

**A LEVEL**

**Examiners' report**

**LATIN**

**H443**

For first teaching in 2016

**H443/02 Summer 2024 series**

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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. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. 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 and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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## Paper 2 series overview

The alternative sections of the paper seemed to even out in terms of the demands made on candidates: both were able to pose a challenge to candidates of all abilities. Approximately two thirds selected Comprehension and Grammar, and there was a wider range of performance here than among the Prose Composition candidates. Some impressive performances were seen on both and there were fewer markedly unsuccessful responses than in recent years. Marks approaching 50, however, on either section were rare. Time seemed adequate for all – except for a small number of candidates who, perhaps in a misguided effort to hedge their bets, spread it between attempts at both sections.

## Section A (Comprehension and Grammar) overview

In a comprehension exercise such as this, unlike a pure translation paper, a response is either right or it is wrong; answers which are close, even including some of the correct words, do not show *comprehension* of what is being read and therefore cannot be given the marks. The sections of Latin used in the questions were mostly several lines long and candidates who attempted to pick out answers without taking the time to digest the whole of each section often ended up in a muddle. In Question 2, for instance, a response which had 'the defending of a revealed city with a war of a continually long time' contained a mix of useful elements but showed no understanding of what the sentence is really saying. The time allowed should be generous enough to allow for a complete reading through of the passage *before* any answers are committed to paper and, ideally, for a second thorough reading afterwards to catch any points missed.

Many candidates produced answers to the grammar questions which were at variance with their responses earlier to the same parts of the passage. Candidates are advised to make use of the grammar questions as an opportunity to revisit their responses to the comprehension questions, rather than viewing them as something detached from the main part of the exercise.

Candidates who did well on this section generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this section generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• had a wide and firm knowledge of vocabulary acquired from reading a range of Latin authors</li> <li>• were able to make sensible guesses at the meaning in context of unfamiliar words</li> <li>• had a robust knowledge of standard accidence and syntax</li> <li>• digested the text and questions thoroughly before starting to write down answers to any questions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• did not know the meanings of common words, e.g. those listed on the AS vocabulary list</li> <li>• did not seem to have the experience/flexibility to make successful guesses at unfamiliar words</li> <li>• did not seem to have a sufficiently robust knowledge of basic accidence and syntax</li> <li>• did not study the text as a whole, focusing piecemeal on individual questions.</li> </ul>

## Question 1

- 1 *non facit ... protrahit* (lines 1–2): according to Seneca, what harm does drunkenness do? [3]

The gist of these opening lines was generally well understood and many achieved full marks, in spite of including some rather inapt versions for *incendit* (e.g. 'burned') and *latebat* (e.g. 'hiding').

## Question 2

- 2 *cogita ... perdidit* (lines 3–5): what effects has drunkenness had on entire nations? [5]

Most candidates made some sense of these lines, though some did not register that *gentes* refers to 'entire nations' rather than to (singular) 'people' and *clades* to more than one disaster. Other problems included the meanings of *acerrimas*, *patefecit* and *perdidit*, and recognising the force of the prefix on *invictos* ('unconquered' or 'unconquerable', rather than 'conquered'). Some candidates also missed the fact the long war describes the defence of the walls rather than being another result of drunkenness – something which a careful reading of Seneca's 'textbook' word order should have made clear.

## Question 3

- 3 In lines 5–7 (*Alexandrum ... obruit*), what details does Seneca include to show the change caused to Alexander by excessive drinking? [4]

Few candidates managed to follow the simple overall structure – *Alexandrum ... intemperantia bibendi obruit*, interrupted by a *cum* clause containing three parallel phrases and an ablative absolute. Some candidates read *tot* as *totus* ('all' or 'whole') or took the meaning of *superata* with *hiemes*, overlooking *difficultate* and fitting it in subsequently as 'with difficulty'. A response which read 'overcoming so many battles and winters of difficult times and places' was an example of the muddled approach which may seem near, but is actually rather far from the meaning of this sentence and did not score well.

## Question 4

- 4 *Marcum Antonium ... reddidit* (lines 7–9): what does Seneca say which shows the decline of Marc Antony? [7]

As with Question 3, it was important to sense the very clear overall structure: the subject of the first sentence is not the accusative *Marcum Antonium* but *quid aliud ... quam ebrietas*; and, in the second, *illum* (= Antony) is the object of *haec res* (= drunkenness) ... *reddidit*. Those who did not do so tended to guess at what lay in between. A significant number of candidates confused *mores* with *moras*, though *vitia non Romana* was generally handled well; the use of *reddere* to mean 'render' or 'make' was not known to many, resulting in Antony frequently 'returning' to the state/enemy. Few candidates realised that the reason for the inclusion of Antony's love for Cleopatra is that it (*nec minor vino*) played as significant a part in his downfall as wine.

## Question 5

5 Translate *eum crudelem ... faciebat* (lines 10–12).

Please write your translation on alternate lines.

[10]

Most candidates made a good attempt at this. In the first half, *capita* was sometimes rendered as 'captured' and *manus inimicorum* as 'a band of the enemy'; the dative participle *cenanti* was not always fitted in successfully, while some versions implied that Antony had resorted to cannibalism; only the most successful responses saw candidates find their way through *cum vino gravis . . . sanguinem*, including the problem of how to handle *tamen*. The three main issues in the second half were (a) the impersonal *intolerabile*, rather than a reference to Antony himself; (b) the force of *quanto* + the comparative; (c) a tendency to take *facio* as 'make' rather than 'do', which led some off the track.

## Question 6

6 In lines 13–15 (*sicut ... valent*), how does Seneca illustrate the harmful consequences of drunkenness?

[6]

The simile, though signposted *sicut ... ita*, was not always understood – quite a number of candidates resorted to putting together words from different parts of the sentence – and too often the inverted word order, perhaps exacerbated by the accumulation of adjectives, was allowed to override the clear grammatical structure (*nos ... faciunt morbi*). The point about *ebrietates continuae* ('constant drunkenness') was not often distinguished from 'drunkenness continually ...', nor illness (*morbus*) from death (*mors*); the phrase *consuetudo insaniae* puzzled many candidates, although a good number saw the point of Seneca's final observation (*vitia ... valent*).

## Exemplar 1

6)	Seneca illustrates the harmful consequences through <del>as they are</del> <sup>things</sup> sad and difficult <del>as they are</del> <sup>things</sup> carried them to long-lasting death and anger towards
	the smallest offense, in this way drunkenness enrages the continuous mind. For it endured insanity with persuasion and <del>even the</del> with the sins having been made, <del>for</del> they were <del>strong</del> even strong without it.

The exemplar above, though showing some knowledge, exemplifies the muddle that could easily result from not understanding the structure of lines 13–15. This response gained 2 marks.

## Question 7 (a), (b) and (c)

7 State and explain the case of the following:

- |                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| (a) <i>consiliis</i> (line 1) | [2] |
| (b) <i>annorum</i> (line 4)   | [2] |
| (c) <i>vino</i> (line 8)      | [2] |

The most successfully answered of these was (b) – though for the second mark, besides the point mentioned above, there were some vague suggestions of ‘possession’ or ‘genitive of time’. The ablative in (c) was also generally identified, though not always for the right reason (‘ablative absolute’ being a not infrequent guess). The dative in (a) almost invariably came out as ablative; few candidates connected it with *obstantem*, which most just pushed to one side and instead supplied a plausible explanation of an ablative, such as ‘removes shame from wicked thoughts’.

### Assessment for learning



These questions ask candidates to state **and explain** the case of each example. A translation is accepted as sometimes the most effective way of showing understanding of the case used – especially for those unsure of the appropriate grammatical term in this particular instance – but the translation must make clear **why** the case is appropriate. This will usually involve providing a little extra context within which to set the word concerned, not simply a bare translation of the word itself.

Question 7 (b) provides a typical example of what is expected. Here ‘of many years’, while a grammatically correct rendering of a genitive in isolation, does not illustrate **why** a genitive is required, and so did not earn credit. What examiners were looking for was either a grammatical term (‘genitive of description’) or an explanation in the candidate’s own words (‘it describes the war’) or, as a translation, ‘a war of many years’.

Candidates should take care that a translation, if offered *in addition* to a grammatical term or explanation, matches the explanation given; conflicting attempts to offer two responses to the same question are discounted altogether (see the general instructions at the start of the mark scheme). Sensible advice is to offer **either** an explanation **or** a translation which covers the same ground, but not both.

## Question 8 (a), (b) and (c)

8 Which part of the verb are the following:

- |                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| (a) <i>obstantem</i> (line 1)? | [1] |
| (b) <i>cogita</i> (line 3)?    | [1] |
| (c) <i>bibendi</i> (line 7)?   | [1] |

A majority of candidates recognised the form of the present participle in (a) and, pleasingly, the gerund in (c) – though answers elsewhere often showed little appreciation of how either of these fitted into the context. In (b), however, the first conjugation imperative (which could be no other form of the verb) was scarcely recognised by anyone, which must have jeopardised understanding of what Seneca is doing in this paragraph and probably accounts for the lack of success with explaining *ediderit* in Question 10.



## Question 9 (a) and (b)

9 Give the present active infinitive of the following:

(a) *patefecit* (line 4)

[1]

(b) *concepta* (line 15)

[1]

Candidates were often successful in both parts, though a good many, perhaps misled by the exceptional *patefacere* in (a), did not remember how compounds of *capere* usually change the vowel to *-cipere*. There are also still a few who, despite the clear instruction, continue to offer the first person, present tense, which scores 0.

## Question 10

10 From lines 3–7 (*cogita ... obruit*), write down **two** subjunctive verbs and explain why each needs to be subjunctive, using a translation if you think it is helpful. [4]

The two subjunctives were located by the majority of candidates, who usually identified correctly the link between *transiisset* and the preceding *cum*. However, there seemed to be a lot of guessing for *ediderit* (e.g. subordinate clause within reported speech, or actually the verb of an indirect statement), when the real answer (indirect question) should have been clear if the sentence had been read correctly in full (see above, on Question 8 (b)).

### Key point call out

That the verb in an indirect question must go into the subjunctive is a frequent, straightforward and universal rule of Latin grammar, yet correctly identifying this construction causes problems to A Level candidates year after year. We would advise centres to spend some time in the latter half of the course revising this rule.

## Section B (Prose Composition) overview

For those who had the skills and practice necessary for this kind of exercise, the passage seemed well within their scope. While there were not as many really polished versions as there might have been, there were many serviceable attempts and fewer candidates this year seemed completely out of their depth.

Most candidates spotted opportunities for more stylish writing – idiomatic phrases, for example, or the choice of apt vocabulary or positioning of particular words – and many earned all of the 5 marks available. As always, however, there was a small number of capable Latinists who made things more difficult for themselves (and often forfeited marks) by attempting to introduce exotic variations which didn't work as well as the standard constructions and often led to further unnecessary errors.

A handful of scripts omitted the first two lines of the passage and started abruptly with 'when he reached Sparta'. This ought to have alerted the writers that something was not quite right, besides the fairly large space left between the instructions and the beginning of the passage, plus the fact that the passages used over the years in Section B (unlike Section A) have never had an English introduction.

Candidates who did well on this section generally did the following:	Candidates who did less well on this section generally did the following:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• had a wide and firm knowledge of vocabulary acquired from reading a range of Latin authors</li> <li>• had a robust knowledge of standard accidence and syntax</li> <li>• had had plenty of practice at similar examples of this exercise (especially previous papers)</li> <li>• aimed at producing a straightforward, accurate version, without taking unnecessary risks with grammar or vocabulary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• did not know the meanings of common words, e.g. those listed on the AS vocabulary list</li> <li>• did not seem to have a sufficiently robust knowledge of basic accidence and syntax</li> <li>• did not seem to have the experience/flexibility to turn English idioms into an appropriate Latin equivalent</li> <li>• tried to use complex constructions or exotic vocabulary unnecessarily in place of standard alternatives.</li> </ul>

## Question 11

11 Translate this passage into Latin prose.

You are reminded that marks will be awarded for the style of your translation.

Please write your translation on alternate lines.

[50]

(i) *Aristagoras urged the Ionians to free their country from the Persians and choose their own leaders.*

Most candidates opted for the obvious *hortatus est*, though some followed this with a simple infinitive rather than the indirect command construction. A few saw an opportunity here either to use just the participle *hortatus* (combining the first two sentences) or to create an ablative absolute *patria liberata*, subordinating the rest. *patria* was the common and most appropriate choice here for 'country'.

(ii) *Meanwhile he himself sailed to Greece to seek powerful allies. When he reached Sparta ...*

This was generally well done, apart from occasional doubt about how to handle 'himself' (*ipse*, rather than *se*) and the omission of a preposition with the name of the country. Several created a tidy gerundive phrase for 'to seek powerful allies'; some, however, tried too hard to force the fairly simple clause 'when he reached Sparta' into a quite impossible ablative absolute.

(iii) *he promised King Cleomenes that great wealth could be obtained and that the Persians would be very easy to defeat in battle.*

This section was one of the most testing in the passage, requiring candidates to find a way of getting round two passive infinitives. This problem was solved quite easily by some using the literal *comparari/superari posse*, while others sensibly turned the whole thing round ('he would obtain ... and easily defeat') which made translation considerably easier. Unfortunately, many tied themselves in knots trying to create future passive infinitives, or even a subjunctive construction instead of an indirect statement. Smaller things were sometimes tackled unsuccessfully – the dative for Cleomenes, and the formation of *facillime* – and those who offered *facillimos vincere fore* showed little feeling for Latin idiom.

(iv) *When the king asked how long the road was to Persia, Aristagoras replied ...*

Once again, plain and simple often worked best, as long as candidates realised that they were dealing with an indirect question rather than an indirect statement, and remembered the perfect tense of *respondere*. Some candidates forced the straightforward temporal clause 'when the king asked' into an unsuitable ablative absolute (*rege rogato*), or tried promoting *rex* to start the sentence, then left him grammatically high and dry. Sadly, very few candidates saw the chance for the idiomatic phrasing *regi roganti ... Aristagoras respondit*. The misspelling of Aristagoras' name in this section had no impact on assessment.

(v) *that it was three months' journey from the coast. Alarmed by this, Cleomenes exclaimed ...*

The phrase 'three months' journey' caused problems, few writing the genitive *trium mensium* or even remembering that *iter* is neuter. A good number of candidates took the opportunity to use a connecting relative at the start of the sentence, and there was a variety of good ideas for 'alarmed' (*attonitus*, *terrītus*, *perturbatus*, etc.). Some used *negavit* (rightly) to introduce the following indirect statement, but it really needed the addition of *voce magna* or some such expression to convey 'exclaimed'.

(vi) *that Spartans would never dare to march so far from their homeland ...*

This was another largely successful section. It was pleasing to see that a majority of candidates were able to form the future infinitive correctly – though others got no further than *audere* – and there was a variety of good suggestions for 'march' (*contendere*, *iter facere*, *signum ferre*, etc.).

## Exemplar 2

		hoc attonitus, clamavit
		lacedaemonios numquam tam
		audaces numquam esse futurum esse
		quia procul munita patria coate
		contenturos sint, et eum disced

The exemplar above, from (vi), gives an instance of over-complexity leading to unforced errors.

(vii) *and ordered him to leave Sparta immediately. However, in Athens, when Aristagoras told the people the same things ...*

'Ordered to leave' should have been straightforward, but a number of candidates either followed *iussit* with *ut* plus the subjunctive or, if they used *impero*, forgot that it governs the dative (or wrote *eo* or *illo*). A narrow majority did not use the ablative after *discedere/exire*, and there was only an occasional locative for 'in Athens'. A straightforward translation of the temporal clause using *ubi* or *postquam* was (rightly) the preferred route, but some – often the same candidates who had tried the same thing in (ii) – gave the impossible ablative absolute *Aristagora dicto*. 'The people' (always worth careful selection) was done best with *civibus*, though *populo* (not *populum*) or even *hominibus* made reasonable substitutes. The declension of *idem* was patchy and *easdem res* (not always formed correctly) as common as the more idiomatic neuter plural.

(viii) *they eagerly decided to send twenty ships to help the Ionians. How much easier it seems ...*

Difficulties mounted here and in (ix), though it was pleasing to see that many candidates coped well with most of them. Particular problems here were what to use for 'how much' and how to form the neuter of *facilior*. 'They decided to send', however, should have been easier than some tried to make it, with subjunctives, etc., and the purpose clause also should have been a 'given' – though using *ad/causa* + gerundive was an appealing bonus. Smaller things, however, tended to spoil good work, e.g. the frequent misspelling of *viginti*, the conjugation of *adiuvare*, and (for those who, stylishly, replaced *ut* with a relative pronoun) the gender of ships (*quae*, not *qui*).

(ix) *to deceive a multitude than one man: for Aristagoras, having failed to convince Cleomenes, succeeded with thirty thousand Athenians!*

Some, but not all, candidates sensed that the comparison between 'a multitude' and 'one man' required *quam* rather than a simple ablative, and that *unum* really needed to be defined with *virum* or *hominem*. 'Having failed' and 'succeeded' caused problems to those (and they were many) who tried to tackle the English word for word, including 'convince' (**not** *convincere*) and 'succeeded with' (no phrasing involving some verb + *cum* proved acceptable). The most successful responses saw candidates conclude, rightly, that it was necessary to strip down what the sentence was actually trying to convey, i.e. 'he was not able to persuade ...he was able to persuade'. Once again, numerals caused problems to all but a few: the spelling and indeclinable nature of *triginta*, the contrasting necessity to decline *mille*, and the need for it to be accompanied by a genitive (*Atheniensium*).

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