

Classics: Latin

Advanced GCE H439

Advanced Subsidiary GCE H039

OCR Report to Centres

June 2012

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, OCR Nationals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

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.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

© OCR 2012

CONTENTS

Advanced GCE Classics: Latin (H439)

Advanced Subsidiary GCE Classics: Latin (H039)

OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

Content	Page
Overview	1
F361 Latin Language	2
F362 Latin Verse and Prose Literature	5
F363 Latin Verse	10
F364 Latin Prose	14

Overview

This summer saw the fourth successive rise in entry numbers at both levels; after years of gradual decline, this is a most welcome trend.

All four papers were judged by all the Examiners involved to be of appropriate standard. The Mark Schemes too, following several years of acclimatisation, have stabilised, providing both effective differentiation and consistent standards year-on-year.

Time-management continues to be a problem for a minority of candidates in F362, F363 and F364. The importance of judicious apportionment of time to each section of a paper cannot be overstated. The wisdom of attempting the language section before the literature in F363 and F364 is for Centres and candidates to determine, but this option is certainly worthy of consideration, if only because the literature questions are open-ended, unlike the language questions.

It is always disappointing for Examiners to see candidates failing to gain the marks that they might have achieved, not because of gaps in their knowledge or understanding, but because they do not address the questions appropriately. This was not uncommon in all three literature components. Candidates need to read the question and analyse the wording to establish the focus of their response, rather than launching straight into a point-by-point analysis of a passage. The second need is to establish what sort of balance between stylistic analysis and evaluation of content each question requires; here also many candidates failed to find the right balance. A few minutes devoted to analysis and planning before beginning the answer could save marks and time later. Thirdly, the handling of Latin quotes needs attention, being all too often taken for granted by candidates, many of whom appear to adopt the notion that, because Examiners are familiar with the text, it is unnecessary to quote all the relevant words; giving only the boundary words of a quote, or even just the line number in a verse extract, is not precise enough. Finally candidates sometimes forget to demonstrate that they understand the Latin that they are quoting.

The above observations should not be seen as a general criticism of candidates: most in fact produced work of a very high standard that the examiners were very impressed with. Centres are to be congratulated on the high standards achieved by the great majority of candidates at both levels.

F361 Latin Language

General comments

The standard overall was high, especially in the first unseen, which caused few problems for the great majority of candidates. The Cicero unseen, on the other hand, contained enough difficulties to tax even the strongest candidates and this was taken into consideration in finalising the mark scheme. The prose alternative, attempted by around 15 per cent (a slight increase on last year), was well within the grasp of nearly all who attempted it. Centres are to be congratulated on the high standards achieved by the great majority of candidates.

The marking standard was the same as for June 2011. That is to say that, for the two unseen passages, most errors were counted as major, unless they made little difference to the overall sense. Thus confusion of singular and plural (a rather pervasive error) was regarded as serious unless English idiom allowed the variation; wrong past tenses were minor errors, but other mistakes of tense were major errors; any omitted word counted as a major error; errors of vocabulary were always major errors, unless only slightly off-target.

Comments on individual questions

Question 1

Germanicus ... habebat: this was mostly handled well; many took *omnes virtutes* as singular; *corporis* was occasionally unknown, while *–que* was often misplaced.

semper ... occidit: the singular was allowed for *proeliis* as the idiom allows it; the superlative was often missed; the frequent rendering of *sua manu* as ‘by his hand’ was counted as a minor error, because the context clearly requires ‘by his own hand’.

et ... erat: many rendered the first *et* as ‘and’, being apparently unaware of its use to mean ‘both’; ‘in the house’ for *domi* (often observed in weaker responses) was considered a minor error; even at this level there were some who confused *domi* with *domini*; many did not know what to do with *aequus*: many were content with ‘equal’ which gives no sense in the context and so was counted a major error; *ac* was sometimes unknown.

ab omnibus ... contenderet: *adeo* was sometimes unknown; the imperfect passive was generally translated correctly; most candidates had to guess *quotiens*, and most gave something acceptable (but the simple ‘when’ was a minor error); *contenderet* was often unknown and guessed as ‘gathered’, which suited the context but was not quite correct (and so a minor error, whereas ‘contend’ was a major error); the gerundive of purpose was handled well.

cum ... iverunt: this section was handled very competently by nearly all, the only difficulty being provided by the vocabulary of the phrase *obviam ei iverunt*, a few confused *e Germania* with *Germanicus*.

ut ... intrarent: this too was nearly always correct; a few did not know *priusquam*.

multo ... visa sunt: this provided the first real challenge of the passage: the adverbial *multo* was widely unknown (‘to many’ was a very common mistranslation); relatively few recognised *maiora* (usually ‘more’), while *signa* was often taken as singular; although everyone knew that *mortem* meant ‘death’, some thought that *in morte* meant ‘during his illness’.

cives ... concurrerunt: the only frequent errors here were treating *morbo* as ‘death’ and *templa* as singular; *certiores facti* was handled surprisingly well; many did not know *undique*.

sperabant ... esse: many weaker responses showed evidence of difficulty with *enim*, giving ‘they were hoping for the gods...’; most recognised the future infinitive in indirect speech.

princeps ... iratissimus: fortunately for the great majority of candidates, the original intention to insist on ‘emperor’ for *princeps* was abandoned (‘leader’ and ‘chief’ were the choices of ninety per cent of candidates); the rest of this sentence was translated correctly apart from the genitive participle, here used as a substantive (‘of prayers’ was almost universal).

sed ubi ... mortuum esse: nearly all translated this clause correctly.

dolor ... potuit: a quarter of the candidates had no problems here; the rest struggled with one word or another.

illo die ... deletae: many could not cope with *illo ... quo*; *templa* was again often singular.

etiam hostes ... desierunt: the only regular difficulty here was the time phrase, where the qualifying *eo* was often unknown, and the ablative was confused with the accusative of duration; many guessed at *desierunt* (‘desired to fight’ was common).

Question 2

Pronouns were better known this year, but some could not cope with the indirect statements. Although there were very few entirely correct versions, it was pleasing to see many thoughtful attempts which paid full attention to the argument.

ubi ... fore: some failed to recognise the superlatives; *fore* defeated the great majority, who guessed it variously as ‘nearly’, ‘made’, or even ‘in the forum’.

idque ... declatum esse: the conjunction was often omitted; the most difficult word by far, though, was *id*, the connection of which to the indirect statement was very rarely noted; some had trouble with the ablatives.

palam ... Milonem: a minority recognised the obligation in the gerundive; most gave a sensible meaning to *agere*; the only common error was failure to note that *dicere* was an infinitive dependent on *coepit*.

res ... posse: most kept the meaning of this sentence (with many guesses as *eripi* and a reluctance to see *consulatum* as the subject of an indirect statement) until they reached *vitam*, at which point most lost the sense (most treated it as a verb).

senatori ... vivo: this provided the greatest hurdle by far: very few candidates could make any sense of this at all; only a small minority made *senatori* dative or singular; *cuidam* was rarely known; few saw the force of the participle; *qua spe fureret*, the most difficult phrase in the paper, was still correctly translated in the very best responses, however most took *spe* as a verb and few saw that this was an indirect question; the final ablative absolute was rarely recognised as such.

respondit ... periturum esse: most candidates got this right; however, the time phrase proved beyond the reach of a quarter of candidates, while *periturum esse* was often guessed as ‘danger’, ‘terrified’ or ‘skilled’.

Question 3

- (a) This sentence was very well translated, mainly because the vocabulary was straightforward and the purpose clause well rehearsed.
- (b) The indirect statement proved difficult for many, particularly the formation of *posse*; both personal and reflexive pronouns were accepted for 'them'.
- (c) Some tried to turn the temporal clause into an ablative absolute, with varying degrees of success (candidates are advised to avoid this temptation unless they can confidently manage this structure); some were unsure what ending to give *oppugno* (including confusion over the use of the right mood); very many omitted the *ut*.
- (d) Many did not know the Latin word for 'priest', and were imaginative in creating alternatives; many did not identify the indirect question; few could produce the correct form of *volo*.
- (e) Most got *duces*, but 'of the people' required care over choice of vocabulary and number; *ne* was usually omitted; many could not form the passive subjunctive; few knew that the accusative plural of *donum* is *dona*.

F362 Latin Verse and Prose Literature

General Comments

The Examiners feel that this unit set candidates tasks of appropriate demand and complexity. Most candidates had clearly studied the texts quite thoroughly, leading to very good marks in the translation and comprehension questions covering both assessment objectives. There was a spread of marks in the 10 mark questions, which therefore again proved to be sound discriminators.

Most candidates performed equally well on both authors, but there were signs of poor time management in the final question on the Ovid text. This may be connected with the tendency that still prevails, to offer more than the requested number of Latin references in earlier questions. Many candidates are including more than they need to for full marks in the earlier questions, and might be better offering a little less on these and leaving themselves more time for a fuller, broader, deeper answer to the final 10 mark questions, which the Examiners hope will be the ones they will most enjoy approaching. 'Enjoying' those questions, which lead candidates' thinking towards that required at A2, is something the Examiners would very much wish to encourage.

There were fewer answers this year that gave style discussion where none was needed, and not so many giving only content discussion where both style and content discussion were invited. The quality of written communication was generally very high indeed.

The Examiners would again like to remind candidates that it is useful to write translations on alternate lines.

Those candidates who answer questions in orders other than a b c d e etc, (which is certainly permissible) are very strongly advised to be very clear about adding the correct question number or letter to their answer to each question.

The Examiners wish to express their genuine thanks to candidates and centres for the quality of work, scholarship and interest in Latin literature that the scripts they marked contained.

Some points of advice for candidates

These are much the same as they were for 2011, as the Examiners still feel that they will be useful to centres and candidates.

1. Note whether the question requires a style comment or not.
2. Try to focus quotations from the Latin. In a discussion of a vital style point, it is very important to quote the exact Latin word or phrase being discussed, rather than a 'start' word, three dots and an 'end' word.
3. Observe the number of points asked for in a question and try not to go over that number. Granted that 'If in doubt, don't miss it out' makes sense, do not prejudice the amount of time you allow yourself. The right number of references to Latin expressions, with an appropriate discussion of each, is better than too many discussion points not supported by Latin.
4. Do observe the line numbers quoted in a question, and the Latin words printed in italics within the question to show where the Latin to be referred to begins and ends. References taken from outside those limits will not be awarded marks.

5. In the 10 mark questions, refer to as much of the story as you can, and do not restrict yourself to the Latin passage or passages printed on the paper. Always focus your discussion points on the question asked on the paper. Remember that these questions are investigating the 'bigger picture' of the text as a whole. When you prepare for these questions, think of what the themes in the text might be, and work on them. Do not be afraid to think broadly here about what the author is describing or how he is arguing, and what his ideas might be. (Though keep your thinking anchored in the text, of course.)
6. Check your translation carefully for any word you might have missed out, often little conjunctions are overlooked, and they can be vital in indicating the connections within the author's argument or narrative.

Comments on individual questions

Section A Prose Literature

Question 1

- (a) Generally well answered. Some candidates did not discuss the number and quality of the artworks in Aspendus.
- (b) Generally thoroughly answered with many candidates attempting to offer more than the three points asked for, some of them, though, without reference to the Latin text they were discussing.

There was some misunderstanding of the point that Cicero was making in the non dicam..hoc dico sentence. It is not the case that Cicero will not describe or mention 'this or that statue which Verres stole', but that he will not say that Verres stole this statue or that, but rather that he stole every single one of them.

- (c) Most translations seen by the Examiners were full and accurate.

The commonest errors were the omission of saepe or mistaking the tense or person of audistis, taking omnia as if it were omnes (this was quite common), and mistaking the tense of dicebant, taking it as present. A few candidates took quod as meaning 'because'.

- (d) Responses to this question were almost universally full and accurate. When candidates read what is indicated in the printed text as an exclamation as a rhetorical question, that was deemed perfectly acceptable by the Examiners. There were many examples of very good discussion of the double superlatives, and the doubling of verbs for emphasis in nudatum ac spoliatum and detractum atque ablatum. The best responses also noted the power of the word choice in nudatum with its overtones of sexual violation. Several candidates discussed the blasphemy of taking gold from Diana herself without quoting the key Latin word ipsa, however, and not a few candidates lowered their marks on this question by not discussing style and confining their discussions solely to content.

This was a question which produced many answers with discussion of more than the required four Latin examples, not infrequently prejudicing the time available for answering question (g) or 2(f).

- (e) Generally well and fully answered.

- (f) Again very well answered, though some candidates omitted to quote the Latin. A few candidates copied out virtually the entire section in Latin and English. The Examiners were really looking for a more focussed quotation of important phrases, and were concerned that this approach prejudiced the candidates' good management of time.
- (g) The best responses covered many of the points that were mentioned in the mark scheme and explained how the points which Cicero made might be analysed as effective. There were indeed a number of very fine and very well argued discussions of why these points would have been an effective means of persuasion of the jury who would have tried Verres had the speech ever been delivered in court.

The Examiners were a little surprised, however, to find that by no means all candidates considered effective Cicero's quite skilfully constructed narrative of the details of the attempt to seduce Philodamus' daughter, and there were noticeably few mentions of the description of the crucial dinner party. That Verres himself was not there was taken by perhaps too many candidates as a reason for omitting this but surely that does not detract completely from its power as a critique of Verres' approach to his work. He did after all tell his men what he wanted to achieve by this party.

Some candidates discussed Verres' presentation of his not very thoroughly audited accounts as an effective means of damning him.

Some candidates tended to confuse wood and trees and confined their discussion almost entirely to the rhetorical features of the text, sometimes this was quite a bravura display of their knowledge of rhetorical technical terms, but not always displayed with a full grasp of the content being delivered through this rhetoric.

Section B Verse Literature

Question 2

- (a) Almost universally well answered, though some candidates did not follow the instruction to refer to the Latin.
- (b) There were numerous very full answers to this question, with a good number of candidates finding more (in some cases quite a few more) than the four Latin examples asked for. There were good discussions of the neat juxtaposition of ego and te, and the metaphorical use of oculos pascit. Some candidates saw, but did not fully explain, an unusual amount of eroticism in the use of the iussive subjunctive, though. There were some fine suggestions about the dismissive use of ille with the implication 'what has he got that I haven't?' which were well expressed. There were however surprisingly few candidates who noticed the dactylic rhythm of line of line 11, but the exciting pace evoked in modo modo was well grasped, as was the general feel of the excitement of the race conveyed by lines 12 and 13 in vivid language.

Several candidates made too much of the danger Ovid would put himself into if he let the reins of the chariot go slack at the sight of the girl, on the grounds that the ends of the reins were tied round charioteers' waists. But the only danger Ovid would be in would be of throwing the race away at the sight of his lady; only if the pole connecting horses and chariot broke, would the driver be pulled out of the chariot by the tied reins. candidates trying to discuss the issue of the reins being tied to the charioteer really had to convince the Examiners that the point they were trying to make showed 'an enthusiastic interest in the girl sitting next to him' before they could be awarded the mark.

- (c) Some candidates lost marks in the first section by linking Pelops and Pisea, and writing 'Pisean Pelops fell by the spear'. Some saw quam as half of a pair of correlatives, without finding the other one. A few read quam as if it had been cum.

In the second section either nempe, tamen or indeed both were quite frequently omitted, and uterque was too often seen as meaning 'all' rather than 'both'. The use of the first person plural was often unnoticed too. The Examiners also felt that puellae and dominae were different words and should be translated with different meanings.

In the final section not a few candidates linked haec with lege rather than commoda, writing about 'this law' or omitted loci.

- (d)(i) Generally well answered.
- (d)(ii) Again generally well answered, though a number of candidates rather saw ne as ni, and wrote 'it is impossible to guard a woman if she does not want it' rather than 'to guard a woman so that she stops wanting' which is what Ovid meant.
- (e) This was also generally well and fully answered.

Some candidates added discussion of lines 7-8 to their answers, which was not required and in some cases impacted on their marks.

The use and placing of vidi ego, and the placing of constitit were particularly well discussed, but too many candidates failed to spot that the noun with which reluctanti agreed was ore rather than equum, fulminis or modo.

The possibilities of discussion of metre in parts of the answer to this question were not taken up by many candidates, though some of the best fully appreciated the visual language Ovid was employing in the word picture of the slackened reins on the streaming mane.

Lines 13-14 were almost always well discussed, whether or not candidates (or centres) believed these to be general statements or references to Tantalus.

The couplet dealing with Argus was also almost always well discussed and understood and both content and style were brought in here.

- (f) Though there was a tendency simply to re-tell the content of the four poems studied in some candidates' work rather than analyse them in terms of the question, not a few candidates had clearly not managed their time fully, the best answers to this question showed some very thoughtful discussion and some very detailed recall of appropriate allusions to the text, some of them quoted in Latin, which is not required but always welcomed.

Most candidates wrote that Ovid saw women as objects rather than people, and backed this up well with references to poem 3.2. Not all, though, saw that Ovid's suggestion to the dure vir to ease up the guarding of his woman might have been intended not as a plea for feminine rights but a clever piece of special pleading designed to make her more available for the kind of treatment meted out to Ovid's neighbour at the racecourse. Not all candidates dealing with the racecourse poem perceived Ovid's essentially ulterior motives in his niceness to the girl in lifting her skirt or allowing her to put her head right against his chest.

Likewise, quite a few candidates saw poem 3.5 as a condemnation of the woman/cow's straying from her mate, without spotting that Ovid goes to some lengths to show how complacent, sleepy and lazy the bull was about keeping the relationship going. This is perhaps the lesson that Ovid drew from the augur's interpretation of the dream and seeing this might have made more candidates sympathetic to her plight and her need for greener pastures.

Perhaps through shortness of time, not many candidates discussed the last poem 3.14 in a more than superficial way.

There were quite a few mentions of the range of persona Ovid might be displaying in the four poems studied, though not many candidates really connected this to the question being asked, rather as though they sensed that a discussion of authorial persona would be a good thing but did not quite know what to make of it.

A little more challenging or deeper thinking about Ovid's motives towards women in all these poems would rarely have come amiss.

F363 Latin Verse

General comments

The examining team felt that the paper was of an appropriate level of difficulty with the scope for stretch and challenge at the top end while remaining accessible to the full ability range. The performance of candidates was generally good, with scores in the 90s not uncommon and few scoring lower than 40. The average raw mark (69.5) was very closely in line with the 2011 paper.

The questions on the set texts differentiated well. Candidates mostly found plenty to say on the Virgil and Catullus commentary questions, and the essay questions allowed them to demonstrate their knowledge of the rest of the prescription. The mark scheme was adapted to incorporate the valid alternative interpretation of the Virgil question by some candidates.

As in previous years, many candidates found the Ovid passage difficult, and there were perhaps fewer opportunities than in previous years for stronger candidates to demonstrate flair in improving on the literal. Even so, few seemed entirely defeated by the difficulty of the Latin.

Once again, many chose to answer the Ovid section before the set texts, a sensible way of managing the time available for the set text questions.

The vast majority of scripts were perfectly legible but the handwriting on a small number made it difficult for examiners to decipher them in places.

Comments on individual questions

Candidates appeared to be well-prepared on the two passages chosen for the commentary questions. The best answers shared the following:

- accurate knowledge of the text (some Virgilians got off to a bad start on *iactanti* by saying that the storm was hurling everything around, and on the Catullus question a surprising number thought that Attis, not the Sun, ended up in the arms of Pasithea)
- the use of quotation to show that the candidate knew what the text meant
- accurate use of technical terms
- an appreciation of the *sound* of the Latin (especially the marked alliteration with which Virgil describes the storm and the breathless Galliambic metre which Catullus uses for the Attis poem)

Answers on the essay questions tended to be less strong, either because they omitted key points (e.g. the meeting between Aeneas and Venus in Aeneid 1, or Catullus Poem 8) or because they diverted from the question set onto a topic with which the candidate felt more comfortable.

Section A: Virgil

Question 1

- (a) Candidates were almost always well-prepared on this passage and were able to make plenty of points to show how Virgil makes the description of the storm a vivid one. Better answers commented on the sound of the Latin as well as the choice of words, and it was nice to see that some had been taught to appreciate the metrical effect of phrases like *insequitur cumulo praeruptus aquae mons*.

- (b) The majority of candidates answered the question as expected, and were able to discuss how skilfully Virgil characterises his gods in Aeneid 1. Many brought out well the touching relationship between Jupiter and Venus in the printed passage, the anger of Juno, and the subtlety of Virgil's characterisation of Venus (there were some perceptive thoughts on the ambiguity of the scene in which Venus meets Aeneas in disguise). Some very good responses also found relevant things to say about Aeolus and Neptune. The significant minority did take the question to mean 'how skilful are the gods?' and this interpretation of the question was also allowed. The best of the responses which took this approach concentrated on Juno's unsubtle bribery of Aeolus, the passion of Venus' appeal to Jupiter (with its combination of daughterly cunning and high rhetoric) and the ways in which both goddesses attempt to manipulate events to secure their desired outcome for Carthage/Rome.

Section A: Catullus

Question 2

- (a) Candidates found plenty to say here. The better answers commented on the sound and metre as well as the meaning of the words, and the symbolism of the description of the sun bringing light, clarity and self-realisation to Attis. There were some perceptive comments on the purifying sense of *lustravit*, but a surprising number seemed to have been taught that it was Attis who was received in the arms of Pasithea, rather than the Sun, her husband.
- (b) Though most were able to discuss the feelings of anger, bitterness and regret in the passage printed from Poem 11, discussion of emotion elsewhere in the prescription was often less successful. Some candidates referred to relevant poems but simply concluded 'this is very emotional' without exploring what the emotions were. Others concentrated exclusively on the Lesbia poems without considering what other poems had to say about (for example) happiness and friendship. Relatively few thought to comment on the Attis poem. It was not uncommon to sidestep the question by arguing that the expression of human emotion is not the best feature of Catullus' poetry and discussing instead his use of wit, humour and sophistication (last year's question!). This was a valid approach as long as the point was cogently argued - too often, however, the impression was given that candidates were unable to engage with the question and preferred to move onto the safer ground of an essay they had prepared on a different theme.

Section B: Ovid unseen translation, comprehension and appreciation

Question 1

One or two of the examiners thought that the Ovid passage was less accessible than in 2011, and some concern was expressed about the subject matter and level of difficulty. In fact, on closer inspection, candidates seemed to find relatively few difficulties on the comprehension questions and coped rather better with the most difficult parts of the section for translation than last year's cohort had done on the Arion passage. When they struggled, it was usually because of lack of vocabulary (e.g. *auctus*, *fertur*, *implent*, *undique*, *prosiliunt*) and an insufficient grasp of grammar. One of the reasons for the choice of the passage was the final couplet, which is simple enough in construction once the word order has been grasped (*una dies miserat omnes Fabios ad bellum ...*) and offered the chance for candidates to consider how to reproduce in English the typically Ovidian chiasmus/balance in the Latin. It was a surprise that many were simply unable to construe the sentence, with some taking *miserat* as something to do with being 'miserable'.

- (a)(i) Most understood *destrictis ensibus* but a surprising number missed the force of the *per* - the Fabii went through the Etruscan line. Some, perhaps expecting an Ovid passage to be about fields rather than battle-lines, wrongly took *agmen* as *ager*.
- (a)(ii) Though some did not know the meaning of *valido* (a GCSE word), most understood that the phrase *valido Marte* was saying something about the strength of the Fabii's attack, or perhaps the presence of Mars with them on their side. A variety of answers was accepted.
- (b)(i) The vast majority realised that the Fabii were being compared to lions, though some thought the comparison was with Libyans and therefore struggled with the next question.
- (b)(ii) Answers tended to be over-brief here and many could only make one point rather than two. Nothing too sophisticated was required, but to win two marks it needed to be clear how the details of the simile (e.g. fierce lions attacking scattered flocks) related to the battle (e.g. a small group of rampant Fabii attacking a larger force of scattered or unprepared Etruscans).
- (c) This question was answered well. The most popular points were the emphatic position of *diffugiunt*, the vivid choice and word order of *Tusco sanguine terra rubet*, and the anaphora of *sic iterum*, *sic saepe* to suggest the Etruscans falling one after another.
- (d) This caused little difficulty.
- (e) This question was less well done. Not all knew the meaning of *colles* (the edges of the plain were surrounded by hills) and some thought that the Etruscans were preparing to use wild beasts in the battle (the point was the woods were thick enough for wild beasts to hide in and therefore a good place for the Etruscans to hide too).
- (f) As in previous years, the scansion question was answered well and examiners hoped that candidates used the quantities to help them with the Latin of the following question. The commonest errors were on *in medio* (which often meant that candidates struggled with the feet divisions for the rest of the hexameter) and *relinquunt* (many scanned it as if it had four syllables). There were fewer difficulties with the pentameter. Most seemed to have been well prepared for the task.
- (g) *paucos armenta que rara relinquunt* ('they left a few men and scattered cattle'): inattention to terminations and the force of *-que* meant that many wrote 'a few cattle', thus losing a mark for the omission of men. Those who took *rara* as 'rare' or 'precious' also failed to win the mark. Although one suspected that not everyone understood the sense of *abdita* or the case of *turba*, most scored a mark for the idea that the rest of the men hid in the trees.
- (h) In the first sentence of the section for translation, few realised that *torrens* must mean 'torrent' or 'river'. Those who took it as a participle tended to take *auctus* as a noun. Some who knew that it came from *augeo* were bold enough to take it as 'swollen' (precisely the right word in the context) and there were some successful attempts to communicate the sense of *undis pluvialibus* (simply 'rain water' was as good as anything). The case and meaning of *victa* caused problems (scansion would have shown that it is nominative) but a pleasing number understood that the snow had been 'overcome', i.e. 'melted'. The best responses were along the lines of 'Look! It was just as if a river, swollen by rain water, or snow, which flows after it has been melted by the warm west wind ...'.

The next couplet (*per sata perque vias fertur nec, ut ante solebat, riparum clausas margine finit aquas*) was perhaps the hardest section of the passage but often handled well by those who realised that *fertur* means 'is carried' here (rather than 'it is said') and those who got the *nec* in the right place. There were some sensible attempts to show the sense of *clausas*. Some were therefore able to produce something as good as '... (a

torrent) is carried through crops and paths, and does not, as it used to before, keep its water enclosed by the edges of the riverbanks’.

In the next couplet, the Principal Examiner had hoped that the prefix *dis-* and the sense of *curro/cursus* would help candidates to understand the word *discursibus*. This was not always the case, however. Those who got the sense that the Fabii ran down into the valley in broad swathes were rewarded more fully than those who thought that the Fabii filled the valley with wide-ranging discussions or broad curses. The meaning of *sternunt* was not well-known, and *alter* caused predictable problems given the obscurity of Ovid’s point (presumably that they had no other fear in them, i.e. they did not suspect that they were about to be ambushed).

fraude perit virtus: most, but by no means all, got this and some successfully improved on the literal. The rest of the sentence was less well handled - *prosiliunt* was not always known and *hostes* was sometimes taken as the object.

The last couplet was a good test of basic grammar. It required candidates to see that *una dies* was nominative and the subject of *miserat*. Sadly, many missed this and were forced to take *una dies* as ablative. *miserat* was sometimes translated very poorly. The best responses made an effort to preserve the chiasmus of the original, e.g. ‘one day had sent all the Fabii to war; those who had been sent to war were destroyed by one day.’

Summary

Examiners’ disappointment that many otherwise good candidates increasingly seem to lack the vocabulary and grammatical knowledge to cope with an Ovid unseen was, as last year, tempered by their pleasure at reading some excellent work on the Virgil and Catullus questions. Candidates and their teachers are therefore to be congratulated. As the current prescriptions have now reached the end of their three-year shelf life, examiners look forward to similar work on Aeneid 4 and Propertius 3 next summer.

F364 Latin Prose

General comments

Once again Tacitus was by far the more popular prose text, offered by well over 90% of candidates. For Section B, approximately two thirds of candidates selected the Comprehension/ Unseen Translation, and there was inevitably a much wider range of performance here than amongst the Prose Composition candidates.

The paper proved to be a very good test of candidates' abilities - part of its demand lying in time-management between the various sections. The two hours available seemed about right for the majority of candidates, except for those who became so engrossed in answering Question 1 or 2 that they left themselves insufficient time to explore the Language section thoroughly. Perhaps those who tackled the paper in reverse had the right idea as, with Q3 or Q4 in the bank, they were then free to devote whatever time they had left to their two literary essays.

Comments on individual questions

Section A: general comments

Candidates were generally very well prepared and showed a high level of engagement with whichever text they had studied. Their paramount consideration for their responses should be to address the specific question set, selecting from the material to build up a case rather than allowing the material itself to dictate the shape and length of the analysis.

Approaches to actually constructing answers swung between working methodically through the passage item-by-item and picking out material according to type: both could work successfully, given a strict enough focus on the target of the question itself and a satisfactory range over the passage as a whole. Devoting a few minutes to prioritising the best material from all over the passage to answer the question set was often time well spent. The danger of working through the passage in order 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 was often unnecessary length, even to the extent of running out of time in a frantic effort to complete such an exhaustive exercise across the whole passage. The average length of responses was perhaps 3 sides of average-size handwriting: some of the best were wonderfully succinct, totally focused responses of around two pages. At the other extreme Examiners were occasionally treated to exceedingly brief answers of less than one side, which inevitably could do justice neither to the question nor to the large amount of material available in the passage.

In general candidates who base the majority of their points on something specific in the text are more likely to produce a better and more focused answer for any question than those who work almost exclusively via recollections of an English translation or paraphrase. As mentioned 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 which properly match the comments being made about them. 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 essential if the candidate is trying to discuss features of an author's style.

Question 1: Tacitus

- (a) *What makes this such a powerful and memorable passage?*

Candidates generally showed familiarity with this passage. The contrast between a drunken, devil-may-care Nero and a knowing, manipulative Agrippina was often well brought out - even when details such as the agreement of *temulento* went astray. The best responses were those which stated clearly what it is that contributes to the drama and power of the narrative without following the passage too slavishly, and showed sensitivity to linguistic features such as the juxtaposition of *incalesceret* with *offeret* or the suggestive vocabulary such as *incalesceret* and *ardore*. Here, as elsewhere, weaker responses made too much of tiny details of little relevance to the question and found significance in alliteration and assonance in the most unlikely places. It was disappointing that the chance to see how Tacitus uses his sources rarely registered as one of the most significant aspects of the passage - few getting beyond the simple notion that quoting two sources (only to dismiss one) somehow proves higher skill as an historian. Similarly, though many mentioned Agrippina's involvement *annis puellaribus* with Lepidus and Pallas, few bothered to give any background details about these names, and the word *exercita* was hardly ever picked out as especially pejorative.

- (b) *In what ways does Tacitus' language create negative impressions of Agrippina, Nero and the senators?*

It was evident that some candidates did not know this passage very well and/or had not left themselves enough time to do justice to this section of the paper. A more prevalent weakness was failure to deal with the *whole* question - whether the emphasis on Tacitus' *language* or the need to refer to Nero, Agrippina and the senators. The last of these was often scarcely addressed at all, and many did not appreciate the relevance here of Seneca's authorship of Nero's *confessio* or the fact that the phrase *miro certamine procerum* cast aspersions on this group. The tone of contempt with which Tacitus reports Nero's letter was generally well grasped, as was the significance of the author breaking into his own voice to refute it: weaker responses however, seemed confused regarding exactly who was the speaker and seemed to take Nero's flamboyant words as Tacitus' own opinion. Candidates generally understood the thrust of the rhetorical questions in the middle, but there were some disconcerting mismatches between the concepts and the Latin quoted to illustrate them. Common faults were to render *crimina* as 'crimes' or to say that the phrase *iacturasque in feminae verba praetorias cohortes* means that the soldiers had actually sworn an oath to a woman. Finally, the Examiners would like to enter a plea for the term 'tricolon' to be used appropriately, rather than being applied routinely to any and every group of three words, people, or phrases.

Question 2: Livy

The small proportion of candidates who answered on Livy generally produced answers of a good to high standard.

- (a) *How does Livy make the most of this dramatic episode?*

Most candidates had a good grasp of Pacuvius' manipulation of the people. There was a tendency to concentrate rather too much on the first half of the passage, whereas the most successful answers 'made the most' of the gradual wearing down of the people in the second half - including their capitulation in the last sentence. Examiners noted some impressive analysis of Pacuvius' rhetoric - the quiet irony of *video quae de hoc sententia sit*, the imperatives reminding us of who is really in charge, and the wheedling tautologies *malo atque improbo* and *bonum et iustum*. Some highlighted the sense of a 'done deal'

that Livy creates throughout, and a few sensitively picked up echoes of Livy's earlier description of Pacuvius himself.

- (b) *How does Livy make this passage persuasive?*

Candidates generally had no trouble locating 'persuasive' material in this passage to talk about, while a few showed scepticism towards even an ancient politician's words in comments regarding how specious and unpersuasive they found the speech, taken as a whole. Most dealt with the 'Italians v. barbarians' concept thoroughly and the shocking images of bridges made out of human remains and even cannibalism were hard to forget, though only the best responses provided a fully systematic analysis of the other alleged negative characteristics of the Carthaginians. There was general appreciation of many of the rhetorical features of the speech - for instance, the effect of the repeated *quod*, and the leitmotif 'we're all in this together' sounded throughout the speech in assertions such as such as *civitatem nostrum magnaie parti vestrum dedimus communicavimusque vobiscum*.

Section B:

Question 3: Unprepared Translation and Comprehension

Candidates generally seemed to find this passage of Caesar more accessible than the equivalent last year. Virtually all got off to a good start and had formed a good working grasp of the storyline by the time the passage became more challenging.

- (a) Most coped well with the translation, solid performances being the norm on at least the first half. There was frequent confusion of singular and plural - storms, this place, the river, great difficulty, for example - which usually caused little damage in isolation but could lead to confusion later in the story. The word *ambos* was not known by many, being widely interpreted as having something to do with walking or footbridges, and the phrase *uno die* caused some confusion when it was not clear whether the bridges were built or destroyed in one day. The sentence *cum enim castra ... continebantur* was sometimes mis-translated e.g. *cum* being inappropriately rendered as 'when', *castra* becoming 'two camps between the rivers', neutrum taken as 'no-one' with the infinitive *transiri* made active, and *continebantur* fitted in as 'continued'. The last sentence posed several real challenges. Many failed to realise that the infinitive *supportare* is picked up by *poterant* at the end; 'citizens' (*civitates*) were often being 'summoned' (*accesserant*) by Caesar to produce corn; *longius* often referred to time rather than distance; the past participle passive *interclusi* might be forced into agreement with *fluminibus*; and the present passive infinitive *reverti* was frequently omitted or made active.

It was pleasing to see many candidates thinking about idiomatic English to replace more literal versions. Though only a small number maintained sufficient overall fluency to gain the 2 marks available for this, many did enough to deserve 1 with simple individual improvements such as 'higher' for *maiores*, 'melted' for *solvit*, or 'this event' for *quae res*.

- (b) The majority of candidates had little difficulty here in finding appropriate factual material. Reference to stylistic features, however, often seemed accidental rather than a deliberate choice and there was a tendency for candidates to pick on an incomplete phrase, translate it (sometimes rather roughly) then assert that this showed Afranius' superiority in supplies. Some of the best responses however made a precise selection of three Latin quotations, at least one of which featured something of interest stylistically, and explained clearly how their examples emphasised the differences between the situations of the two commanders.

- (c) Most candidates correctly indentified the size of the river as one of Caesar's problems, but many were unable - to sort out the rest of the sentence. Some were unable to work out the meaning of *adversariorum*, and this - together with the sense of *patiebantur* required here - led to results such as Caesar's cohorts suffering while standing on the opposite bank.
- (d) These superficially easy grammatical questions yield a wide range of results, and surprisingly few candidates achieve full marks here. Even some very competent translators seem to be confused by the grammatical terminology. A perfectly acceptable way of demonstrating understanding here is to offer a translation of the relevant phrase (as indicated in the mark-scheme), possibly in addition to categorising case usages, etc. Examiners were left unconvinced by the vagueness of answers such as '*fluminis*; partitive genitive' or mixed messages such as '*facultates* is the object of the verb *praebebant*: it must therefore be nominative'.
- (e) Many candidates tackled this question with apparent ease.
- (f) Many candidates proved unable to secure these two marks. Surprisingly perhaps, *dispono* appeared correctly more often than the e stem in *provideo*, but all sorts of guesses were commonplace - as was no response.

Question 4: Prose Composition

Candidates for this option generally seemed to know the basic grammatical principles well, even if they couldn't quite produce every word-formation correctly. Although examiners saw few completely accurate versions, there were also very few poor attempts and almost everyone was able to introduce sufficient touches of good Latin idiom to earn a decent proportion of the 10 bonus marks available.

Conspicuous syntactical faults included:

cases for time phrases ('for two years');

mille: not regarded as a noun, with a plural (*milia*), and requiring the genitive after it;

use of *post* for *postquam* ('After Spartacus told his men ...');

overuse of ablative absolutes, even when this leads to severe contortion:

(e.g. some who tried to amalgamate the whole of the first three sentences in this way) or is technically impossible (e.g. in the final sentence, if 'they' = the comrades who were crucified);

failure to apply the appropriate sequence of tenses in subjunctive constructions (e.g. the imperfect needed in 'Spartacus told his men to climb down', the perfect preferable in 'so off their guard that their camp was quickly captured');

haziness regarding which constructions actually require the subjunctive in Latin:

e.g. 'they set out to punish the Romans'; also after *cum* ('When Crassus asked ...') and for the indirect question '... which of them was Spartacus'. On the other hand, 'everyone believed that they had been punished' was sometimes given subjunctive treatment.

Candidates' working knowledge of vocabulary was generally good and, where it was apparent that they had guessed at meaning, gave rise to some ingenious solutions.

Though much of the passage fell into Latin fairly readily, several phrases (e.g. 'They summoned other slaves to join them', or 'because they had been mistreated') posed significant challenges which only the very best responses were able to render convincingly. In a tight corner, it is generally better to think about the underlying sense and make up a plausible periphrasis than to attempt a word-for-word rendering of the English. For example, 'the Romans were off their guard' might reasonably be turned into 'the Romans guarded their camp so badly that it was quickly captured' or 'the Romans were so badly prepared that ...'.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

Education and Learning

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations
is a Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England
Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU
Registered Company Number: 3484466
OCR is an exempt Charity

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
Head office
Telephone: 01223 552552
Facsimile: 01223 552553

© OCR 2012

