

Classics: Latin

Advanced GCE H439

Advanced Subsidiary GCE H039

Examiners' Reports

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Chief Examiner's Report

This year saw a pleasing increase in entry numbers in both AS units, and a smaller but nonetheless welcome increase at A2. Over 500 candidates re-sat Unit F361; once the tighter marking standard on this unit is taken into account (see below), these resit candidates improved their performance on average by several marks.

The overall standard of attainment was again very high at both levels, reflecting the considerable efforts made by candidates to learn the prescribed material and to prepare themselves for these examinations.

Examiners are of the opinion that, while both AS units are securely within the grasp of a large majority of candidates, the same cannot be said of the A2 units. Many candidates are not showing evidence of a further year's language learning and practice; the disparity of their language and literature attainment suggests that perhaps too high a proportion of their time and energy had been devoted to the prescribed texts, at the expense of increasing their ability to handle unprepared Latin. Centres are reminded that in a further year of study after AS, it is not unreasonable to expect candidates to improve their vocabulary knowledge substantially beyond that required for AS. Since there is no prescribed vocabulary list for A2, attention should also be given to developing the skill of intelligently guessing the meanings of unfamiliar words. An important part of improving translation skills also involves reading substantial extracts from the works of the author prescribed for unprepared translation and comprehension: only thus can candidates become familiar with the appropriate subject-matter, literary style (including word-order), idiom and typical vocabulary. Another reasonable expectation is that, by the end of their advanced-level study, candidates should possess a thorough grasp of grammar, so that they can deploy rational analysis rather than unfocused guesswork to help them to access the meaning of a Latin sentence.

Performance on the literature was generally very good. Where candidates scored lower marks than they might have expected, it was usually because of their failure to decode the question rather than because of ignorance of the text. It is discouraging to read detailed, knowledgeable responses that do not fully address the question and so receive lower marks than the candidates are capable of achieving. The Principal Examiners offer cogent advice on this issue in their individual reports.

Centres are reminded that both A2 units are required to contain sufficiently testing questions to meet the criteria of 'stretch and challenge'. This is achieved, at least in part, by setting literature questions that require candidates to think carefully about the material they have studied and to plan an appropriate response, rather than relying on a prepared response of a generic nature which may be quite inappropriate to a particular question.

The above comments, focusing as they do on weaknesses, should be read alongside the more positive comments in the individual reports that follow. All have been impressed by the overall level of knowledge and ability shown by the candidature, and centres are to be congratulated on helping their students to reach this level.

F361 Latin Language

General comments

The overall standard of this year's entry was once again very high, with only a very small percentage of candidates showing a poor knowledge of the defined vocabulary, though there were some severe gaps in the knowledge of certain types of words and some constructions. Once again the percentage offering Question 3 instead of Question 2 was between 10 and 15 per cent.

In 2010 substantial numbers of candidates gained full marks on this unit and, while this was impressive, this year efforts were made to tighten the Mark Scheme a little, in order to improve differentiation. Whereas previously errors of number were always regarded as minor, this year, where the number was particularly important, such errors were regarded as major. All omissions of words, apart from basic conjunctions, were treated as major errors. Errors of tense were considered minor if they involved a wrong past tense; otherwise they were counted as major. Even despite this adjustment, there were a good few candidates who scored 100 marks. As in previous years, the length and complexity of each section were taken into account when judging the seriousness of errors and the proportion of sense.

The most obvious weakness in translations, apparent in at least two-thirds of the scripts, was general confusion over pronouns and related words. These included *hic*, *ille*, *is* and *iste* in particular, especially but not only in the oblique cases, and to a lesser extent *tot*, *qui*, *se* and *suus*. The frequency of appearance of these words in this year's unseen had a severe effect on many candidates' marks. Many candidates, as so often previously, had difficulty with the pairs *dico* / *duco*, *possum* / *pono*, *tandem* / *tamen*, *maior* / *melior*, *forte* / *fortis*. Similarly recurrent errors were common with the words *imperator* and *legatus*. Fortunately for over half the candidates, it was decided that they could not be expected to have any knowledge of ancient history, and so they had to be allowed to believe with little penalty that Alexander the Great and Hannibal were Roman emperors. There was much confusion over the various uses of *ut*, whereas indirect statements, unfulfilled conditions and fearing clauses were usually well handled.

Comments on individual questions

Question 1

accidit ... esset: this was usually correctly translated, with the commonest error being ignorance of the locative case.

is ... caperetur: the pronoun *is* offered the first serious pitfall; very many candidates hedged their bets with 'Here, he...' It should be noted that the presence of an incorrect word along with the correct one will always count as a serious error; candidates should therefore be discouraged from adding words unnecessarily to their translations. Many did not recognise *tot*. The weakest candidates thought that *milia* was part of *miles*. A surprising number omitted *in bello*. The rest was handled well.

tandem ... vicit: this was done well, though *vix* was sometimes unknown.

forte ... Africanus: *Africanus* was often brave, and *legatos* were often commanders.

hic ... fuisse: the opening two pronouns wreaked havoc among all but the best candidates: 'here, when' were particularly common renderings. The predicative dative proved a good discriminator, with good candidates generally getting it the right way round, and weaker candidates attributing the hatred to the wrong person; pleasingly, however, nearly all handled the phrase *Hannibal ... erat* well enough to pick up no more than one major error. *Imperatorem* was usually 'emperor' (minor error), while *fuisse* was often treated as if *esse*.

Hannibal ... superavisset. is exercitu parvo was very frequently 'with his small army'. All but the very strongest candidates failed to render the superlative *plurimos*.

Africano ... poneret: to their credit, nearly all candidates did their best to bring out the oblique case of *Africano quaerenti*; most took it as an ablative absolute, which was accepted as close enough to the hoped-for indirect object. This section was usually handled well. Those who turned the dative participle into a main clause with only a comma to link it to the following one had this counted as a major error.

Hannibal ... conciliandi: the ablative absolute proved an excellent discriminator, with about half the candidates getting it fully correct; the commonest errors were 'many enemies having been defeated by his army/armies', which at least makes reasonable sense. *artem habebat homines conciliandi* was mostly handled well; the problem, however, was the addition of the pronoun *sibi*, which defeated at least half the candidates; 'his men' was the commonest version.

cum ... duceret: the first half caused few problems, but *quem tertium duceret* defeated three-quarters of the candidates, because many did not recognise *quem*, while the meaning 'consider' for *duco* (listed as such in the DVL) was unfamiliar to most. Nearly all knew *tertius*, however.

sine ... sum: the great majority of candidates translated this section correctly.

magno ... vicisses: many thought that *quid* could mean 'whom'. Many treated the past unfulfilled condition as if it had been present; had they done so they would have gained only a minor error, as the sense is little different here.

tum ... posuissem: half of the candidates tried 'I would have been able' for *me posuissem*, which generated further problems trying to fit the sense of the rest of the sentence around this. The polysyndeton troubled weaker candidates, who tried unsuccessfully to insert an inappropriate 'and' either before or after *me*.

hoc ... motus est: nearly all handled this very well. Treating *hoc responso* as an ablative absolute was accepted.

quod ... maiorem: the great majority grasped the sense of this, and only a few got it completely the wrong way round. Well over half thought that *maiorem* was the comparative of *bonus*; this counted as a minor error, as it made little difference to the sense. Many did not recognise the ablative of comparison, writing 'out of all' or similar.

Question 2

Verres ... auferendi: the frequent 'such' was accepted for *tanta*. A wide range of meanings was given for *incensus est*, provided they equated more or less to 'incited' these were all accepted; 'incensed' however was not (minor error). The gerunds were handled very well, with only a few insisting on the word 'must' appearing somewhere. The commonest error in this section was failure to recognise *vasa* as plural; this counted as a major error, because there was plenty of evidence that there were several vases. Any subsequent repetition of this error was ignored.

ut ... posceret: a surprising number of weaker candidates made *Diodorum* the subject; also there were a few who had no idea that English uses only the nominative forms of proper nouns. Nearly all identified the result clause, but only half could express this correctly in English: 'so that' counted as a minor error. *Ad se* caused some difficulties for weaker candidates.

ille ... reliquisse: *ille* was often guessed at: 'he replied to him' was not accepted. *Se vasa* was frequently 'his vases'. *Propinquum suum* was very often plural, probably because *apud* was thought of as belonging more naturally to a plural noun.

tum ... mittat: retention of the historic present was accepted; what was not accepted was switching from present to past or vice versa. Most recognised the accusative of goal of motion. 'Asked Diodorus so that...' was counted as a major error. The presence of *illum* and *suum* either side of *propinquum* defeated most candidates, who usually omitted one of them or, worse, took *suum* with *litteras*. 'Letters' (far more frequent than the correct singular) counted as a minor error, as being of little importance to the sense.

Diodorus ... scribit: only a handful of candidates recognised the causal use of *qui* with the subjunctive (the almost universal 'who wanted' counted as a minor error, because of the rarity of the construction). *Sua* was most often 'himself' (major error).

ut ... Lilybaeum: *iis qui* wreaked havoc among all but the very best candidates. The *ut* clause was usually mishandled: indirect command was looked for; purpose was accepted as well, but not result. The juxtaposition of *se* and *illud* also caused many difficulties. Although most recognised the indirect statement, most turned it into the passive: 'that silver had been sent'; here the omission of *se* counted as a major error (for omission of a word), as did the even worse 'his silver'.

Question 3

- (a) All knew one of the words for 'emperor'. It was pleasing to see a number of instances of *veritus est* alongside the more usual *timebat*. All knew the fearing construction. A few were unsure of the correct word for 'senate', and tried *senatores*, *patres* or even *curiam*, all of which were accepted. Most formed the imperfect subjunctive correctly; a few even gave a correct historic future subjunctive.
- (b) Half the candidates used *imperavit*, the other half *iussit*, the use of the latter with *ut* and the subjunctive, which appeared several times, was allowed, as being a Livian usage. Again most formed the imperfect subjunctive correctly, though a few thought *custodire* was a 1st conjugation verb.
- (c) Most used *igitur* and placed it first in the sentence, which was accepted. There was occasional confusion over the distinction between *tam* and *adeo*. Many pleasingly gave the perfect subjunctive in the result clause, though they sometimes misspelt the perfect stem of *discedere*. The commonest error in this sentence, surprisingly, was the handling of 'from the city', where half the candidates omitted the preposition and many of the rest gave *ex* with the accusative.
- (d) Various words were used for 'although', in nearly all cases followed by the correct mood. Most formed the superlative correctly. Many did not know the Latin word for 'no one' and had to try sometimes ingenious substitutes. A few tried *se* for 'them', which does not work. Many could not form a past indicative of *posse* correctly.

- (e) Those who attempted an ablative absolute for 'since few had been killed' sometimes threw marks away because they could not form ablative cases of the relevant words correctly. The indirect statement was handled successfully by the best, but most failed to make 'safe' agree with the accusative pronoun; eos was accepted instead of se as being theoretically possible.

Conclusion

Every effort was made at Standardisation to ensure that the marking standards applied to Questions 2 and 3 kept the two alternatives closely correlated, so that no candidate was disadvantaged by offering one rather than the other. Those candidates who had time to spare and attempted all three questions showed that they were capable of scoring just as highly on Question 3 as on the alternative.

F362 Latin Verse and Prose Literature

General comments

The Examiners are satisfied that this unit provided its candidates with questions of suitable difficulty and appropriate challenge. This was the final 'outing' for the two set texts prescribed, Cicero's First Catiline Oration and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* VIII. Most candidates found the questions accessible and understandable, and have clearly enjoyed handling these fine pieces of literature.

There were almost no examples this year of whole centres making identical mistakes in the translation questions; this is very reassuring. In the translation questions there were the usual and perhaps inevitable errors of omitted words, which will be mentioned in more detail in the question specific remarks below, but there were more numerous examples of perfectly accurate translation.

Recall of the 'storyline' of the texts was clearly firm in this group of candidates, whose answers to the comprehension questions were consistently achieving high, indeed full marks. Very few examples appeared this year of candidates offering 'style' discussion in what were content-based comprehension questions, and it was reassuring that such advice in previous reports had been observed.

Not so many candidates produced unfinished scripts this year, though there were some scripts in which there were clear signs of acceleration in the last question. The Ovid essay was sometimes a little foreshortened; yet not always where there had been very lengthy, or very accurate, answers to the preceding questions. But generally there was not a great difference between the marks scored on each author.

Fewer candidates than last year, but still a measurable number, were 'overanswering' those questions which required discussion of both content and style points. As with last year, all acceptable points which candidates made were rewarded, and it is possible, ideally only *in extremis*, to pick up one mark for a point made only in English, but the Examiners would wish to repeat their warning that trying to discuss more than the three or four Latin references asked for can be prejudicial to time management. Of course an answer containing no Latin reference at all can only achieve half the marks on offer at best.

The Examiners were frequently impressed with candidates' approaches to discussion of the stylistic aspects of the Latin. There were fewer bravura displays cataloguing technical terms and more grasp of how the stylistic or rhetorical points actually worked. There was still some confusion between assonance and alliteration in verse discussion, and some candidates have some quite imaginative views of the emotional, erotic or tonal effects of repeated consonants, but Cicero's use of commas has *almost* entirely disappeared as an attempted focus for discussion.

Not so many examples of scansion of the lines being discussed appeared this year. This may have been due to the nature of the questions and lines chosen, but it was welcome when observed, as it almost always indicates a high quality of thinking on the part of a candidate. In places candidates were still going beyond the lines asked for in their answers, especially on those questions which began their references at the second line of the passage rather than the first.

There was some looseness in references to the Latin, with rather vague quotation of the 'first word- three dots- last word' variety, who did not gain the mark for the Latin reference if they then discussed a word or phrase they had not actually quoted. There was also a surprisingly large

number whose answers indicated inaccurate grasp of the meaning of the Latin they quoted, or who gave no indication of the meaning at all, even implicitly. Less strong candidates might well be advised always to follow the 'quote- translate- discuss' formula to be 'on the safe side'. Failure to show clearly that a candidate knows the meaning of the Latin he or she is quoting is apt to lose them the mark for the reference.

The short essays were awarded quite a range of marks, but were often very well done indeed, with many candidates clearly knowing their texts well, and able to argue their points in a clear and well developed way. The standard errors of not going beyond the Latin printed in the passages on the paper and trying to re-shape other essays into the questions set did appear. A few candidates in the Ovid essay took their discussion into parts of *Metamorphoses* VIII not prescribed, sometimes at the expense of recall of important points from the parts which were. Centres might be advised to take care with this.

The Examiners would like to thank centres and candidates for all the fine teaching and learning that underpinned the work they have seen in these scripts.

Some points of Advice for Candidates:

These are much the same as they were for 2010, 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 too much over that number. Develop the habit of discussing only a few lines or sentences rather than a whole passage. 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 essay 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.
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.

Question Specific Remarks.

Section A Cicero

- a. This was generally well answered. *audacia* without *effrenata* was not thought to indicate sufficient excess and so received 1 mark out of 2. Some candidates erroneously discussed expressions in line 1 of the passage.
- b. Almost universally well and fully answered.
- c. Most candidates produced very complete and accurate translations of this passage; the loss of marks was chiefly for omission, as ever, and in dealing with prepared text such as this it is worth remembering that omission is effectively a major error. Most common errors were: omission of *constrictam* or *teneri*, confusion of *coniurationem* with *consilia*, omission of *iam*, and *omnium*, imagining that *egeris*, *fuertis* etc were imperfect rather than perfect, translation of *ubi fueris* as 'where you went to', and misconstruing *quem nostrum arbitraris*.

It was acceptable to translate the second and third sections in the more normal English order, with the main clause first.

Some Candidates treated the indirect questions as direct ones.

- d. This was generally well answered, with Candidates easily able to find sufficient Latin expressions to support their answers. There were many good expositions of the exclamation in *O tempora O mores* (Though 'tempura' battered its way onto a number of scripts.), and of the repetition of *vivit* with the shocked interrogative on the second time. The use of *immo vero* and the tricolon of outrageous things done by Catiline were also well understood. Some Candidates had not grasped the tone of *nos autem fortes viri*. Taking the phrase at its face value rather than ironically, they made harder work for themselves than they needed in arguing how it indicated Cicero's outrage.
- e. There were numerous fine answers here too. Again some candidates included discussion of line 1, which lay outside the question.

The anaphoras of *nemo* and *non* were well understood and discussed. A number of candidates lost marks in their answers to this question through not giving indications that they really knew the meaning of the Latin they quoted, however, merely stating that there were some rhetorical questions, sometimes giving the first and last words of the Latin. But there were also some fine discussions of *inusta*, *haeret* and *fama*.

The best candidates also spotted the power of the tricolon of references to the body and understood it well.

Some candidates saw intriguing meanings in the alliteration of the 'qu-' in the interrogative pronouns introducing the rhetorical questions. Discussion of the anaphora of those pronouns and the tricolon effects would have been more effective.

- f. This was generally well understood and answered. A paraphrase of lines 11-12, *nonne cumulasti* was deemed acceptable even without the hint of the murder of the son.

- g. Many fine answers to this question appeared. Those that did not achieve the highest levels of marks tended either to confine their discussions to the Latin passages on the paper (in a few cases not dealing even with much material from those) or to provide a paraphrase of the speech with 'and so this is a brutal demolition of Catiline' inserted every so often. This was not a good way to be rewarded for the development of the argument.

Those who were awarded marks at the highest level showed that they understood the substructure of the question and discussed how Cicero showed:

- that Catiline's outward appearance of power and threat had been broken by Cicero's skilful intelligence work
- that Catiline was an appalling person and his fellow conspirators were no or little better,
- that Catiline was treacherous, unpatriotic and sacrilegious as well as murderous and criminal
- that he posed an even greater threat to the state than well known historical precedents (some Candidates even used the phrase *a fortiori* well in this part of their discussion.)

Some were also keen to show they could define 'brutal' and supported their argument well both with text reference and with the point that Cicero was working on flimsy evidence in places.

On the other hand, some took a perhaps too balanced approach and suggested that when Cicero offered to be kind and gentle to Catiline, he meant it, which rather misses the irony in some parts of the speech.

Section B Ovid

- a. (i) Generally very well answered. There were some thoughtful explanations of what *sonus inhaesit* actually might have meant in reality.
(ii) A surprising number of Candidates offered no mention of *illuc ascendere*
- b. As ever, the chief errors were omissions, the commonest being:
quoque, saepe, ex illa in the first section
iam or *-que*, (or both), *procerum* and *quoque* in the second section
etiam, nosse in the third section

There were more references than one might have wished to the 'European leader' in that section too, and in that couplet *faciem* was not infrequently read as *nomen*.

1.
c. This was a question where Candidates proved oddly prone to omit mention of the meanings of the Latin expressions they used to support their answers. Minos was deemed handsome *seu caput abdiderat cristata casside pennis*, for instance without any reference to the meaning, or Scylla just admired his *torserat adductis hastilia lenta lacertis*.

The comparison to Phoebus was sometimes really too scantily discussed. 'Sic Phoebus, she thinks he's a god' appearing at times.

The alliteration of 'l' in line 16 was given an erotic power without much discussion in some candidates' answers, though there was often sound discussion of the breathily passionate sibilance helping the meaning and context of line 18. Candidates might be encouraged to think about what tone they impute to alliteration and assonance a little more thoughtfully. It may be useful to encourage Candidates to include 'perhaps' in their assessments of the effects and tone of alliterations and other sound or rhythmic effects.

Nonetheless the best answers showed focussed grasp of the meaning en route to well thought out discussions of Scylla's infatuation and some included the adverb 'humorously' in dealing with the 'how' of the question, and supported that idea sensibly too.

- d. Here too there were more examples than the Examiners would have liked, of Latin references without much indication of knowledge of what they meant, and of rather loose focus in quotation.

The repetition of '*quo fugis?*' was usually very well discussed, but some candidates gave perhaps a little too much space to discussion of *exclamat* when there were more useful points to be made.

There were fine discussions of the word order and alliteration of line 2, the use of *immitis* (though again quite often quoted as a vital word but without a statement, or at least an accurate statement, of what it meant), and the use of *et scelus et meritum*.

Some of the most unfocused quotation came in discussion of lines 5-6. Admittedly there is a lot that could be said about this sentence in terms of its anaphora of *nec*, the tricolon of things which failed to move Minos and the effectively intertwined word order of *spes omnis in unum te mea congesta est*, but those points were made best when individual Latin phrases were commented on (rather than offering *nec te.....est* or just references to line numbers), and when sound indications of meaning were given too.

- e. This was very well answered indeed, with Candidates easily finding their 3 points. As in last year's essay question, however, there were a number of candidates who thought that Scylla had killed her father.
- f. Candidates who were not awarded the highest marks on this question tended to focus only on the passages printed, an admittedly fair quarry for points but not fair enough for the highest levels, or they paraphrased the storyline and inserted 'so here Ovid keeps his readers' interests' at intervals.

Better answers here tended to be 'thematic' discussing

- the setting of scenes to arouse interest
- the depiction and development of character
- the evoking of emotions, especially in the story of Daedalus and Icarus
- the use of suspense to encourage the reader to go on
- the intriguing threads that bound the stories together. This theme appeared in rather fewer answers than the Examiners might have anticipated
- use of style and rhetoric, and so on.

Candidates with this approach were often well able to point out *why* each of those ideas would keep a reader interested.

There were many candidates who clearly knew the texts in considerable detail and alluded to several moments in the text for each discussion point they made.

F363 Latin Verse

General comments

Examiners generally felt that the paper was of an appropriate level of difficulty which succeeded in stretching the very best ('stretch and challenge') while remaining sufficiently accessible to less strong candidates. The performance of candidates was good on the whole, with relatively few really outstanding or really weak scores. The average mark for each section was very closely in line with the 2010 paper.

As last year, Virgil was marginally the preferred set text author over Catullus - the questions on the set authors, though different in demand, produced comparable scores.

The Ovid unseen passage proved a stiff test, though very few candidates failed to make any sense of it at all. On the more complex couplets, only those with a wide vocabulary and secure grammar knowledge scored highly. Many chose to answer the Ovid section before the set texts, a sensible way of managing the time available for the set text questions.

Comments on individual questions

There was some outstanding work on the set texts. The best answers on the commentary questions shared the following:

- accurate knowledge of the text (all too often a phrase like *alta theatris fundamenta* was incorrectly taken by less strong candidates as 'foundations for high theatres')
- the use of quotation to show that the candidate knew what the text means
- accurate use of technical terms - though these are not always necessary, if candidates are going to use technical terms then they should use them correctly (i.e. spelt correctly). At this level it is surprising to encounter the word 'similie' (sic) so often
- the ability to discuss the *point* of a rhetorical feature - weaker answers are often mere lists of rhetorical features without being related to the wording of the question (alliteration of 't' does not necessarily make a line 'vivid' or 'memorable!'), thus scoring well on Assessment Objective 1 (AO1) but less well on Objective 2 (AO2).

Answers on the essay questions were generally less strong. The best spent perhaps little more than three quarters of a side of A4 discussing the printed passage before moving on to discuss the prescription as a whole, on which they maintained a sharp focus on the question. Many candidates, however, maintained the age-old tradition of trying to weave one of their prepared essays into an essay with a different title. Virgilians were more often the offenders in this respect - many found their way onto the *pietas* of Aeneas or, perhaps with greater relevance, the role of Fate. On the plus side, this year's essays showed a better balance between discussion of the passage and the rest of the prescription.

Section A: Virgil

- 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 picture of Carthage a vivid one. The usual method of answering was to go through the passage line by line, but some candidates focused on each of the three parts of the question separately and produced some excellent answers. Discussion of the bee simile was often disappointing, however, as many concentrated on its literary features (e.g. the wonderful alliteration in lines 12-13) without relating it to the question ('the activity of the Carthaginians'). When teaching Virgilian similes it is all too easy to explore the poetry without leaving students with a

clear idea of the basic point of comparison. In this case, relatively few candidates talked about the frenzied activity of the Carthaginians/bees (*exercet sub sole labor ... fervet opus*).

- 1(b) At this level, candidates are expected to pause for thought before launching into their essay. Those who failed to do so tended to concentrate on anything to do with the greatness of Rome and scored less well than more thoughtful candidates who tackled the half of the question relating to the degree of optimism in Aeneid 1 as a whole. Though it was possible to win full marks by arguing that the tone is optimistic throughout (e.g. that there is no doubt that Aeneas will succeed because the events predicted by Jupiter were mostly already history to Virgil's audience) but the best answers explored some of the darker moments of the book: Aeneas' suffering, his despair during the storm, his private feelings of despair when making his encouraging speech to his men, the opposition of Juno, *tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem* etc.). On the essay, limited quotation in Latin is welcome but not required; certainly required is detailed reference to the events of the rest of the book. Centres are reminded that knowledge of the *whole* of the book is prescribed (i.e. lines not set for study in Latin should be studied in English translation). Comments on the printed passage were largely strong, though the sloppy misidentification of the tenses of *pono* and *dedi* was common and tended to distort the candidates' point (the perfect tense of *dedi* is significant - Austin has a good note on it).

Section A: Catullus

- 2(a) There were some excellent answers to the question on this intriguing poem. Most were able to discuss in detail the lively personification of the boat and many were also able to pick out how Catullus brings life to the places it had visited through the use of names, adjectives and apostrophe. The best also discussed the structure of the poem (retirement - earlier life - birth - later life - retirement), the relationship between the boat and its master, and the lively use of iambic metre.
- 2(b) Candidates were mostly well able to discuss the humour of Poem 13 and other poems, but were less impressive when responding to the prompt-word 'sophistication' in the title. Some talked of Catullus himself rather than his poetry. Some, reasonably enough given the title ('to what extent ...'), argued that many of his poems are *not* humorous or sophisticated before reproducing what read like prepared essays on Catullus as a love poet. Some were clearly disappointed not to have a question on the Attis poem but wrote about it anyway (unconvincingly) as a poem with some funny moments in it. The best candidates who understood better what makes Catullus a sophisticated poet were able to relate the Attis poem more directly to the wording of the question. Background knowledge about Catullus as a poet was sometimes relevant, though occasionally candidates were so desperate to write everything they knew about the neoterics and the fact that Catullus was a *novi poetae* (sic) that they did not leave themselves time for much else.

Section B: Ovid unseen translation, comprehension and appreciation

As expected, candidates scored more highly on the section set for comprehension and appreciation than on the translation. On the translation, those who lacked knowledge of terminations struggled to construe the more difficult couplets and resorted to using their vocabulary knowledge to put together a basic paraphrase of what seemed to be going on in the story.

- (a)(i) Most answered this correctly, although some were confused by the meaning of the word *tellus* or the word order *quae nescit Ariona tellus* (or both). Despite the clear guidance of the introduction, some thought that no one had heard of Arion.

- (a)(ii) This should have been a straightforward sentence with an easy main verb, an obvious accusative (*aquas*) with a participle (*currentes*) clearly agreeing with it, and a noun in the ablative (*carmine*). Many, however, described his poetry as being like running water or did not grasp what Ovid means by saying that Arion 'held' (i.e. controlled) the waters. A couple of charioteers cropped up too.
- (b)(i) Problems were caused here by the dislocation of *est* from *retentus* and the verb *restitit*, which was often taken as 'resisted', usually with fatal consequences for the sense. The best answers not only translated the lines correctly but gave a brief overall comment on Arion's ability to alter the normal course of nature.
- (b)(ii) Candidates who have read a fair amount of Ovid in preparation for this paper should be used to the sort of balance and contrast in these lines. Many commented intelligently on the anaphora of *saepe*, the chiasmus of case endings in *agnam lupus ... agna lupum* and the contrast of the participle *sequens* and *fugiens*.
- (c) The question required discussion of Ovid's choice of words. Some chose instead to discuss the position of *captaque erat* without showing what it meant or why *capere* was an effective choice of word. Many sensibly picked out *impleverat* and translated it correctly, though there was a fair amount of confusion from candidates who knew what an *impluvium* was and thought that Arion's poems were raining down on the cities of Sicily.
- (d) As last year, the scansion question was answered well and there was some evidence that centres' teaching of scansion allows candidates to make informed comments on metre elsewhere on the paper. For example, the correct identification of the long syllables of *infelix* coming after the first foot dactyl *forsitan* allowed candidates to refer to it in their answer to (e) by saying that not only is the word emphatic but its meaning is emphasised by the movement of the line. This is exactly what the paper setter had hoped.
- (e) Most commented on *infelix* but many struggled to find a second point. The best commented on Ovid's use of apostrophe and realised that we do not pity Arion because he was afraid of the sea, but because he did not realise that it was in fact safer than his own ship.
- (f) It had been hoped that the phrases *destricto ense*, *cetera turba* and *armata manu* would give candidates easy marks here, but not all succeeded.
- (g) The unseen translation of Latin verse is admittedly hard - this passage was no different from others in requiring thorough analysis of word terminations (e.g. the ability to match adjectives with nouns).

In the first sentence, *pavidus* was often not known but Examiners allowed a wide variety of methods of showing how scared Arion was ('shaking with fear' was the best). There were good translations of *liceat* (e.g. 'but may I be allowed ...?') but *sumpta* was often omitted or translated over-literally as 'with my having been taken up lyre'. What Examiners wanted was something like 'but let me take up my lyre and play a few songs'. This is the sort of thing that wins the two bonus marks for improvement on a literal translation.

In the next sentence, *veniam* was often not known, *moram* was taken as 'death' or 'custom' and *tuos* was taken as 'you' rather than with *crines*. Translations such as 'they gave him what he asked for' were accepted for *dant veniam*.

The next two couplets defeated all but the best:

protinus in medias ornatus desilit undas: *ornatus* (here = 'having put on his crown/wreath') is admittedly difficult (it might have been glossed, perhaps) but it was surprising to see so many struggle with the meaning of *desilit*, particularly when the context was relatively clear.

spargitur impulsa caerulea puppis aqua: it had been hoped that candidates who scored full marks on the scansion question (most did) would have been able to analyse this sentence correctly. Scansion of the first half of the line shows that *impulsa* must have a long final 'a' and so must presumably agree with *aqua* (which could be ablative) not *puppis* (which can't). The final 'a' of *caerulea* is short and so it must agree with *puppis*. The bare bones of the line now become clear: the dark boat was scattered (splashed, perhaps?) by water which had been *impulsa*. *impulsa* is the last remaining difficulty, solved by the rare candidates who wrote something like 'by water which had been churned up/forced upwards'.

inde (fide maius) tergo delphina recurvo / se memorant oneri supposuisse novo: the word order needs reconstructing here to put adjectives with nouns; *memorant delphina tergo recurvo se supposuisse oneri novo*: 'they tell that a dolphin with a curved back placed itself beneath its new burden'. The phrase *fide maius* was not unlike last year's *vera loquar, veri vix habitura fidem*. It was translated acceptably by very few candidates indeed, who either thought instinctively that it must mean something like 'you are hardly going to believe this' or who analysed the grammar: *maius* - comparative of *magnus* and therefore presumably 'greater'; *fide* - ablative of *fides* and perhaps ablative of comparison; 'greater than faith/trust' i.e. something that cannot be trusted or believed.

Even the weakest candidates scored well on the two sections of Latin contained in the last couplet, though many lost a mark by not seeing that *pretium vehendi cantat* means something like 'he sang the price of his fare'. In the last sentence, candidates were allowed a fair bit of leeway on *aequoreas* - the best took it as something to do with *aequor* rather than *aequus* and translated it as 'the waters of the sea', vel sim.

Summary

The paper is designed to be accessible to all candidates whilst incorporating elements of 'stretch and challenge'. It is hoped that all candidates felt they had chance to show what they knew and could do, and that the very best students felt suitably extended, especially on the Ovid. The fact that the mean mark for the paper was once again high is a reflection of their success. Despite some disappointment with responses to the Ovid, Examiners once again emerged from their marking of the set text questions feeling that their appreciation of the Virgil and Catullus passages selected had been heightened by some of the things candidates had to say about them. Candidates and their teachers are therefore to be congratulated.

F364 Latin Prose

General comments

Tacitus was again by far the most popular prose text, offered by 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 - though examiners were delighted to record a clutch of top-notch scores for both options.

The time allowed 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

The paramount aim for any A Level candidate should, of course, be to address the specific question set. For each author this year's paper posed a contrasting pair of questions - one largely to do with overall thrust and content, the other focusing more on the author's approach and style in the passage. The most successful candidates were those who sensed the difference between the two and adapted their approach accordingly. Those who regarded both questions as wholly about style laboriously collected small-scale examples from Q1a or Q2a which contributed little or nothing towards answering the bigger question, Conversely for Q1b or Q2b, those who cited no more than the occasional word from the Latin were guilty of summarising what the passage is saying rather than exemplifying the author's literary technique.

Approaches actually to 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. There was a regrettable tendency generally to aim for excessive length, sometimes including a large amount of scene-setting (which scored no marks) before reaching the issue raised in the question. The average length for an essay was perhaps 2-3 sides of average-size handwriting: some of the best were wonderfully succinct, totally focused essays of around one side and a half. 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 the actual Latin text are more likely to achieve the desired result for any question than those who work almost exclusively via English translation or paraphrase. As mentioned in last year's report 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. Simply appending the occasional Latin word or sentence in a bracket is not the same thing as choosing a quotation out of which an observation or comment is then developed. Making reference to the text by quoting first and last words or by using line numbers is an acceptable method if the section quoted is lengthy, but full quotation of the Latin is generally preferable - and essential if the candidate is trying to discuss features of an author's style.

Question 1: Tacitus

- (a) *Show how Tacitus portrays Poppaea as cunning and manipulative in this passage.*

Most candidates seemed very familiar with this passage and found little difficulty in finding plenty of nasty references to Poppaea. Too many, however, allowed their discussion to drift onto a general consideration of the passage, cataloguing stylistic details instead of keeping the focus on Tacitus' portrayal of Poppaea as cunning and manipulative. This was particularly the case with points taken from the beginning and end of the passage, such as Nero's growing love for Poppaea and the 'long contemplated crime' of doing away with Agrippina, both of which certainly could be made relevant but it was not sufficient simply to mention them and leave it at that. Poppaea's taunting of Nero as a *pupillum* or her threat (bluff?) to leave him and return to Otho were also regularly mentioned without showing any real appreciation of their significance. Conversely, fairly minor features such as the mention of *sibi matrimonium* before *discidium Octaviae* were often given enormous significance regardless of whether they had any bearing on the initial question. An occasional shortcoming was to report Poppaea's words in the passage as if they are genuine quotation, instead of commenting on Tacitus' sly trick of insinuating his own opinions in his narrative.

- (b) *How does Tacitus' language convey his strong disapproval of Nero's excesses in this passage?*

Here the best candidates analysed the whole passage in detail and with a high degree of sophistication, linking points about content to those about stylistic features, making apt use of rhetorical terms and quoting to support each point, alongside a translation or at least a clear indication of meaning. Again, however, there was a frequent tendency to highlight phenomena such as polysyndeton or alliteration without any explanation regarding how these features relate to the original title. Many, for example, could spot a tricolon such as *conventicula et cauponae et ... inritamenta* but only the better candidates went on to say something about its impact, thus actually linking the device to the question. Another fault was to become so engrossed with selecting *minutiae* of the author's style that important parts of the bigger picture (e.g. the contrast between Augustus and Nero's use of the area round the lake, or the whole of the final sentence) went unmentioned - and it is worth noting that Examiners expect candidates to select the best available material across the whole passage, not just from the first half of it or wherever the candidate has managed to get to in the time available.

Question 2: Livy

The small cohort of candidates who answered on Livy generally produced answers of a very sound standard, though showing a lesser degree of sophistication than their Tacitus equivalents simply because there was not so much that could sensibly be highlighted by way of stylistic comment.

- (a) *Show how Livy portrays Pacuvius Calavius as ambitious and cunning in this passage.*

Most candidates fared pretty well here, showing a clear overview of the situation and background, providing details/dates by way of context. The main problem (again) was with those who did not focus on the terms of the question. Some candidates became rather muddled when trying to explain the niceties of PC's plan, or - perhaps themselves swept along by his rhetoric - did not make enough of the fact that PC is all the time deceiving the senate for his own ends. The references to PC's family links with Rome were also sometimes either misinterpreted or overlooked. Some of the stronger answers analysed the various stages of PC's rhetoric in the passage - first making the senators afraid, then

gaining their trust by appearing to be on their side, finally offering them an instant means of salvation. Whilst the focus of this question was not essentially on stylistic analysis, candidates often supported their argument appropriately with well-chosen stylistic details.

- (b) *What makes this passage a good example of vivid historical narrative?*

Many candidates sensibly tackled the question thematically, picking out instances of Livy's style for comment and analysis, rather than working through the passage in order. A wide variety of dramatic aspects was identified in the story, such as the difficult relationship between father and son, the build-up to the banquet, the tension between Hannibal and PC, young PC's awkwardness at dinner followed by his startling proposal in the garden. The strongest candidates took care to make comments about the style of presentation in the passage, rather than just cataloguing items which make it a good story. Similar problems occurred here as for Q1b regarding the use/abuse of rhetorical features. Surprisingly few candidates commented on the change to direct speech at the end of the passage - and indeed there were some disconcerting errors in the translation of these lines, including confusion about the tense of *fuimus*.

Section B:

Question 3: Unprepared Translation and Comprehension

There was inevitably an enormous spectrum of performance on this option. The best candidates scored almost full marks, making the passage look quite straightforward in the process, but the general level of success was disappointing as the culmination of several years of Latin study. The crux of the problem was not candidates' vocabulary, which in most cases seemed quite serviceable, but grammar. Not only did the grammar questions themselves frequently reveal a staggering lack of expertise regarding what might look to some teachers very undemanding points, but the translation section often lost all coherence because of some extremely basic errors and a tendency simply to shift the words around at random in an effort to find some kind of sense, rather than fitting them together on linguistic principles.

- (a) Usually fine, though many candidates missed out one of the 4 mini-elements required (time/opportunity/trickery/deceit) and *fraudis* was commonly rendered inappropriately as 'fraud'.
- (b) Most candidates had no problem finding two out of the various points available.
- (c) There were some excellent answers here. Some candidates, however, did not give this question quite the thought it deserved producing hasty responses (e.g. Caesar's use of the historic present) which did not really focus on the question. Careful candidates quoted precisely and related their choices specifically to the 'trigger' word 'speed'.
- (d) There was a tendency among weaker candidates not to check the context in which these isolated nouns appear. Many correctly wrote 'Ablative' twice - and then again for *arma*, which then required some ingenuity to explain!
- (e) Most candidates failed this question by mechanically supplying 'from' which was not regarded as an idiomatic translation in context. A secondary issue was *diutino*, which was not always correctly deduced from *diu*.
- (f) Surprisingly many wrote simply 'infinitive' or suggested all sorts of types, such as perfect or some kind of passive. Again, consideration of the word in its context might have helped to steer the unsure in the right direction.

- (g) The use of the subjunctive after *cum* (whether temporal or causal) was generally recognised. Perhaps predictably, the appearance of *ut* led immediately to a rash of purpose clauses, regardless of the preceding 'signpost' *sic*. While not unusual at GCSE level, this is exactly the kind of mistake which examiners were distressed to find cropping up so frequently on an A2 paper.
- (h) A testing piece perhaps - particularly the second half - but quite typical of Caesar's style and range of vocabulary. Words such as *tormenta*, *perfidia*, *tempestas*, *fiducia*, *alteram*, and *admonere* ought to have come fairly readily, also common Caesarean idioms such as the use of *nostris* for 'our men' and even *infecta re*, which virtually no candidate was able to render convincingly. Many versions descended almost immediately into a meaningless stream of vocabulary, with just the occasional phrase (e.g. 'in a very short time' or 'on the following day') rescuing them from complete incoherence. The short middle sentence (*temptaverunt ... die*) was a lifesaver for many, even those who insisted on writing 'tempted'. Case endings often went overboard, and the logic of the storyline was not taken into consideration nearly enough. As an example, in the final sentence, whilst many candidates could handle the ablative absolute convincingly, they would then frequently disregard the accusative ending of *reliquos*, turn the verb from active to passive, and end the story with everything happening the wrong way round! In general, sheer incomprehension of the passage meant that few candidates were able to gain the two marks available for good English, though many did enough to deserve one. Examiners are looking here, not for totally polished English, but simply for a few indications of conscious searching for appropriate English idiom, such as selecting an apt rendering of a few individual words (e.g. *tempestas* as 'weather conditions') or doing something cleverer with ablative absolutes than the 'having been somethinged' approach.

Q4: Prose Composition

Candidates for this option generally seemed to know the grammatical principles well, even if they couldn't always produce word-formations accurately. 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 a few days'),
- use of *post* for *postquam* (and vice versa),
- overuse of ablative absolutes, even when technically impossible (e.g. *longo proelio pugnato*),
- the use of present participles when past would be better (e.g. 'urging his men ...'),
- forgetting to use the subjunctive after various constructions (notably after *cum*, and for the indirect command 'urging his men to stand firm').

Candidates' working knowledge of vocabulary was generally good and, where it failed, gave rise to some ingenious solutions which might just about pass muster for a Roman reader! If in a corner, it is generally better to think about the underlying sense and make up a plausible periphrasis than to stick rigidly to the English. For example, *captores* is a word that barely exists in Latin, certainly not in the sense required here: a reasonable substitute was *custodes*, but a periphrasis such as *ei qui eos ceperant* really does the job best.

Specific vocabulary problems included:

- rest: *dormire* was adequate, *se quieti dare* merited a bonus mark,
- advanced: too many just used something like *iit*

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- go past: some knew *praeterire*, others used *praeter* correctly, adequate substitutes were *per* or *vitare* or something like *transgredi*
- menacing: an impressive number of candidates knew *minax*, (though many of these were not aware of its correct ablative formation) and quite a few came up with an attractive alternative (e.g. *magna voce* or *vehementer*)
- attack: impressive to see *impetum facere* so often used
- took heart: this appeared to puzzle many, but there were lots of good suggestions (e.g. *incitati*, *animo refecto*)
- imprisoned: there is no verb *incarcero*, though many tried to use it: the best solution is therefore to make up a periphrasis (e.g. *in vincula iacere* or *in carcere tenere*)
- rescued: surprisingly few thought of *servare*, and many incorrectly substituted the late ecclesiastical verb *salvare* ('saved' in a rather different sense!). As always, *in extremis* a periphrasis is the intelligent way out (e.g. *e carcere trahere*).

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