

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

LATIN

J282

For first teaching in 2016

J282/01 Summer 2019 series

Version 1

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Introduction

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

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

Paper 1 series overview

Examiners considered the second paper of the new specification to be of a fair and appropriate standard. The standard of candidates' performance was generally high, and it was pleasing to see a number of completely accurate scripts. Examiners also commented in particular on the number of candidates who achieved full marks (or close to full marks) on the translation question. There were very few marks below 50.

Examiners felt that the paper was accessible to the full range of candidates, while differentiating very well, particularly in certain questions. Both the translation question and the comprehension questions revealed a sound understanding of the two storylines, in most cases. There were very few examples of 'No Response', suggesting that candidates of all abilities were able to engage with the questions.

Despite the fact that this was only the second live paper, which meant that candidates did not have the benefit of many past papers, examiners were pleased to note that errors of exam technique were relatively few. However, as has been noted in previous reports on the legacy language papers, some candidates showed a tendency to provide alternative answers, using either brackets or an oblique stroke. In Question 15, for instance, the response: 'To ask for advice/help' would be given 1/2. Teachers should discourage candidates from this practice, since an incorrect alternative response negates the mark they would have been given. In addition, occasionally candidates did not read questions carefully enough, and gave a response based on Latin elsewhere in the passage, but not in the lemma for the question.

Most candidates were well-acquainted with the Defined Vocabulary List, although there were some errors with the meaning of some common words, such as *statim* and *deus*. In addition, there were occasional errors in understanding the gender of the characters. Candidates should therefore be reminded to make use of the glossary provided, noting in particular the genitive case and gender of proper nouns. Easily confused words were a challenge for some: prime examples are: *domum/donum*, *quis/quid*, *pugno/oppugno*.

Candidates' knowledge of syntax was judged to be generally sound, even though one or two areas caused particular problems: ablative absolutes; passive and deponent verbs; participles.

Noun number and case caused problems for some candidates: *muros* was commonly translated as singular, and the case of nouns such as *mortem* and *dei* was not always recognised.

Participles and irregular principal parts (e.g. *esse*, *passi sunt*, *coacti sunt*) caused considerable difficulty for some candidates. Examiners also noticed some issues with accuracy with tenses (e.g. *superaverat*, *timebat*, *hortatus esset*), with the perfect tense frequently translated as pluperfect in Question 20. Teachers are reminded that the testing of verbs in forms other than the present tense is good practice.

Question 10 and Question 11 (the new optional element) were considered by examiners to be a very welcome addition to the paper, and they were pleased to note a definite improvement this year in candidates' responses to Question 10 in particular. Both options were generally managed well, with a pleasing number of candidates gaining full marks. The majority of candidates opted for the questions on grammar, although a good number attempted both Question 10 and Question 11, which is entirely acceptable. Examiners mark both questions (even if one has been crossed out), and the higher mark is given. Thus, if candidates have enough time, it is probably a good idea to answer both questions. Candidates are encouraged not to cross out the attempt they consider to be weaker. Occasionally the crossed-out responses did result in a higher mark, but, if they are totally obliterated, they cannot be marked.

Candidates are reminded to take note of the number of marks allocated to a question. In the comprehension questions worth two marks, examiners noticed that many candidates did not score full marks because they did not provide enough detail for the number of marks available.

The new five-mark band for the translation question was welcomed by examiners. Valuable marks, however, were lost through the omission of 'little' words such as *tamen*, *mox* and *nunc*. Candidates should therefore be advised to check they have translated every Latin word in the passage. With the passage printed above the space for the answer, it is an easy matter to look at the answer and tick each of the Latin words translated.

Candidates generally managed the longer time allowance of an hour and a half very well, and appeared to have had sufficient time to complete the paper. Many were able to produce a rough draft, followed by a neat copy, of the translation question, and a good number attempted both Question 10 and Question 11. The number of corrections elsewhere in scripts suggested that candidates had plenty of time to check their work. Examiners noted, however, that often correct answers were changed to incorrect responses. Any alterations need to be clear and unambiguous, and the rough version of the translation should be crossed out.

Most candidates performed well on this paper, and examiners would like to congratulate both the candidates and their teachers.

Section A

Question 1

1 *Scylla erat filia Nisi, qui Megaram regebat* (line 1): who was Scylla?

..... [1]

A straightforward start to the examination: this question was answered correctly by almost all candidates, and *filia* was rarely confused with *filius*. A number of candidates said that Scylla was the daughter 'of **Nisi**', which is not correct, but the misspelling of proper nouns is not penalised in comprehension questions.

Question 2

2 *hic rex crinem purpureum in medio capite habebat* (lines 1–2): where was Nisus' purple lock of hair?

..... [2]

Most candidates scored the mark for *in medio*, but some misunderstood *capite*, and said that the lock of hair was 'in the middle of the capital'. Others did not notice the gender of Nisus in the glossary of names and wrote that it was 'in the middle of **her** head', which was treated as a harmful addition (HA).

Question 3

3 *omnes credebant urbem sine illo crine in maximo periculo futuram esse* (line 2): what did everyone believe about Nisus' lock of hair?

.....
..... [3]

Most candidates scored at least one mark for *in maximo periculo*. *sine illo crine* was sometimes omitted or misunderstood, and the tense of *futuram esse* caused problems for some, even though examiners felt that on the whole it was handled very well. Occasionally *urbem* was omitted (e.g. 'Everyone would be'), which negated the mark.

Question 4

4 *illo tempore Minos, rex Cretae, Megaram oppugnabat* (line 3): what was Minos doing in Megara?

..... [1]

The only word required to score the mark was *oppugnabat*, which was frequently confused with *pugnabat*. Candidates are encouraged to look carefully at compound verb pairings (e.g. *fugio/effugio*).

Question 5 (a)

5 *Scylla, quae proelium a summo muro spectabat, subito intellexit quam pulcher esset Minos* (lines 3–4):

(a) what did Scylla suddenly realise?

..... [1]

Almost always answered correctly, even by candidates who were not sure of the grammar in Question 10 (e).

Question 5 (b)

(b) where was she at the time and what was she doing?

.....
..... [2]

The two marks available reflect the two points required to score 2/2. This was a slightly more challenging question, since candidates were required to link *proelium* to *spectabat* and also to choose the correct meaning of *summo*. Some confused the two different strands of the answer and wrote responses such as 'She was watching the wall from the battle'.

Question 6

6 *nam, timens ne Minos in bello interficeretur, Scylla crinem purpureum abscidere constituit* (lines 6–7): why did Scylla decide to cut off Nisus' lock of hair?

.....
..... [2]

Generally, well answered. Most candidates realised that *ne* used after a verb of fearing does not negate the action. The candidates who did less well tended not to recognise the passive form of *interficeretur*, which led to them offering answers such as 'She was afraid that Minos was going to kill her'.

Question 7 (a)

7 *ille propter scelus dirum Scyllae tam iratus erat ut crinem accipere nollet* (line 9):

(a) why was Minos angry?

..... [2]

This question proved to be a very good discriminator with only higher ability candidates managing to score 2/2. *scelus* and *propter* (although not required in the answer) were often not known, and *dirum* was sometimes taken as referring to Scylla. Others chose to paraphrase instead of using the lemma as a guide for the answer, answering for instance that 'He was angry because she had cut off Nisus' lock of hair'.

Question 7 (b)

(b) what did he refuse to do as a result?

..... [1]

A straightforward question answered correctly by most.

Question 8

8 *itaque, urbe Megara victa, domum quam celerrime rediit* (line 10): what did Minos do after conquering the city of Megara?

..... [1]

Most scored the mark, even though a number confused *domum* with *donum* or *dominum* and, as a consequence, wrote that 'Minos returned a gift' or 'Minos returned to his master'.

Question 9

9 For each of the Latin words below, give **one** English word which has been derived from the Latin word and give the meaning of the **English** word.

One has been done for you.

Latin Word:	<i>nomine</i>	
English Word:	nominate	
Meaning of English Word:	to put forward someone's name	
Latin Word:	<i>urbem</i>	
English Word:	
Meaning of English Word:	[2]
Latin Word:	<i>spectabat</i>	
English Word:	
Meaning of English Word:	[2]

This question is designed to be accessible to candidates of all abilities, and most scored at least 3/4. 'Urban' was the most popular choice for *urbem*, but some clearly struggled with the meaning. Examiners were prepared to give benefit of the doubt (BOD) when they felt that the definition was close enough. For example, defining the adjective 'Urban' as '**an area** in a city' is not strictly correct, as the meaning of the derivative is not the same part of speech, but it is close enough to merit a mark. 'Suburbs' and 'Urbanisation' were also sometimes offered as derivatives. For the second word *spectabat*, 'Spectate', 'Spectator' and 'Spectacles' were the most common answers, and candidates appeared to have no difficulty in defining these words. Occasionally examiners came across candidates who simply translated the Latin word as the meaning of the English word, which cannot be rewarded with a mark. This can be seen in Exemplar 1.

Exemplar 1

Latin Word:	<i>nomine</i>
English Word:	nominate
Meaning of English Word:	to put forward someone's name
Latin Word:	<i>urbem</i>
English Word:	<u>urbans</u>
Meaning of English Word:	<u>city</u> [2]
Latin Word:	<i>spectabat</i>
English Word:	<u>Spectator</u>
Meaning of English Word:	<u>Someone who watches something</u> [2]

Question 10 (a)

10 Answer the following questions based on part of the story you have already read.

Scylla erat filia Nisi, qui Megaram regebat. hic rex crinem purpureum in medio capite habebat. omnes credebant urbem sine illo crine in maximo periculo futuram esse.

illo tempore Minos, rex Cretae, Megaram oppugnabat. olim Scylla, quae proelium a summo muro spectabat, subito intellexit quam pulcher esset Minos. 'hostem patris mei amo!' sibi dixit. 'quid nunc facere debeo?'

5

Names

<i>Scylla, Scyllae</i> (f)	Scylla
<i>Nisus, Nisi</i> (m)	Nisus
<i>Megara, Megarae</i> (f)	Megara (a city in Greece)
<i>Minos, Minois</i> (m)	Minos
<i>Creta, Cretae</i> (f)	Crete

Vocabulary

<i>crinis, crinis</i> (m)	lock of hair
<i>purpureus, purpurea, purpureum</i>	purple

(a) Identify an example of the **accusative** case in line 1.

..... [1]

Well answered. Examiners were pleased to note that almost all candidates offered the correct spelling of the word they identified.

Question 10 (b)

(b) *Scylla erat filia Nisi* (line 1): identify the **case** of *Nisi*.

..... [1]

Well answered. Only the case is required for the mark, so there is no need to add the number, which will negate the mark if incorrect. There were some interesting spellings of genitive, but this did not affect the awarding of the mark.

Question 10 (c)

(c) *in medio capite* (line 1): identify the **case** of *capite* and explain why this **case** is used here.

.....
..... [2]

This was a more challenging question for many, with the irrelevant adjective *medio* between *in* and *capite* causing some candidates to give the answer 'genitive', followed by an incorrect explanation such as 'because it is the middle of his head'. Indeed, the grammar questions carrying two marks (the second for an explanation) were found to be the best discriminators in Question 10.

In Exemplar 2, 'infinitive' is incorrect, so the first mark is not given. However, it is still possible to gain the second mark, as can be seen on this script: the second 'infinitive' is disregarded, as it is a repeated error.

Exemplar 2

(c) *in medio capite* (line 1): identify the **case** of *capite* and explain why this **case** is used here.

..... infinitive; in needs to take an infinitive as
..... it is a preposition. [2]

Question 10 (d)

(d) *credebant* (line 2): identify the **tense** of this verb.

..... [1]

Answered correctly by almost all candidates.

Question 10 (e)

(e) *subito intellexit quam pulcher esset Minos* (line 4): explain why *esset* is in the **subjunctive** mood.

..... [1]

This was the best discriminator in Question 10, even although the Mark Scheme accepted a range of answers, including 'It follows *quam*'. Many candidates were misled by *intellexit* and gave the answer 'indirect statement'.

Question 10 (f)

(f) Pick out a **pronoun** in line 5.

..... [1]

Answered correctly by most candidates.

Question 10 (g)

(g) Identify an example of the **present** tense in line 5.

..... [1]

Most candidates scored the mark, but a few opted for *dixit*.

Question 10 (h)

(h) *quid nunc facere debeo* (line 5): identify the **form** of *facere* **and** explain why this **form** is used here.

.....
..... [2]

Most recognised that *facere* is an infinitive (there is no need to identify the tense or voice), but some did not link it with *debeo*.

Question 11 (a)

11 Translate the following English sentences into Latin.

(a) The sailors were sleeping in the inn.

.....
..... [3]

Most candidates scored at least 1/3, even though *in tabernam* was a common error and some struggled with the spelling of *dormiebant*.

Question 11 (b)

(b) When did you write the letter, master?

.....
..... [4]

This was considered to be the most challenging of the sentences, with many candidates not knowing the perfect tense of *scribo* or the vocative of *dominus*. Others did not realise that *ubi* cannot be used to introduce a direct question.

Question 11 (c)

(c) I guard the temple of the goddess.

.....
..... [3]

This was well answered, with many candidates gaining full marks. The only real issue was keeping track of the vowels in *custodio*.

Section B

Question 12 (a)

Answered correctly by almost all candidates.

12 *Croesus, qui rex Lydorum erat, multas gentes superaverat* (line 1):

(b) in what way had he been successful?

..... [2]

Question 12 (b)

This was a good discriminator: many candidates scored the first mark for *superaverat*, but not all were familiar with *gentes* and some translated it as singular.

Question 13

13 *imperium Cyri, regis Persarum, semper timebat* (line 2): how does this show Croesus' lack of confidence?

.....
..... [2]

Most candidates correctly referred to *semper timebat*, although a few omitted or mistranslated *semper*, which was also required for the first mark. The second mark for *imperium Cyri* was gained only by the strongest candidates, with some missing it out completely, some translating *imperium* as 'emperor' and others treating the question as a style question. Candidates are reminded that this paper tests only AO1, so no analysis of the language is required. This approach can be seen in Exemplar 3, where the candidate gives an analysis of 'afraid' instead of explaining what Croesus feared.

Exemplar 3

..... 'Semper timebat' meaning 'he was always afraid'
..... Shows he wasn't confident. - Afraid is the [2]
..... opposite of confident.

Question 14

14 *Croesus igitur, cum vellet scire num bellum contra Persas gerere deberet* (line 3): what did Croesus want to know?

.....
..... [3]

The majority of candidates scored at least one mark, but the meaning *num* in an indirect question was not always known.

Question 15

15 *nuntios plurima dona ferentes Delphos misit ad consilium dei petendum* (lines 3–4): why did he send messengers to Delphi?

.....
..... [2]

consilium was a common error, with many choosing the meaning 'plan'. Candidates are reminded to think about the context of the passage and to choose the most appropriate translation of a word with several meanings on the Defined Vocabulary List.

Question 16

16 *omnes enim illo tempore credebant hoc oraculum omnium optimum esse* (lines 4–5): why did he choose Delphi above other places?

.....
..... [2]

Many candidates scored the first mark for *optimum*, but not all saw how it was linked to *omnium*, which resulted in responses such as 'All the oracles were the best'.

Question 17

17 *deus breviter respondit: 'rex Croesus, si exercitum suum contra Persas ducet, magnum regnum delebit.'* (lines 6–7): what did the god say would happen if Croesus led an army against the Persians?

.....
..... [2]

This was well answered on the whole, even though a few candidates struggled with the meaning of *regnum*. Others attempted to attribute the kingdom to someone (i.e. Croesus or the Persians), which was considered to be a harmful addition (HA). Responses using direct speech or translated as passive were not uncommon and were accepted by the Mark Scheme.

Question 18 (a) and 18 (b)

18 *Croesus, verbis dei maxime delectatus, statim exercitum paravit ut iter in terram Persarum faceret* (lines 7–9):

(a) what did Croesus do in response to the oracle's words?

..... [1]

(b) what was his purpose in doing this?

.....
..... [2]

Most candidates scored the mark available for this question, although not all were familiar with *exercitum*. A few candidates referred to Croesus' reaction rather than what he did. Some also included the information required for Question 18 (b), and consequently put incorrect or irrelevant information in their answer to Question 18 (b). Further practice in using the clues given by the wording of the question and the constructions in the lemma (i.e. 'what was his purpose' = *ut*) might be of benefit here.

Question 19

19 *nam sperabat se hoc modo Cyrum Persasque celeriter deleturum esse* (line 9): what did Croesus hope would happen as a result?

.....
..... [3]

A good discriminator, as many candidates transposed from active to passive, but did not include a reference to *se*. As so many candidates appeared to think that *deleturum esse* was passive, centres are reminded that the future passive infinitive is not included in the Latin Accidence and Syntax list. Lower ability candidates also lost marks for omitting *celeriter* or for translating *Persas* as 'Persia'.

Question 20

20 Translate Passage 3 into English.

[50]

Examiners were impressed by the overall standard of translations, with a good number making very few or no errors. Lower ability candidates also seemed to find the question accessible, and usually managed to score high marks in at least one or two sections.

Section (i): This section offered a straightforward start to the passage and was usually handled well, even though a few struggled with *inter se* and *ferociter* was sometimes confused with *fortiter*.

Section (ii): An effective discriminator with only the strongest candidates scoring full marks. Common errors included: making *multi* agree with *mortem crudelem*; failure to recognise the forms of the verbs *passi sunt* (resulting in responses such as 'Many cruel deaths were suffered') and *coacti sunt* (often confused with *conor* or *coepi*; translating *fugere* as *effugere*; the comparative *plures*, which was very often confused with *plurimi*.

Section (iii): This section was generally well done, although *cum* + subjunctive proved tricky for some ('with no-one having victory' appearing from time to time). *domum* again appeared as 'a gift' at times, but, as it was a repeated error, it wasn't penalised. *suas* occasionally proved a problem, with some linking it with *domum* rather than *copias* and others omitting it completely.

Section (iv): The major problem here was *eodem*, which was often mistranslated or omitted. The rest of the section was usually handled very well.

Section (v): Although this was quite a long section, it was relatively straightforward, and many candidates were able to score full marks, albeit with an inconsequential error (usually *irruerunt* translated as 'burst'/'broke' – candidates are reminded to look carefully at the meaning of glossed words – or *muros* translated as singular).

Section (vi): This section was a very good differentiator. The handling of the ablative absolute caused some candidates to lose a mark, and others struggled with the case of *ipse* and the passive *traditus est*, resulting in responses such as 'The city was soon captured, Croesus handed himself over to Cyrus'. In Exemplar 4, there is no coordination between the ablative absolute *urbe mox capta* and the main clause, which is treated as a more serious error. Candidates are reminded that it is perfectly possible to turn the ablative absolute into a main clause, but only if 'and' is added before the actual main clause. In addition, the candidate has made two more serious errors (the meaning of *traditus est* and the case of *ipse*). However, the overall meaning is clear enough to award three marks.

Section (vii): This section was mostly handled well, although some confused *quis* with *quid*, and thought that Cyrus had asked what had encouraged Croesus to attack the Persians. The tense of *hortatus esset* was sometimes translated as perfect, and the meaning of this deponent verb was not always known, with references to 'gardens' not uncommon.

Section (viii): This was another good differentiator, which tested vocabulary effectively. The main stumbling block was *malo*. If this was recognised, the rest was more likely to fall into place, even although some candidates put the two infinitive phrases in the wrong order and stated that Croesus preferred to wage war than to seek peace. Those who did not recognise *malo* usually confused it with the adjective *malus*, and tried to work the word 'bad' into their answer. In addition, quite a few candidates translated *tristissime* as an adjective.

Section (ix): this section proved to be a little tricky for some, with lower ability candidates translating *verba* as singular and *dei* as plural. Some wrote that the words of the god were ambiguous and either omitted the main verb or described the words as persuasive. *tandem* was sometimes confused with *tamen*.

Section (x): Most candidates seemed to cope well with this final section. The main issue was active to passive transposition of *regnum meum delevi* without a reference to the agent. *diceret* was often translated as perfect or pluperfect.

Exemplar 4

easily. soon the city had been captured.
Croesus was carried to cyrus himself. At once

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