

## **A LEVEL**

*Examiners' report*

# **CLASSICAL GREEK**

**H444**

For first teaching in 2016

## **H444/01 Summer 2019 series**

Version 1

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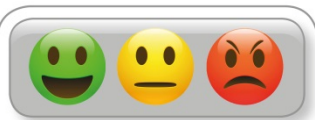
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## Introduction

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

This is the Unseen Translation paper. To do well, candidates needed to translate accurately and communicatively into English. At this level, an amount of interpretation and even speculation is required. In both passages, candidates who read the English introduction carefully found there was a great deal of information, and indeed vocabulary, to help them.

Following the approach documented in the 2018 Examiners' Report, on both this paper and Paper 2, examiners referred to the Defined Vocabulary Lists for both GCSE and AS when making choices about what to accept, and what alternative meanings to expect. This is not because either List is prescribed for A Level, but because examiners consider the Lists to represent a scope of knowledge that an A Level candidate is expected to surpass, and substantially. In the comments below, "(GCSE)" and "(AS)" indicate that a word appears on those lists. The intention is constructive: to help centres and candidates by drawing attention to Greek words that significant numbers of candidates find difficult to pin down even after some years of study, most especially where more than one distinct meaning may be in use.

There were very few explanatory brackets or slashes used by candidates this year. This is a good thing. Candidates should have the confidence to write communicative English: they will only ever lose marks on this paper if their English does not communicate the meaning of the Greek, which a quick re-read will make obvious. The rubric states that contradictory responses will not receive credit: this most definitely applies to "took over the rule/power" or "he became a cruel (difficult) ruler". Brackets are recommended only to clarify a heavily metaphorical expression (e.g. "he told him to get his head out of the gutter (lit. to think better thoughts)"); but of course, if the metaphor is appropriate, the brackets will not be necessary. Examiners see perhaps one candidate response in a year where a bracketed explanation was helpful, and - to reiterate the essential point - brackets that offer any kind of alternative meaning are likely to be harmful.

A small number of candidates of all ability levels did not write their translations on alternate lines, which made their responses harder to mark.

## Section A

## Question 1

- 1 Translate the following passage into English.

Please write your translation on alternate lines.

[50]

*Alexander, a bloodthirsty tyrant and a disloyal husband, is murdered at his wife's instigation.*

The ruler Polyphron was slain by Alexander, acting as avenger of Polydorus and destroyer of the tyranny.

ἐπεὶ δ' αὐτὸς παρέλαβε τὴν ἀρχὴν, χαλεπὸς μὲν Θετταλοῖς ἄρχων ἐγένετο, χαλεπὸς δὲ Θηβαίοις καὶ Αθηναίοις πολέμιος, ἀδικὸς δὲ ληστής καὶ κατὰ γῆν καὶ κατὰ θάλατταν. τοιοῦτος δ' ὢν καὶ αὐτὸς αὐτὸ ἀποθνήσκει, αὐτοχειρία μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν τῆς γυναικὸς ἀδελφῶν, βουλή δὲ ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἐκείνης. τοῖς τε γὰρ ἀδελφοῖς ἐξήγγειλεν ὡς ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος ἐπιβουλεύει αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐκρούψεν αὐτοὺς ἔνδον ὄντας ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν, καὶ δεξαμένη μεθύοντα τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἐπεὶ κατεκοίμισεν, ὁ μὲν λύχνος ἐκαίετο, τὸ δὲ ξίφος αὐτοῦ ἐξήνεγκεν. ὡς δ' ἦσθετο ὀκνοῦντας εἰσιέναι ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον τοὺς ἀδελφούς, εἶπεν ὡς εἰ μὴ ἤδη πρᾶξιεν, ἐξεγερεῖ αὐτόν. ὡς δ' εἰσηλθόν, ἐπισπάσασα τὴν θύραν εἶχετο τοῦ ρόπτρου, ἕως ἀπέθανεν ὁ ἀνὴρ. ἡ δὲ ἔχθρα λέγεται αὐτῇ πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα γενέσθαι ὑπὸ μὲν τινῶν ὡς ἐπεὶ ἔδωκε τὰ ἑαυτοῦ παιδικὰ ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος, νεανίσκον ὄντα καλόν, αἰτησάσης αὐτῆς λῦσαι ἐξαγαγῶν αὐτὸν ἀπέσφαξεν· οἱ δὲ τινες ὡς ἐπεὶ παῖδες αὐτῶ οὐκ ἐγίνοντο ἐκ ταύτης, ὅτι πέμπων εἰς Θήβας ἐμνήστευε τὴν Ἰάσονος γυναῖκα.

Xenophon *Hellenica* VI. 4, 35–37 (adapted)

## Names

Θετταλός, ἡ, ὄν	Thessalian
Θηβαῖος, ἡ, ὄν	Theban
ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος, -ου	Alexander
αἱ Θῆβαι, -ῶν	Thebes
ὁ Ἰάσων, -ονος	Jason (a ruler of Thessaly, previously assassinated)

## Words

ὁ ληστής, -οῦ	pirate, robber
μεθύω	I am drunk
κατακοιμίζω	I put (someone) to bed
ὁ λύχνος, -ου	lamp
ὀκνέω	I hesitate
ἐπισπάω	I pull shut
τὸ ρόπτρον, -ου	door-knocker
ἡ ἔχθρα, -ας	hostility
τὰ παιδικὰ, -ῶν	beloved boy
μνηστεύω	I woo

The passage was handled generally well but contained some good differentiating challenges. Key points included the handling of sentence structure, most especially with  $\mu\epsilon\nu$  and  $\delta\epsilon$ : many candidates would benefit from a reminder that while  $\delta\epsilon$  may or may not be significant,  $\mu\epsilon\nu$  will always be answered further on. As noted below,  $\omega\varsigma$  proved very important in this passage.

1i: Candidates gained full marks only if they translated  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$  in some way.  $\pi\alpha\rho\epsilon\lambda\alpha\beta\epsilon$   $\tau\eta\nu$   $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta\nu$  was a good differentiator: examiners accepted any reasonable English phrasing but not “seized”, which did not fit well with either the vocabulary or the English introduction. “When he took (over/up) the rule” was a remarkably common wording. Examiners would encourage candidates to have the courage to go beyond this to something like “when he took power (GCSE)”, or “when he took control”, “when he took over the kingdom/empire (GCSE)”, etc. Translation is assessed by the proportion of meaning conveyed and, on that basis, these latter examples are clearly no less accurate than the first. They are obviously better translations, too. In fact, “when he took over the rule” was only accepted after some discussion and a corpus check to establish that it is indeed functional English; it could well have been treated as a minor error. Many candidates translated  $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\omega\nu$  as a participle which in their English then morphed into a gerund: “ruling the Thessalians became difficult...” Candidates who wrote “it became difficult...” would have benefited from looking closely at the adjective ending.

ii: Often difficulties in the preceding section carried over to the second. Candidates who spotted  $\mu\epsilon\nu\dots\delta\epsilon\dots\delta\epsilon$  found these particles very helpful.

iii: Many candidates who had struggled with the first two sections got firmly back on board here, although  $\tau\omicron\iota\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$  (GCSE) was translated quite often as “so great”.  $\alpha\upsilon$  was another good differentiator; it was unlikely that Alexander would die twice in one passage, and candidates who were prepared to try another shade of meaning here were rewarded.  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\chi\epsilon\iota\rho\iota\alpha$  allowed candidates to show their resourcefulness, and examiners accepted a range of plausible conjectures, with a similar approach to  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\kappa\omicron\pi\eta\rho\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$  in 2018. The structure here ( $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\chi\epsilon\iota\rho\iota\alpha$   $\mu\epsilon\nu$   $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron$ ...  $\beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\eta$   $\delta\epsilon$   $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron$ ) was a good guide, most especially given the English introduction (“Alexander... is murdered at his wife’s instigation”) and indeed a majority of candidates clearly grasped this essential contrast, with some using the word “instigation” for themselves.

iv: The change of subject was understood by most candidates. It was clear that careful revision of  $\omega\varsigma$  would have helped many: it was used in three different ways in this passage, and relatively few candidates handled all of them well. This passage also tested  $\beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\omega$  (AS),  $\beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\eta$  (GCSE) and  $\beta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\omicron\mu\alpha\iota$  (GCSE, AS) quite thoroughly.

v: By the same principle that candidates for Prose Composition are encouraged to subordinate main clauses using participles, etc., candidates translating from Greek may have confidence to unpack Greek sentences into separated clauses and sentences of English. Some high-ability candidates wrote such things as “when she received Alexander drunk she put him to bed; a light was burning, and...”. “She burned a lamp” was quite a common mistake. High-ability candidates were helped in their translation by looking to the following sections. Seeing that the only part that Alexander’s sword would play in what followed was by its absence, they made clear that his wife removed it rather than unsheathing it, good although such an idea was.

vi:  $\eta\sigma\theta\epsilon\tau\omicron$ , even though GCSE, is not easy and was handled well by a majority.  $\acute{\epsilon}\iota\sigma\iota\epsilon\nu\alpha\iota\dots\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota$  proved more challenging, and (as with Latin in) the hostile force of  $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota$  (GCSE) seems not to be very familiar: a significant number wrote “to go in towards Alexander”.  $\eta\delta\eta$  was quite often translated “already”, which was not accepted.

vii: This shorter section was generally well handled. Many candidates wrote “while” for  $\acute{\epsilon}\omega\varsigma$  (GCSE), however, which was treated as a major error.

viii: The construction here was challenging; even the large majority who were comfortable with λεγεται often had difficulties with ὑπο showing the agent. Higher-ability candidates looked for the δε to follow the μιν here. There were many conjectures for ἐδησε, including often “need” or “miss”.

ix: The participle phrase was almost universally well handled. αιτησσης (GCSE) was problematic, with many offers of “blame”. αυτον as a shared object between λυσαι, εξαγαγων and απεσφαξεν was also challenging, but the sense of the last of these was given by most. As in both parts Paper 2, candidates should be reminded that the subject of the main verb is never the same as the subject of a genitive absolute, as with the equivalent construction in Latin.

x: Candidates who had identified ὑπο μιν τινων... οι δε τινες had no problem supplying a verb here. Many however made agreement between τινες and παιδες, crossing a very clear clause boundary. εκ ταυτης was often translated “out of/from this”; again, the ending showed the gender very clearly. The object-less “sending to Thebes” was often given an object, whether the wife, the children or the widow.

## Section B

## Question 2 (a)

2 (a) Translate the following passage into English.

Please write your translation on alternate lines.

[45]

*Theseus, the king of Athens but currently in exile at Troezen, has (unjustly) cursed his son Hippolytus, asking his own father, the god Poseidon, to destroy him. A messenger arrives with news of Hippolytus' fate.*

CHORUS I see a servant of Hippolytus here, rushing toward the house  
with gloomy face!

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ ποῖ γῆς ἀνακτα τῆσδε Θησεῖα μολῶν  
εὐρομι' ἄν, ὦ γυναῖκες; εἶπερ ἴστε, μοι  
σημήνατ'· ἄρα τῶνδε δωμάτων ἔσω;

ΧΟΡΟΣ ὄδ' αὐτὸς ἔξω δωμάτων πορεύεται.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ Θησεῦ, μερίμνης ἄξιον φέρω λόγον  
σοὶ καὶ πολίταις οἳ τ' Ἀθηναίων πόλιν  
ναίουσι καὶ γῆς τέρμονας Τροιζηνίας.

5

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ τί δ' ἔστι; μῶν τις συμφορὰ νεωτέρα  
δισσὰς κατέλιψ' ἄστρυγείτονας πόλεις;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ Ἴππόλυτος οὐκέτ' ἔστιν, ὡς εἶπεῖν ἔπος·  
δέδορκε μέντοι φῶς ἐπὶ σμικρᾶς ῥοπῆς.

10

οἰκεῖος αὐτὸν ὤλεσ' ἀρμάτων ὄχος  
ἀραί τε τοῦ σοῦ στόματος, ἄς σὺ σῶ πατρὶ  
πόντου κρέοντι παιδὸς ἠράσω πέρι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ ὦ θεοί, Πόσειδον θ'· ὡς ἄρ' ἦσθ' ἐμὸς πατήρ  
ὀρθῶς, ἀκούσας τῶν ἐμῶν κατευγμάτων.

15

Euripides, *Hippolytus* 1153–1170 (omitting 1164–1165)

## Names

ὁ Θησεύς, -έως  
Τροιζήνιος, -α, -ον  
ὁ Ποσειδῶν, -ῶνος

Theseus  
of Troezen  
Poseidon

## Words

ἡ μερίμνα, -ης  
μῶν;  
ἀστρυγείτων, genitive -ονος  
ἐπὶ σμικρᾶς ῥοπῆς  
ἀρμάτων ὄχος

anxiety, care  
surely ... not?  
neighbouring  
= 'by a slender thread'  
= chariot

This passage of stichomythia, a textbook Arrival-of-a-Messenger exchange, was handled well. Following up on comments in the 2018 report, it was clear that this year centres have worked hard to prepare candidates for what to expect from such a “set piece”. Many of the strongest translations were written in a noticeably heightened register compared to Question 1; while it is certainly not a requirement (and even less of a recommendation) that candidates fill translations of Tragedy with “forsooth” and “behold”, many of the responses with the best comprehension also had the strongest sense of style in the English. This came in many guises: in some very strong responses the style was in fact markedly colloquial, which worked well for the dialogue too. Either way, the candidates who had the confidence to write either “O ye gods; and Poseidon too!” or “O gods; O Poseidon!” tended to be those with the strongest comprehension overall.



As with the first passage, there was a great deal of very helpful information in the substantial English introduction, most especially concerning the curses that Theseus had made and indeed the fact that Hippolytus had come to grief.

A substantial minority did not translate the character names (in practice, application of the Mark Scheme meant that this in most cases meant loss of one mark), and some did not even give any indication of the changes of speaker. Paying more attention to such structure would have helped.

2ai: Most candidates started strongly here, recognising the Messenger's question and address to the Chorus. μολων was very widely known. Many candidates, had they been clearer on the force of ποι, would not have attempted to connect it with γης, whose syntax was in fact very straightforward.

ii: σημηναι' was well handled; ιστε less so. The demonstrative τωνδε was left out by many candidates.

iii: Higher-ability candidates thought in dramatic terms and found a way to express the demonstratives well ("here comes that very man", "this is the man himself"). The second part of this section was translated accurately by almost all candidates.

iv: οι was not always connected with πολιταις; a common misconception was that ναιουσι had to do with sailing. τερμονας was familiar to about half of candidates, and saw some creative conjectures.

v: Most candidates found an appropriate English word - in many cases very idiomatic - for κατεληφ'. This section was generally done well.

vi: Of the three idiomatic phrases here, interestingly the most challenging to candidates turned out to be the third, which in the literature is probably the most common idiom of the three. Examiners were very flexible here but did not accept "he has seen the light" which does not reflect the Greek tense and has an inappropriate idiomatic meaning in English.

vii: Vocabulary here appeared challenging: οικειος led to many conjectures about a 'domestic chariot'. Candidates who recognised στομα (AS) were able to use the English introduction for help with αραι; candidates who thought they saw σωμα (GCSE) became quite confused.

viii: Here it was the word order that was the biggest challenge. The unambiguous nominative συ was very helpful, but many candidates discarded this because they thought they saw a first-person singular in ηρασω. Word order caused great confusion about what was done by whom to whom about whom.

ix: Candidates generally made a careful attempt to bring the passage to a convincing close. As noted above, there were various good ways to invoke the gods and Poseidon, but a significant minority of candidates seemed not to recognise θ'. ησθ' was frequently connected with αισθανομαι; but the main differentiator was that higher-ability candidates translated the central clause as an exclamation following ως, where others made it into a question, or tried to combine the two clauses.

## Question 2 (b)

(b) Write out and scan lines 2 and 4.

εὕρομι' ἄν, ὦ γυναῖκες; εἶπερ ἴστε μοι

and

ὄδ' αὐτὸς ἔξω δωμαίων πορεύεται.

[5]

This question was answered fully correctly by an overwhelming majority of candidates. The most common error was to scan the first syllable of γυναῖκες as heavy.

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### Section A, Q1

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### Section B, Q2

Adapted from Euripides, 'Hippolytus', 1153-1170. OCR is aware that third party material appeared in this exam, but it has not been possible to identify and acknowledge the source.

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