 involves reading a passage in Latin, this year from Cicero, and answering questions on it; these questions are designed to test comprehension rather than accurate translation. There were some excellent responses this year but many candidates who show ability in Question 1 lose marks because they do not spend enough time thinking beyond a bald translation to what Cicero was trying to convey. Many candidates do not take notice of the number of marks allotted to a question and do not give enough information to gain all the marks. Teachers should advise candidates to:

-read the introduction to the question several times and think about the theme of the passage before beginning.

-read each question carefully and take note of the lines referred to

-translate the relevant Latin and then relate the answer to the question, thinking about the **sense**

-express the response in their own words, making sure it makes sense in English

-not give too brief a response; look at the number of marks and give all **relevant** information, including words or phrases such as *saepe, semper, brevi tempore,* which may or may not be required in the Mark Scheme

Question 3 requires different skills and should only be chosen by those who have practised sufficiently beforehand. Candidates need to be able to recall verb and noun endings with great accuracy and to have a good knowledge of vocabulary and the required constructions. Those who attempted this question generally did very well, but some lower-ability candidates made numerous errors and would be better advised to choose Question 2.

Question 2 (a)

> **(a)** *ceteri ... omnium* (lines 1–2): how do the Gauls' reasons for engaging in war differ from those of other peoples?   **[3]**

Most gained 2 marks here but did not see the significance of *omnium* being genitive and meaning the beliers 'of everyone'

Question 2 (b)

> **(b)** *illi ... gesserunt* (lines 2–3): how do the Gauls' attitudes towards the gods differ from those of other peoples?   **[4]**

This was a straightforward question requiring 2 points about the Gauls and 2 points about the others. A few candidates did not name the two groups and so lost a mark. Some only referred to the Gauls.

Question 2 (c)

(c) *hae ... oppugnatus* (lines 3–6): what did the Gauls do in the past which shows how aggressive they are towards the gods?   **[5]**

5 points were needed here, and many grasped all 5. Most gained 3 from ransacking the temple of Apollo, besieging the Capitol and attacking Jupiter but there were references to the Gauls leaving their **seats** (rather than homes) with no mention of the distance involved. Some gave just 1 or 2 points in a brief response.

Question 2 (d) (i)

(d) *praeterea ... ornant* (lines 7–8):

(i) what does Cicero find objectionable about the Gauls' way of worshipping the gods? **[2]**

Most gained 2 marks here; a reference to the Gauls 'decorating' or 'adorning' their altars was required.

Question 2 (d) (ii)

(ii) when do the Gauls worship the gods in this way?   **[3]**

This proved tricky and few gained 3 marks. Many were confused by *aliquo metu adducti;* 'they were afraid' would have gained 1 mark (no need to say 'led on by some fear'). The obligation implied by *deos placandos esse,* that 'the gods must be won over' was not always understood.

Exemplar 1

| 2 | dii | ~~Th~~ If they think that it would please the |
| | | gods to be led by the fear of something. |

This is an example of a very good candidate, who excelled in the translation, going astray. He or she has misunderstood *adducti,* not recognising it as a past participle in the nominative and produced an answer which makes no sense. This shows the need to keep the theme of the passage in mind and re-think any response which does not fit in.

Exemplar 2

| (ii) | When they think the gods must be won over becaus |
| | they are scared. |

This is an example of a response where the candidate has read the Latin carefully, kept the theme of the passage in mind and made all 3 points succinctly and in the candidate's own words with the simple 'because they were afraid' instead of 'led by some fear' .

Question 2 (e) (i)

(e) *quis ... immolandorum* (lines 8–10):

    (i) what custom does Cicero describe?   **[1]**

Nearly all gained the mark for 'human sacrifice'.

Question 2 (e) (ii)

    (ii) what does he say to show his disapproval of this custom?   **[2]**

2 points were required but 3 could be made here, 2 obvious points, that the custom continues 'to this day' (in Cicero's own time) and that Cicero thinks it *diram* 'dreadful'; the 3rd point is that Cicero refers to the Gauls as *istos* but few mentioned this. Some found this question difficult because they took *morem* as 'death' or claimed that the Gauls were 'ignorant'.

Exemplar 3

> ii. He calls it that 'dreadful' custom which implies that it's horrible, and says they have kept it to this day which shows that he thinks it's outdated.

This shows a reasoned response where the candidate gives two examples and explains in the candidate's own words the points which Cicero is making.

Question 2 (f)

(f) *qualem igitur ... posse* (lines 10–12): in this sentence, what does Cicero say to make the Gauls' behaviour seem ridiculous?   **[5]**

Exemplar 4

> f) He says, 'What kind of loyalty, what kind of religious beliefs, therefore, do they hold, those who still believe that the immortal gods can be placated so easily by the wickedness of a human and the blood of a man?' Cicero means to say that no god is so easily placated by something as awful as this act of human sacrifice.

This is an example of good practice in answering a five-mark question. The candidate has picked out five relevant points from the passage and made a brief but valid commentary in his or her own words, succinctly but showing understanding.

Question 3 (a)

3   Translate the following five sentences into Latin.

Please write on alternate lines.

(a) The slave-girls promised that they would give water to the horse.   **[5]**

Most scored well here and recognised the indirect statement. Common errors were not making the future participle agree and, occasionally, omitting se or missing the dative in 'to the horse'.

Question 3 (b)

(b) If we do not walk quickly, we shall not be able to buy enough food.   **[5]**

Generally, well answered but some chose the future or present rather than the required future perfect tense for 'if we do not walk'. The most common error, even with the highest scoring candidates, was missing the genitive after satis and giving satis cibum rather than satis cibi.

Question 3 (c)

(c) When their sons did not return home, the fathers were very angry.   **[5]**

Generally, well answered with few errors. Most chose *ubi* or *postquam* with the infinitive; those who chose *cum* and the subjunctive handled it well.

Question 3 (d)

(d) The soldiers advised the women to hide their money under a tree.   **[5]**

Generally, well answered as most recognised the indirect command construction; some did not use the ablative *arbore* after *sub.*

Question 3 (e)

(e) All the citizens want to know what happened in the battle.   **[5]**

Generally, well answered as most recognised the indirect question, the only common error being the tense of the subjunctive for 'happened' which required *acciderit.*

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