

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

CLASSICAL GREEK

H444

For first teaching in 2016

H444/02 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

This is the Comprehension or Prose Composition paper. Candidates choose which of the two options to answer. Very occasionally a candidate answers both; in such a case both responses are marked, and the higher mark is given in accordance with the rubric.

Once again Comprehension was the more popular option: 43% chose Prose Composition, the same proportion as last year.

In general, handwriting was acceptable and appears to improve year on year. Candidates should be reminded that where the Greek letters written (especially breathings) are ambiguous, Benefit of the Doubt is not guaranteed. This notably applies to the regular question that asks to identify a verb: a missing breathing is a missing letter. (Accents, however, are not required.) Similarly, in Prose Composition, a missing breathing will be penalised as a slight error like any other spelling mistake; each year a small number of scripts show only rough breathings or no breathings at all.

Following the approach of previous years, on both this paper and Paper 1, examiners made reference 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 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.

Examiners noted in particular that for many candidates, it would be worth directing effort towards certain words and confusions that may well have been troubling them since GCSE: αἰτιάομαι (AS) / αἰτέω (GCSE), for example, or the different cases that follow common prepositions. Especially with conjunctions and prepositions, the benefit can be disproportionate to the time spent compared with (for example) learning nouns and adjectives. Teachers are encouraged, as one suggestion, to make a habit of testing new noun vocabulary alongside common prepositions, and verbs alongside adverbs, etc.

Assessment for learning



Confusion of prepositions and their following cases can cause havoc for comprehension. Many grammar books offer common phrases illustrating these, arranged in informative groups (e.g., κατὰ τοὺς νόμους alongside παρὰ τοὺς νόμους) which can stick in the memory better than a dry 'κατά + acc'; consider allocating these for learning, or indeed keeping lists of uses of preposition encountered in set texts, which again might bring lasting recall.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<p>comprehension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> made use of the thorough English introduction and kept track of the story appeared to recognise the genre of a legal speech, and so noticed the significance of words such as οὔτοι and μάρτυραι gave clear grammatical explanations that identified important connected words when quoting Greek, remembered to write breathings <p>prose composition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> made sensible choices about combining or subordinating English phrases, while avoiding over-reaching used simpler particles or vocabulary effectively and correctly, rather than trying to impress with esoteric choices of words showed signs of checking through their translation and adjusting the word order for clarity. 	<p>comprehension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> translated rather than answered the questions (especially where verbs were in the first person) seemed less confident in separating out the events and characters gave long-winded or even self-contradictory grammatical explanations <p>prose composition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> were over-ambitious in subordinating, and/or lost track of a structure like Indirect Statement when the sentence became long and unwieldy were unclear about the use of pronouns, especially ἐαυτόν and οὗτος.

Section A overview

Question 1

Comprehension and Grammar

1 τὰ μὲν γινόμενα ... τὰ εἰκότα (line 1): what does Euxitheus encourage his audience to do? [2]

Most candidates achieved 2 marks here. Examiners noted that εἰκός appears on the AS DVL, but its meaning might also have become clear through the wording of 5(a) if read closely with the Greek.

Exemplar 1

1		Euxitheus encourages his audience to consider the facts and from these they will see what happened

This well-written answer gained the first mark for 'consider' but does not put across the force of τὰ εἰκότα so was not given the second mark.

Question 2 (a)

2 πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ ... τὴν ἀγγελίαν (lines 1–3):

(a) What was Euxitheus about to do? [2]

ἀνάγομαι appears on the AS DVL; appreciation of the simple and relevant meaning of this phrase were therefore required.

Question 2 (b)

(b) What happened after Herodes disappeared? [2]

A common slip here was to see a part of αἰτέω and suggest that nobody *asked for* Euxitheus.

Question 2 (c)

(c) Why does Euxitheus suggest that this was surprising to him?

[3]

Most candidates received at least 1 or 2 marks here. The first was quite commonly missed because the answer did not deal with τούτων and said simply 'they had already learned the news.'

Question 3 (a)

3 λέγουσι δὲ ... ἐκ τοῦ πλοίου (lines 5–6):

(a) Explain what the prosecution says happened.

[3]

This question was mostly well answered.

Question 3 (b)

(b) How does Euxitheus respond to this claim?

[2]

The emphatic κἀγώ helped make clear who was the subject of ὃς οὐκ ἐξέβην. Some candidates took this as referring to Herodes.

Question 4

4 ὅπως δ' ... ἀποφάινειν (lines 7–8): what, according to Euxitheus, is the prosecution failing to do?

[2]

'Explain/show/describe/prove' and other variations were all accepted for the first mark; it was essential for the second mark to interpret ὅπως, which was quite often missed even though it was the introductory word to the clause.

Question 5 (a)

5 δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι ... ἐκ τοῦ πλοίου (lines 8–9):

(a) Where does Euxitheus suggest that it is likely that things took place?

[2]

This was almost always successful for both marks.

Question 5 (b)

(b) What reasons does Euxitheus give to justify his suggestion?

[3]

This question was answered well, with the first point being the most commonly missed. Examiners noted that similar vocabulary had appeared, by coincidence, in the Unseen Translation paper, but had the impression the word was omitted altogether here more often than omitted or not known in that paper.

Question 6

6 ζητουμένου δὲ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ... ἐκ τοῦ πλοίου (lines 10–12): translate these lines into English.
Please write your translation on alternate lines.

[10]

The translation was generally done very well with a good number of candidates achieving a mark of 9 or 10. Difficulties quite often arose with συγχωρέω (AS) and the courtroom reference of τοῦτων. Examiners noted that six different meanings for λόγος are given in the GCSE and AS DVLS, and a wide range of improvements on the very basic translation 'word' were offered.

Question 7 (a)

7 οὐδενὶ τρόπῳ ... ἀπὸ τῆς θαλάσσης (lines 12–14):

(a) What does Euxitheus think is unlikely?

[2]

Here candidates needed to combine two notions for 2 marks, and in sequence: that Herodes could vanish, and also that he could remain hidden.

Question 7 (b)

(b) What condition does he attach to this claim?

[2]

πόρρω (AS) was quite often omitted, perhaps due to word position before the verb, but was required for the second mark. 'Forwards' was not accepted as 'far away' was clearly the important point: Herodes could only have escaped notice if he had gone some distance away from the harbour (contrasting with ἐγγύς mentioned previously).

Question 8 (a)

8 Which part of the verb are the following?

(a) σκοπεῖτε (line 1)

[1]

This was mostly identified correctly. The courtroom context helped: direct speech makes frequent use of imperatives.

Question 8 (b)

(b) ἴσασιν (line 7)

[1]

This was also widely answered well. The most common incorrect answers were subjunctive and/or aorist, presumably influenced by the -σα-.

Question 9 (a)

9 Give the first person singular, present indicative active of the following:

(a) ἐξέβην (line 6)

[1]

This was usually answered well. It was common for candidates to omit the initial breathing or to write ἐξβαίνω, neither of which could be accepted.

Question 9 (b)

(b) ζητουμένου (line 10)

[1]

This was usually correct.

Question 9 (c)

(c) λαθεῖν (line 13)

[1]

This was most often correct, but λαμβάνω was occasionally offered instead.

Question 10 (a)

10 State and explain the case of the following words:

(a) ἐμοῦ (line 4)

[2]

This was mostly answered correctly and efficiently (all that was required was 'genitive: κατηγορέω takes the genitive' or even 'genitive following κατηγορέω,' which is a clear and accurate description).

Question 10 (b)

(b) λιμένος (line 8)

[2]

This was correct in almost all cases.

Answering grammar questions efficiently

Words such as 'after' and 'follows/following' are often the most efficient way to explain the case of a noun. Where the meaning is affected by which case follows a preposition or verb, it may be appropriate to add explanation such as 'accusative following κατά meaning 'in accordance with''.

Teachers and candidates are advised to study past Mark Schemes together with the relevant papers to see which details are required to gain marks; questions are intended to test understanding of the important points of the structure under discussion.

Question 10 (c)

(c) ἀφανισθέντα (line 13)

[2]

The immediate reason why the participle is accusative is that it agrees with τὸν ἄνθρωπον, so this (or an accurate translation) was accepted for the second mark. That noun itself is accusative because it is the accusative subject of the indirect statement ('acc + inf') following δυνατὸς ἦν, so this explanation was accepted as well.

Exemplar 2

10.	a)	genitive = with the verb 'κατηγοροῦσθαι'.
10.	b)	genitive = follows the preposition 'εἰς'.
10.	c)	accusative = follows with 'λαθεῖν'.

Questions 10(a) and 10(b) show efficient explanation including the useful term 'follows'; these received 2 marks. 'κατηγορέω takes the genitive' was another popular wording. For 10(c), however, the explanation is insufficient: it is not clear in what sense the word is 'with' λαθεῖν (As direct object? As subject in an accusative-infinitive construction?) so the second mark could not be given.

Question 11 (a)

11 Explain, using a translation if you think it is helpful, the grammar of the following words:

(a) ἀνάγεσθαι (line 2)

[2]

This question was well answered by most candidates.

Question 11 (b)

(b) πεπυσμένων (line 3)

[2]

This question was well answered by most candidates.

Section B overview

Once again this year, the standard of translation was very high, with many candidates achieving a mark over 40 and some at the very top of the scale. Examiners noted that, as usual, a really solid command of GCSE grammar and syntax would serve well for most of the translation required - at least for a 'basic' version (which of course would, if free of errors, be given high marks). There were relatively few complex constructions required, but instead some challenging sections where the English did not obviously correspond to a typical Greek structure. The passage offered plenty of opportunities for idiomatic subordination with participles; candidates responded accordingly. As has become normal, there were very few eccentric attempts at 'stylish' writing; the idiomatic quality of the Greek offered is now very good.

The frequent appearance of τρόπος in 12vi and ἠτιάσαντο or κατηγόρησαν in 12viii suggested that some candidates had fruitfully scoured the Comprehension passage for vocabulary inspiration. (δύνανται and ζητούμενου might also have been helpful.)

Question 12

Prose Composition

12 Translate this passage into Classical Greek prose.

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

Please write your translation on alternate lines.

[50]

i: Most candidates made a strong start, gaining + for initial connection. τε ... καί could only be credited, however, if the word order was appropriate; this is worth noting carefully.

Exemplar 3

12	οὐ δ' Ἀθηναίους παλαί τοὺς τε νεανίας
	καὶ τὰς κόρας πρὸς τὴν κτ κρητὴν
	πολλακίς ἔπεμψαν ἔπεμπον, ὅτε,

This clearly written translation (which followed a page of notes and rough working) was given 5 marks for 12i, with + for the connecting δ', the idiomatic word order of τοὺς τε... καί, and the frequentative imperfect ἔπεμπον ('they used to send/they were in the habit of sending').

ii: It was common to offer a dative following the verb of necessity, perhaps under influence of Latin *opus est*. κατὰ + accusative for 'according to' was almost always offered correctly and + given for the genitive sandwich here.

iii: 'every kind of' was a challenge, with higher-achieving candidates making use of παντοῖας νόσους and a range of other suggestions. A significant number incorrectly followed a form of πᾶς with a genitive, or the verb ἀμύνωσιν with a dative of the object warded off (in all uses of this verb, including the middle voice, it is accusative; the person from whom the danger is warded off is what needs, if expressed, to go into the dative).

iv: Many candidates successfully used a participle for 'when they had been brought...' and were frequently given + for οἱ πολλοί. 'Believe' quite frequently became 'believed,' which was incorrect.

v/vi: The principal challenge here was to keep the indirect statement construction going; it was quite common to lose track of a case or structure, with accusatives becoming nominatives later on, or infinitive verbs becoming participles inappropriately. A common trap was to use the nominative οἳ τ' ὄντες where the chosen accusative-infinitive construction required accusative.

vii: This section was generally done well. It was quite common to use ἔχων for ἔχον (agreeing with θηρίον) and to write ὁ τοῦ Ἀθηναίου βασιλέως (where 'king of the Athenians' would be more idiomatic and stood to gain + for the genitive sandwich, if not already awarded).

viii: Though challenging, this section was well handled with good use of prepositions (for 'towards his father' - simple dative was not enough) and notably successful relative clauses. τὸν πατέρα was quite often wrongly formed, with incorrect versions ranging from πατρα to πατρεμ.

ix: Various sensible solutions for 'for his courage and eagerness' were suggested and most candidates gained high marks in this final section. πατριά appeared quite frequently in place of the more appropriate πατρίς.

x: As discussed above, a wide range of thoughtful offerings were given +, with many of these detailed in the Mark Scheme. Most candidates achieved the full 5 marks available, often already within the first third of the passage.

Misconception



Many candidates, including those who otherwise attained highly, wrote (perhaps under the influence of Latin?) incorrect third declension accusative plurals in -εξ. This happened especially often with participles.

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