

# **OCR Report to Centres**

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

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

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## **Overview**

As in January 2011, entries for A401 and A402 were small, especially at Foundation Tier. The performance of candidates on A401 was very similar to that in the previous two sittings and it was possible to set similar grade boundaries. The Higher Tier A402 paper, in contrast, turned out to be rather harder than previous sittings. Though the paper certainly differentiated very well between the candidates, the inclusion of a couple of really testing sentences in the translation section meant that it was possibly harder to score a really high mark and the mean mark was considerably lower as a result. Grade boundaries for this paper were accordingly lower than in January 2011 and June 2011.

## A401/01 Latin Language 1: Mythology and Domestic Life (Foundation Tier)

There were only 19 candidates for the Foundation tier, so generalisations are difficult to make.

In Question 1, several candidates ignored the plurals *templa* and *deorum*, while others translated *visitabant* as the Present tense.

Questions 2 and 4 were usually answered correctly.

In Question 3, *quid* caused problems to most candidates.

In Question 5, although the Perfect was accepted for *audiverat*, few candidates achieved full marks, probably because of difficulties with the following Indirect Statement.

Questions 6–8 were generally well answered, though in Question 7, *in* was often taken as ‘into’, probably because the meaning of *maneret* was unknown.

In Question 9, as in Question 3, *quid* caused problems, as did the tense of *pararet*, which was often taken as the Pluperfect, even by very good candidates.

Question 10 was the most testing part of the paper and some candidates did very poorly on it. The main causes for this were inattention to endings and errors in the vocabulary as listed in the specification.

Inattention to endings was seen in the opening four words *tum Iuppiter deis dixit*, which were often rendered ‘Then the gods said to Jupiter’ and ‘The god Jupiter said’. In the next section, *sacrificia* was usually translated as singular, even by those candidates who performed better on the paper as a whole. This was surprising, as the word was glossed as *sacrificium* (n). In line 2, *nobis* and *tantum* caused problems to most, and *ut* was frequently translated ‘and’. In line 4, *mitteret* was not recognised by many, and in the last sentence, *sub* was often unknown.

In Question 11, the plural *deos* was usually translated as singular; conversely, in Question 12 *navem* was often taken as plural.

In Question 14, *dea* was usually taken as masculine or plural.

Question 15 was poorly answered by most unfortunately. Common errors here were to take *ossa* as singular – again, the word was glossed. A strange, but common, error was to take *tergum* ‘back’ as an adverb, e.g. ‘to throw back the bones’, although the word was glossed as a noun in the vocabulary.

Questions 16 and 17 were generally well answered, though there was some confusion between *habeo* and *habito* in the latter.

In Question 18, *omnium* was often not recognised.

In Question 19, the plural nouns were sometimes taken as singular.

Question 20 was very well answered, most candidates achieving full marks.

Although there was much good work, there were many examples of inattention to endings. Perhaps candidates know the meaning of the words, but are unable to recognise their oblique cases and their number. It may be an idea, when testing vocabulary, not to give a noun in the nominative case, but in the accusative or dative plural/singular, or a verb in the Perfect tense. Parsing was abandoned years ago, but it had the merit of focusing attention on the different parts of the word.

## A401/02 Latin Language 1: Mythology and Domestic life (Higher Tier)

Nearly all candidates scored over half marks; there were some, however, who may perhaps have been well advised to be entered for the Foundation Tier Paper.

Most of the candidates coped well with the paper, though, as with the Foundation Paper, more attention to endings of nouns and verbs would have secured higher marks. While the words to be learned in the Specification were generally well known, their various parts were often mistranslated. There were many instances of plural words being translated as singular, even in words given in the glossary; for example, *sacrificia*, *imbres*, *ossa* and *lapides* were frequently rendered as singular. Another instance where close scrutiny of the glossary is always beneficial was where a number of candidates took either Jupiter or Neptune to be goddesses although they were glossed as male.

Candidates would be well advised to stay with their first thoughts, unless there is an obvious error, as correct answers were more often changed to incorrect ones than vice-versa.

In Question 1, most candidates scored 3 or 4 marks; the most common mistakes were to take *dona* and *deis* as singular (see above). *nulla* was not insisted upon, provided that there was a negative in the candidate's answer.

In Question 2, as in the Foundation Tier Paper, *quid* caused a few problems, though most coped well with it. 'why' was accepted, if the candidate translate *facerent* incorrectly. The tense of *facerent* was sometimes taken as Pluperfect, which was not accepted.

Question 3 was generally well answered.

In Question 4, the main error was to translate *esse* as Pluperfect. Some candidates had trouble translating Indirect Statements, as was evident in Question 7, where the two Indirect Statements proved troublesome.

All candidates scored at least three marks on the multiple choice Question 5.

In Question 6a, *pararet* was frequently taken as Pluperfect; otherwise, this question and the following 6b were very well answered.

Question 7 was the least well answered question, as this required close attention to the Latin endings. There were few mistakes in the first section, though *omnes* was sometimes taken with *regem* while others confused it with *regnum*.

The second section caused problems to most candidates, partly because *neminem* was not recognised, partly through candidates not recognising the Indirect Statement. A few candidates translated *cum* as 'with' and *num* was not often recognised. Some verb endings were not recognised which was surprising, e.g. the second person ending of *punies* and *creditis* in the following section. This was further exemplified in the third section when *promitto me* became 'Promise me'. The endings *-o* or *-m*, *-s*, *-t*, *-mus*, *-tis*, *-nt* are common to all tenses except the Perfect.

In the fourth section, *vocatum* caused problems to many, though there were some pleasing renderings, e.g. 'Jupiter summoned Neptune and asked him to send...'.

An error here however was to take *imbres* as singular in this, and the next, section (see above on plural nouns).

The last section was usually well done, though vocabulary deficiencies lost some candidates marks and *ut* was often translated 'and'.

On completion of the question or at the end of the paper, candidates are advised to check every Latin word in the translation passage to ensure that they have translated all of them, as the omission of simple words like *igitur*, *tamen*, *iam*, *tum* and *deinde* was quite common. Vocabulary weaknesses also took their toll, as the following words were often unknown or confused with other similar words, e.g. *regem*, *ceteri*, *scirent*, *neminem*, *punies*, *creditus*, *aliud*, *graves*, *tot* and *plurimi*. It may be an idea, when testing vocabulary, not to give a noun in the nominative case, but in the accusative or dative plural/singular, or to give a verb in the Perfect tense. Parsing was abandoned years ago but it had the merit of focusing attention on the various parts of the word.

Questions 8a, 8b and 9a were all well answered, but in Question 9b, many candidates took *aqua* as the subject of *surgebat*, despite the fact that *aqua* was preceded by *ex*, which must mean 'out of the water'. A few candidates put the answer for 9b under 9a, or vice versa, but this was allowed.

Question 10 was usually answered correctly, though the candidates who had not learned the meaning of *uxor* usually put 'Jupiter' or even *Iovis* as the answer.

Questions 11 and 12 caused few problems to most, but Question 13 caused problems for many candidates who took *ossa* as singular and *matris* as plural. *Omnium* was often not recognised.

Similarly, in Question 14, *feminarum* and *iuvenum* were often taken as singular, and *turba* was sometimes unknown.

Question 15 caused a few problems, as candidates often gave the meanings of the Latin word, rather than an English derivative. However, most candidates scored 3 or 4 marks on this question. It would be helpful to explain, however, that candidates must give an English meaning of the derivative which is the same part of speech as the derivative, e.g. 'donation – a gift', not 'to give something'.

Most candidates performed well on this paper, and many scored high marks, which reflects great credit upon themselves and their teachers.

## A402/01 Latin Language 2 (Foundation Tier)

As in January 2011, the entry for these papers was very small and it was hard to draw comparisons with the performance of candidates last summer. Most followed the storyline well and did not seem to be unduly put off by the content of a more predominantly military passage.

The entry was 8.

**Q1:** most candidates got off to a good start on this relatively straightforward question, though some missed the superlative form of *fortissimus*.

**Q2:** generally well done.

**Q3:** straightforward.

**Q4:** it was not necessary to understand the accusative and infinitive construction here – those who knew the meaning of *fugere* got their mark.

**Q5:** as on Higher Tier, the forms of *quo* and *abis* (from *abeo* not *absum*) caused difficulty.

**Q6:** straightforward.

**Q7:** this more difficult question was less well done, due to the case, meaning and position before the verb of *ceteris*.

**Q8:** ‘once Caesar was waging war against the Gauls.’ The phrase *bellum gero* was not always known.

‘The Gauls attacked the Romans fiercely for many hours.’ As on Higher Tier, the meaning of *oppugno* was not always known.

‘The Gauls killed many centurions and wounded the others ...’ The meanings of *interficio* and *vulnero* caused problems, perhaps because candidates were less used to a story with military vocabulary.

‘... so seriously that the Romans were not able to resist them.’ Those who missed the sense of *tam graviter* usually handled the result clause well and picked up at least two marks out of the four available.

‘When Caesar saw this, he himself went forward into the middle of the enemy.’ The *cum* clause caused predictable difficulty, along with the phrase *in medios hostes*.

‘Then the centurions saw Caesar fighting with great courage.’ Difficulties were the present participle form of *pugnantem* and the enclosing word order of *Caesarem magna virtute pugnantem*.

‘Although previously they wanted to run away ...’ *quamquam* was not always known.

‘... now there were defending themselves bravely against the enemy.’ *nunc* and *fortiter* are the sort of words often not known or omitted by candidates at this level.

‘In this way Caesar often led the Romans to victory ...’ *hoc modo* caused difficulty but the rest of the clause was straightforward.

‘... and taught terrified soldiers to win.’ As on Higher Tier, *doceo* was not well known.

## A402/02 Latin Language 2 (Higher Tier)

As in January 2011, the entry for these papers was very small and it was hard to draw comparisons with the performance of candidates last summer. Most followed the storyline well and did not seem to be unduly put off by the content of a more predominantly military passage.

333 candidates were entered for the paper. This session saw the first use of the slightly amended mark scheme for the marking of translations, which broadens the three mark band to include translations with up to three minor errors.

Even so, marks overall were considerably lower than in June 2011, with a smaller percentage of really high scoring candidates. This may have been due to the difficulty of the paper, which was felt to include one or two particularly testing sections.

**Q1:** as in June 2011, what had been intended to be a relatively straightforward start to the passage turned out to be a stiffer test than expected. It was not necessary to recognise the superlative form of *audacissimus* but it was necessary to see that the genitive form of *omnium ducum Romanorum* depended on *virtutem maximam* – he had the greatest courage of all Roman leaders.

**Q2:** the first half of the sentence was straightforward but to be sure of full marks candidates had to make some sense of *malebat* in the second half – it was not sufficient to say that he fought and did not run away.

**Q3:** this was found to be very straightforward by most candidates. For full marks some account needed to be taken of *parantem* ('he was prepared to flee' was acceptable here).

**Q4:** *quo abis* caused much difficulty, either among those who connected *abis* with *absum* rather than *abeo* or by those who took *abis* (not unreasonably) as a future tense. The idiomatic form of *illic sunt cum quibus pugnamus* ('the ones we are fighting with are over there!') had been expected to cause difficulty, but many handled it well and a wide range of answers was accepted.

**Q5:** this was well answered.

**Q6:** this was a good test of a candidate's ability to see that Caesar was the subject of *reddidit* and that it meant 'gave back' rather than 'went back'. Many scored at least two marks for correctly identifying the phrase *spem victoriae*, but only the best saw that Caesar restored this hope of victory to the army.

**Q7:** 'at that time the Roman soldiers admired Caesar's courage to such an extent that they followed him willingly.' A surprising number struggled with the phrase *illo tempore* (common errors were 'at this time' and 'for a long time') and there were some predictable mistranslations of *libenter* (books, children, freedmen etc.) but most were able to score at least two marks.

'Once, in a war which Caesar was fighting against the Gauls ...' The use of *quod* caused unexpected difficulty – very many wrongly took it as 'because'. Even so, they tended to score three marks for the sentence. Some candidates did not know the meaning of *bellum gero* or were puzzled by the English idiom to 'wage war'. At a time of recession, the small number who wrote about a wage war could perhaps be forgiven.

'... the Gauls were overwhelming the Roman forces very fiercely.' Taking *copias* as agreeing with *Galli* was considered a major error here. Many missed the superlative form of *ferocissime* (a minor error) and some struggled with the meaning of *oppugno* by apparently connecting it with *oppugno*.

‘When Caesar had noticed that several centurions had been killed ...’ The meaning of *nonnullos* was sometimes not known – candidates taking it as a negative may have found themselves losing the plot here. *occisos* was sometimes connected wrongly with *oculos*. It was possible to miss the perfect infinitive form of *occisos esse* and still win full marks for the clause (‘being killed’ was considered only a minor error).

‘... and the rest had been worn out by such serious wounds ...’ This was a good test of those who knew the meaning of *conficio*, recognised the form of *confectos esse* and saw that *tam gravibus vulneribus* was ablative case. Even the best sometimes omitted *tam*.

‘... that they were no longer able to resist the arms of the enemy ...’ Many who struggled with the earlier part of this very difficult sentence recovered somewhat here, though it was disappointing to see so many taking *armis* as ‘armies’.

‘... he himself dared to advance very boldly into the first line of battle.’ Only the best knew *ausus est* but those who omitted it were still able to win three marks for something like ‘he himself advanced very boldly ...’

‘Then he called the centurions by name and strongly encouraged them to drive back the enemy.’ Many handled the participle *vocatos* well, though some connected it with *vox*. *vehementer* was quite often omitted and *hortatus est* not known. Even those who knew *hortor* often took the following *ut* as a purpose clause. They did not necessarily lose marks for doing so but it is worth urging better candidates to distinguish purpose clauses from indirect commands so that they make better sense of *ut*.

‘After they saw this, soldiers (who had been) previously terrified now began to fight more bravely.’ *hoc viso* caused regular problems (it was often taken as *hoc dicto*, for example) and even otherwise excellent candidates missed the comparative form of *fortius* (though they did not necessarily lose a mark for doing so).

‘In this way Caesar very often taught legions, prepared to be defeated, to be victorious.’ The form of *saepissime* caused problems as it was very often misconnected with *sapientissime*. The last five words provided a very good test: the meanings of the words were straightforward (with the possible exception of *doceo*) but only the very best answers solved the puzzle of how they fitted together (i.e. that *paratas* agreed with *legiones* and *vinci* was passive infinitive). The examiner had hoped that the use of *vinci* and *vincere* in the same clause might alert candidates to the passive form of *vinci* but many did not identify this.

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