

Examiners' report

A LEVEL

CLASSICAL GREEK

OCR Level 3 Advanced GCE in
Classical Greek

H444

For first teaching in 2016

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Contents

Introduction	3
Paper 2 series overview	4
Section A overview	6
Question 1	6
Question 2 (a)	7
Question 2 (b)	7
Question 2 (c)	7
Question 3	7
Question 4 (a)	8
Question 4 (b)	8
Question 5	8
Question 6	8
Question 7 (a)	9
Question 7 (b)	9
Question 7 (c)	9
Question 8 (a)	9
Question 8 (b), 9 (a) and (b)	9
Question 9 (c)	10
Question 10 (a)	10
Question 10 (b)	10
Question 10 (c)	10
Question 11 (a)	11
Question 11 (b)	11
Section B overview	12
Question 12	12

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 responses 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 [Teach Cambridge](#).

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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. In a new development, the two sections were equal in uptake; this represents a significant shift in favour of Prose Composition.

Handwriting continues to improve year on year. Candidates should be reminded that where written Greek letters (especially breathings) are ambiguous, credit is not guaranteed. This notably applies to the regular question that requires identifying a verb: a missing breathing is a missing letter. Accents 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 in those lists. The intention is constructive: to help centres and candidates by drawing attention to Greek words that many candidates find difficult to identify correctly 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 constructions that may well have been troubling them since GCSE: ξένος (for example) has five meanings given at GCSE; βοηθέω (GCSE) would be helpful for τὴν βοήθειαν (AS), etc. The different cases that follow common prepositions are often problematic even for otherwise high-achieving candidates. 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 κατὰ + acc.; consider allocating these for learning, or indeed keeping lists of preposition uses 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:
Comprehension: - answered the question, paying attention to the number of marks available, rather than simply translating the relevant Greek - followed the story and allowed this to inform their choices between possible meanings of words - gave clear grammatical explanations that identified important connected/governing words - when quoting Greek, remembered to write breathings. Prose composition: - made sensible choices about combining or subordinating English phrases, 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 - made sure to connect sentences with appropriate particles.	Comprehension: - translated rather than answered the questions (especially where verbs were in the first person) - seemed less confident in separating out the events and characters, or occurrences of similar words - gave long-winded and even self-contradictory grammatical explanations. Prose composition: - were vague on key items such as use of the article or pronouns, especially when building relative clauses - may have been over-ambitious in subordinating - used English punctuation rather than Greek. Notably, a significant number used an English semi-colon (;) instead of a Greek colon (·). This was treated as an error akin to an incorrect breathing.

Section A overview

The passage appeared reasonably accessible to candidates, with marks distributed similarly to last year. The greater complexity of the Greek compared with Paper 1 is often balanced out by the structure and wording of the questions. The mark scheme also prioritises sense over the literal wording. Sometimes the opposite is true where (for example) an inaccuracy in translation might be treated as a 'slight error' but importantly not affect the mark. Candidates appeared well prepared and comfortable with the genre, with some common incorrect responses being sensible guesses in the context.

Centres are commended for the quality of candidate responses to the grammar questions. These appeared stronger this year, especially in the final 'explain the case/grammar of' questions where candidates appeared more confident than ever to explain with a translation and ordinary words rather than strive for a technical term. Centres are reminded that clarity is the main requirement, and that any contradictory wording will negate an otherwise correct response.

Question 1

When a citizen called Aristophanes was sentenced to death, the Athenian state confiscated his property and auctioned it off to make a profit. Raising less money from the sale than expected, the state accused Aristophanes' family of stealing from the estate before the auction. In this passage the defendant, the brother-in-law of Aristophanes, is discussing Aristophanes' character and attitude towards Athens.

Aristophanes focused his attention and energy not only on his own private matters but also on the state; any money that he had, he would spend it in the pursuit of glory.

From γνώσεσθε δὲ ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγω ἐξ αὐτῶν ὧν ἐκεῖνος ἔπραττε. **to**
προσδεῖν γὰρ ἔφη πρὸς τὸν μισθὸν τοῖς πελτασταῖς.

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Lysias, *On the Property of Aristophanes* 19–22 (adapted)

Comprehension and Grammar

- 1 γνώσεσθε δὲ ... ἔπραττε (line 1): what does the speaker say will show that he is telling the truth? [1]

This was mostly answered correctly.

Question 2 (a)

- 2 πρῶτον μὲν ... ἀγαθὰ πεποιηκότος (lines 1–4):

- (a) State what was Conon's wish. [2]

This was again answered well by most candidates. Given the simple syntax and GCSE vocabulary, 'some people' or 'something' were not accepted for τινά.

Question 2 (b)

- (b) State what Aristophanes did. [2]

This was again well done.

Question 2 (c)

- (c) What does the speaker say about Eunomus? [3]

Only three points out of a possible four were needed for full marks here, with again full marks being the most common. 'Stranger' was not accepted for ξένου here, as it made little sense in combination with 'friend'. πλεῖστα, making a repeat appearance after Paper 1, was recognised by most, but not always kept distinct from τὸ πλεῖθος.

Question 3

- 3 ἦσαν δ' ἐλπίδες ... τῇ πόλει τῇ ὑμετέρῃ (lines 5–6): explain what were the hopes regarding the voyage. [3]

Most candidates answered this well, with almost every candidate identifying the contrast marked by μὲν ... δέ.

Question 4 (a)

4 καὶ ταῦτ' ἔπραττον ... Λακεδαιμονίοις (lines 6–9):

(a) Why was the task dangerous?

[2]

This was answered well. Those who were unsure of ὑπαρχόντων benefitted when they answered the question rather than attempting to translate.

Question 4 (b)

(b) State the outcome of the discussion with Dionysius.

[3]

Most candidates scored full marks. Some made τριήρεις singular and a few did not know παρεσκευάσατο. Virtually everyone understood the structure of the relative clause.

Question 5

5 μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ... εἰς τὸν ἀπόστολον ἠπόρουν (lines 9–12): translate these lines into English.

Please write your translation on alternate lines.

[10]

The first half of the translation caused few problems. Some did not know βοήθειαν (AS) and a few translated the phrase as 'in order to help', which went against the story. The phrase including the partitive genitive caused the most difficulty. Some slightly mistranslated the verb ἐξέλιπε by offering such translations as 'left behind'.

The second half of the translation was more problematic for some candidates. Quite a few offered 'he gave' or 'they gave' for ἔδοτε, ignoring the emphatic ὑμεῖς (GCSE) and/or its case. τᾶλλα was sometimes translated by 'others' (implying people); ἐψηφίσασθε (AS) was recognised by most. Quite a number did not register the change of subject for the final clause. In the final sentence, ἐμισθώσαντο was usually correctly recognised or worked out from μισθός (AS), as was πελταστής (AS) where 'light-armed soldiers' was preferable to 'peltasts'. ἀπορέω (AS) was quite often not recognised.

Question 6

6 ὀλίγα μὲν γὰρ ... ὅπλα ἐπρίαντο (lines 12–14): describe the problem faced by the envoys. [4]

Candidates most commonly gained 3 marks. Problems came from not recognising χρήματα (GCSE) as 'money', which the context heavily implied, rather than 'goods' or 'property'; and, as in Paper 1, the προσ- prefix was important to the sense. The later points about needing money for the hire of light-armed soldiers and buying weapons, however, were usually made confidently.

Question 7 (a)

7 Ἀριστοφάνης δ' οὖν ... τοῖς πελτασταῖς (lines 15–17):

(a) When did Aristophanes go to see the defendant's father?

[2]

προτεράια (AS) was quite often mistranslated as 'the day after', but the verb ἀνήγετο was usually recognised. Marks were split very evenly between 0, 1 and 2.

Question 7 (b)

(b) What did Aristophanes ask for?

[2]

This was often answered well. Some candidates offered 'some money' which was not close enough to ὅ τι εἴη ἀργύριον to secure the second mark.

Question 7 (c)

(c) Why was this needed?

[1]

This was almost always answered correctly by candidates.

Question 8 (a)

8 Which part of the verb are the following?

(a) γνώσεσθε (line 1)

[1]

This was quite challenging, more often wrong than right. 'Aorist' was suggested frequently, as was 'imperative'; the latter, while incorrect, was a reasonable conjecture given the legal-speech context.

Question 8 (b), 9 (a) and (b)

(b) πέμψαι (line 8)

[1]

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

(a) πεῖσαι (line 5)

[1]

(b) παρεσκευάσατο (line 9)

[1]

Candidates mostly answered Questions 8 (b), 9 (a) and 9 (b) correctly.

Question 9 (c)

(c) προσεδεήθησαν (line 13)

[1]

This was answered well.

Question 10 (a)

10 State and explain the case of the following words:

(a) πόλει (line 6)

[2]

Virtually every candidate recognised the case and so the second mark usually followed; but those who wrote 'Dative: 'to' might have reflected on whether such an answer (which could have been written out of context by a pre-GCSE student) would be worth 2 marks at A Level. Similarly, 'Dative: indirect object' was deemed insufficient understanding of the context.

Question 10 (b)

(b) ἄς (line 8)

[2]

Again, the case was recognised well in responses, but the second mark was harder to achieve. Those who stated that the case was in agreement with τριήρεις would have done well to consider how a relative clause operates.

Question 10 (c)

(c) προθυμίας (line 10)

[2]

This was the most challenging grammar question, with the most common outcome 0, followed by 1. Nominative and accusative were often proposed, or genitive following ἐξέλιπε, rather than partitive after οὐδέν.

Exemplar 1

10.	(a)	Dative, showing benefit to the city (σύμμαχου ἢ πόλει = "an ally <u>to</u> the city").
	(b)	Accusative, agreeing with ἐπὶήρεις (direct object of σέβεται) through relative attraction.
	(c)	Genitive, used as a partitive genitive (οὐδέν... ἀποδοῦναι = "no [amount of] seal").

The responses to Question 10 (a) and Question 10 (c) effectively explain the case (note that the first was only successful because it included the word 'ally'), and numerous candidates did not achieve the mark because they simply stated 'to the city', which does not explain the dative use here as any different from any other context.

The response to Question 10 (b) is mostly correct, but the incorrect inclusion of 'relative attraction' contradicted the main explanation and 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) πεποιηκός (line 4)

[2]

Most candidates recognised the perfect participle and many then secured the second mark by noting the agreement with the noun or offering a correct translation. Some incorrectly guessed 'genitive absolute'.

Question 11 (b)

(b) προσδεῖν (line 16)

[2]

Most candidates spotted the infinitive but the tense was quite often left out. Most candidates understood that this was part of an indirect statement.

Section B overview

With most candidates attempting this section for the first time this year, the general strength of the responses was impressive. The Greek written was continuous and mostly very logical, with morphology that was transparent in structure even where the details were not correct. Plenty of candidates received a full 5 marks for improvements on a literal version, most often for well-considered subordination into participles or appropriate choice of vocabulary. The passage required fewer challenging textbook constructions this year. Instead, candidates were required to pay careful attention to changes of subject, a tricky relative clause and the awareness of where (for example) a genitive absolute would turn out not to work.

Assessment for learning



It's useful for candidates to remember that the Comprehension passage printed on the paper may be a helpful reminder of an item of vocabulary, apt particle, or word ending.

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]

Once upon a time Hermocrates was a ruler in Syracuse. He had a daughter called Callirhoe, who fell in love with a young man. She was admired by everyone because they thought that she was as beautiful as Aphrodite.

At that time, when there was a festival to this goddess in the city, almost all the women went to her temple. The girl's mother led her there to honour the goddess, and they took many gifts from home. A certain Chaereas, whose father was an enemy of Hermocrates, happened to be going home when he saw her unexpectedly; immediately a passion arose in both of them. He hoped to marry her, and she wanted the same thing, secretly saying to Aphrodite "Mistress, give me this man you have shown me as my husband."

5

10

Section (i): This was mostly tackled well, with 5 the most common mark. Most responses included the initial connective particle and coped well with the basic vocabulary. The possessive dative for the start of the second sentence was commonly well done, with style credit given. A few did not include the initial subject and/or the connective of the second sentence.

Section (ii): The first clause was mostly very well answered. Again some candidates did not include the initial subject and/or connective of the new sentence. Some made this sentence active. A few included an article before πάντων. Again full marks was the most common outcome.

Section (iii): For the next few sections, the greater challenges meant the most common mark was now 4. Some scored a style bonus mark by using a participle to agree with πάντων in the previous section or the conjunction ἄτε plus participle. The reported statement was quite problematic although quite a few found ways around it, offering 'equal beauty to' or 'she and Aphrodite were equally beautiful'. There was some spelling confusion between καλός, τὸ καλόν and τὸ κάλλος.

Section (iv): Many offered the genitive absolute for the subordinate clause and most coped well with the vocabulary. A few did not use the correct nominative feminine plural form of 'all'. 'Women' in the genitive case was a common error.

Section (v): The genitive sandwich was commonly used and the purpose clause was often translated well with a number using ὥς with the future participle. For 'from home', οἰκοθεν appeared frequently.

Section (vi): The initial connective was quite often omitted, which after the first sentence was a slight error. The genitive relative pronoun was correctly used by most candidates, although some incorrectly used the definite article instead.

Section (vii): This was again more challenging, and 4 was the most common mark for the following sections. Most used the verb εἶδεν for 'saw'. The second part of the section was sometimes flexibly rendered using such structures as 'they fell in love with each other'. Some used πόθος or even ἴμερος (perhaps remembering from Paper 1) for 'passion', both of which gained a bonus mark.

Section (viii): This was often answered well. Again the initial connective was sometimes missed out. 'The same thing' was sometimes rendered using an additional προῶγμα; many correctly used the article and adjective for this phrase. 'Secretly saying to Aphrodite' was usually translated accurately.

Section (ix): Many candidates provided a correct form of the imperative 'give' and most incorrect translations at least offered the correct verbal stem. Many used the pronoun 'this' to stand in for 'this man' to gain a bonus mark.

Section (x): Most responses were given full marks for improving on the literal. Many were given marks for the initial connection at the start of the passage, the possessive dative in Section (i), the genitive absolute in Section (iv) and the genitive sandwich in Section (v). Many offered imaginative vocabulary at some points elsewhere in the passage. Some scored a mark for using μέν ... δέ ... in Section (viii).

Careful checking

More than one otherwise strong translation omitted one or more entire phrases - for example, 'and they took many gifts from home'. Careful checking can benefit any candidate.

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