

# **Classics - Classical Greek**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS H040

## **Report on the Units**

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**June 2009**

**HX-CLAS/MS/R/09**

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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Any enquiries about publications should be addressed to:

OCR Publications  
PO Box 5050  
Annesley  
NOTTINGHAM  
NG15 0DL

Telephone: 0870 770 6622  
Facsimile: 01223 552610  
E-mail: [publications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:publications@ocr.org.uk)

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## **Chief Examiner's Report**

The first examination of the new specification went well. Candidates clearly understood well what they needed to do, and had been well prepared both in terms of the content of the specification and in techniques to be applied in the examinations.

The 'unprescribed' unseen translation in F371 was of course a familiar exercise, and the standard of candidate responses much the same as in previous years; candidates in future years who attempt the 'prescribed' unseen in this Unit (Lysias, this year) might well devote a little more time during the year to familiarising themselves with the author's style and the (in this case forensic) context from which extracts are likely to come. Candidates had clearly worked hard at their set texts, and the standard of responses was very pleasing; those who did themselves less than justice were in general either those who did the questions in a different order (perfectly permissible, but to be done with care) and missed one or more out, or those who wrote too much on the earlier questions and ran out of time. Not many do this, but it is regrettable that any should fail to show what he or she can do as a result of flawed examination technique, and we hope that even fewer of next year's candidates (none, if possible!) will penalise themselves in this way.

## F371 Classical Greek Language

### General Comments

Most candidates found the Section A on unprepared translation very manageable. About half the candidates did well or very well here, and there were very few weak scripts. There were many participles in the passage and almost all dealt well with most of them. It seemed sometimes to markers that this section was too easy.

Section B proved quite different. Candidates found the Lysias passage quite a bit harder than that of Section A. This was a good thing, as it meant that the paper as a whole differentiated between the good and the excellent. Also, the Lysias passage proved to equal the demand of the sentences, as it was indeed supposed to do. The sentences proved to be a bit more difficult than we had expected and Examiners took care, as in the rest of the paper, to give credit for what was right rather than penalise what was wrong.

### SECTION A Diodorus Siculus

The overall standard was high and many candidates scored high marks.

Lines 1-2 τῆς δὲ ... ἐσόμενα

*Having increased and being increased* were quite common. Some did not know κτήματα, whilst some confused it with χρήματα. Many found the last part of the sentence hard, especially the future participle.

Lines 2-4 οἱ δὲ περὶ ... εἰς τὴν πόλιν

*The things that were happening* was very common. πάντα was often not taken with τόπον, and some confused this word with τρόπον. The last part was done very well.

Lines 5-8 τῶν δὲ πολιτῶν ... φυλάσσουσιν

*Having defended themselves* was common, as was *killing*. Otherwise candidates did well on these genitive absolutes, though some took the Macedonians as the subject of *having killed*. μάλλον was often not known, and was often translated as *very* or *very much*. διότι was sometimes translated as *because of*.

παραδεδωκότες was handled well. οὕτως was often translated as *in this way* or *thus*. φυλάσσουσιν had to be *guarded* or *were guarding* (not *guard* or *are guarding*) and most candidates got this right.

Lines 9-13 τέλος δὲ ... οὔσης

Several appeared not to know ῥίπτω, many coped well with ἐτάθησαν. Many had problems with ἡμέρας γενομένης. Frequent renderings were *during the day* and *after a day had passed* and *on the following day*. Some translated ἔδωκε as *he decided*. It was quite common to read *gave the soldiers* the plunder in the city. The genitive absolute in the last line was hardest part of the passage and few got it wholly correct, many failing to spot that it was genitive absolute. *Much of the city* was a common error.

## SECTION B

Many more candidates did Question 2 (Lysias) than did Question 3 (Sentences)

### 2 Lysias

Candidates found this more difficult than the passage in Question 1, in particular the sentences which straddled lines 5-6 (καὶ ταῦθ' στρατιωτῶν). Uniformly, the same elements were done poorly whilst other clauses/sentences caused no problems at all.

Lines 1-3 καὶ ὅτε ... ἐμῆς

*The ships* was very common, though there was no article in the Greek. Several had *they destroyed the ships*. The genitive absolute caused many problems: few saw that οὐδενός agreed with στρατηγοῦ, and that that word was the "Subject" of συμπλέοντος. It may have been the word-order that foxed so many here. *Others* (plural) was common for ἄλλην.

The short sentence straddling lines 1-3 was done very well.

Lines 3-5 εἶχον γὰρ ... εἶναι

Candidates found this difficult and there were very few wholly correct versions. Although many got εἶχον right, many did not see that Φαντίαν was its object, and not many saw that Φαντίας was a man. Many referred to a *Fantian helmsman*. χρήμασι πείας proved difficult.

Lines 5-6 καὶ ταῦθ' στρατιωτῶν

This proved to be the hardest sentence. Very few saw that ὅτι meant *that*, and that it was dependent on πάντες ἐπίστασθε, which therefore had to be translated first. Many thought that ἐπίστασθε meant *believe*, and *everything* was common. Not many identified the second person plural. ὅσοι ἐτυγχάνετε ὄντες defeated very many candidates.

Lines 6-8 αἱ μὲν γὰρ ... Ναυσιμάχου

Not many saw how the genitive τῶν νεῶν fitted in here. The last sentence was done well.

### 3 Sentences

There was a wide range of performances. Some scripts were almost faultless: others were not. Names caused problems, although all the names were in the DVL. Several candidates were careless with breathings: a mistake or omitted breathing was treated as a minor error every time.

- (a) Most did the genitive absolute well. Neither a transitive εἰσβάλλω, nor προσβάλλω were allowed.
- (b) Generally well done.
- (c) Against was not well known.
- (d) A common error was to use καίπερ with the indicative.
- (e) This proved the hardest. οὐ was common instead of μη. Most knew that they had to use the aorist + αν, but many struggled to produce the aorist of μενω and the aorist passive of λάμβανω or αἰρέω. *The whole of Greece* caused a lot of problems, with many putting *Greece* into the genitive.

The difficulty of the Lysias was well matched by that of the sentences, and both proved to be good discriminators.

## F372 Classical Greek Verse and Prose Literature

### General comments

The examination was in a new format, with a greater number of questions on each text, and with more specific focus.

Most candidates performed to a high standard, both in recalling detail and in having the skills needed to answer the questions on the style of the Greek. It was often apparent that candidates enjoyed engagement with the texts and with using the technical literary skills that they had developed over the year. The new format did not appear to cause any significant problems, which is pleasing in the first year and is a credit to those who have prepared candidates for the examination. Candidates had a lot to say; a few had problems with timing but most managed their time well.

Most translations were very accurate, with any small blemishes suggesting a lack of recall of small words. A good number of centres had small variations in the translation offered, which suggested that the candidates had developed their own translations. The examiners prefer to see translations that show a full engagement with the idiomatic nature of the texts rather than a more flowing one in English idiom that glosses over the Greek. Those candidates who displayed the former approach tended to do better overall since they had a better basis on which to answer the style questions.

Some candidates could improve by focusing their comments. Where three or four examples were needed, the best candidates answered in three or four short paragraphs, with a blank line between each paragraph. This not only made it easier for those marking the papers: it also focused those candidates' attention on the demands of the question. They answered clearly and concisely, knowing that they had identified a good point, and commented on it in the terms posed by the question. To gain full marks, candidates need to be reminded to quote a relevant example in Greek, make it clear they understand what the words they have quoted mean precisely, and then explain how it answers the question set.

Some candidates clearly had great pleasure in displaying their knowledge of technical terms, some of them not very common. This does not impress Examiners *per se*. A technical term – such as polysyndeton – may be a short-hand for describing a feature, but it does not explain the effect in its particular context. Indeed, apparent misuse of terms (notably tricolon and clause) puts the candidate at a disadvantage. A simple description of the effect together with an explanation of what it achieves is always acceptable.

A small minority of candidates changed the order of answers significantly, usually doing the translation and essay first. There were a few cases where this resulted in one section being omitted. Candidates should consider the pros and cons of not answering the questions in sequence.

Quotations from Greek do not need accents but must have breathings.

## Lysias

Q1(a) This type of question requires a short answer. Some candidates wrote unnecessarily at great length, for far more than the two minutes which would have been appropriate. A number of candidates lost a mark because they only made one point which they described at excessive length.

Q1(b) Answers scored well on the whole, but a lot of candidates would have given a significantly better answer if they had used three paragraphs. Some points tended not to be explained; others mistranslated key Greek words used in support of their argument.

Q1(c) A significant number failed to pick up on the key words 'pretending' and 'claiming' in the question. Thus the fact of arresting was not put into its context as being a πρόφασις but was stated as just a fact. A few quoted Greek: in this type of question – which is comprehension rather than style – no Greek is needed. A minority gave more detail than was necessary or possible in the time.

Q1(d) The standard of translation was high. The most common stumbling block was the last phrase where the translations suggested insufficient thought as to what πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους actually meant.

Q1(e) There were some slight inaccuracies of expression here, which were marked leniently, but candidates should understand the basics of the liturgy of funding a chorus so that they can translate idiomatically πάσας μὲν τὰς χορηγίας χορηγήσαντες. Some missed the third part in the mark scheme.

Q1(e)(ii) There were some very good answers but on the whole this question was done the least well. A lot of candidates talked mainly or solely about content, despite the clear phrasing of the question. It suggests that a significant number had not really engaged with the text on a word-by-word basis in answering this question.

There were a lot of attempts at commenting on alliteration, but not many explained its use that well. Similarly, the μὲν and δε sequence was identified but not well explained in the particular context of this passage. Some tried to link the two occurrences of ἀλλὰ where they have no real connection.

Candidates should be made more aware about the manipulation of word position in Lysias to give emphasis. Their thought process would be made clearer by having one point per paragraph. In the best scripts, candidates did quote the relevant Greek word or phrase; showed that they understood its meaning; and commented on its significance in the context of the passage.

Q1(f) This was very well answered.

Q1(g) There was a wide range of standards evident in the answers. Some candidates who had otherwise performed well in the examination failed to realise that this question needs to show detailed knowledge of the **whole** of the prescribed text. There were some prepared essays which, while sophisticated and showing enjoyment in engagement with issues, missed the thrust of the question. A significant minority of candidates wrote exclusively on the cross-examination of Eratosthenes. While they may have considered that these were the most effective points, it did unbalance the answer and prevented the answer from achieving the top level. A few tried to construct their answers around points of style, which tended not to be pertinent to the question set.



Good answers achieved a nice balance between the wrongdoings of the thirty generally, the personal attack on Eratosthenes and the emotional impact on Lysias' family. This type of question expects candidates to select a number of relevant and varied pieces of evidence from the text and comment on them briefly. There is no expectation that Greek will be quoted (although some candidates did so) and full marks can be gained without. What **is** required is a number of references to the text from throughout the prescription which show detailed recall, such that the precise line in the text could be identified by the informed reader.

Candidates should be prepared to answer this type of question by going through the text and including the most relevant pieces of evidence. An acceptable approach is to follow the order of the text.

Most candidates wrote a little over one side in the fifteen minutes available and it was possible to score full marks by so doing. Those who had time problems had written too much on previous questions.

## Homer

Q2(a) This was generally done well. Some candidates did not clearly signal entering or leaving the simile with ὥς, and a number did not translate τῶν, which although a little awkward in English, does make the connection between the situation and the simile clear – as well as making sense of the structure of the sentence. Some translations of ἰσόθεος φῶς did not make it clear to whom this referred.

Q2(b) This was generally well done. Some candidates identified a relevant point but failed to make explicit the effect. Some did not appreciate the importance of φράδμων and few discussed the enjambement of ἐγνῶ.

Q2(c) This caused some problems for a significant number of candidates, with a lot of woolly thinking in evidence, which is surprising considering the occurrence of a number of similes in the text. The small number of candidates who impressed were the ones who showed clarity of thought through the simile methodically. A statement of the main points of similarity (flies = men; milk-pails = body of Sarpedon); and then a look at subsidiary points (buzzing = continuous noise of battle; crowd around = persistency; consistency of crowding around). Candidates who did less well tended to flights of fancy on some of the details from the extended part of the simile (milk, spring) before describing the basic similarities. Candidates also did not routinely quote the specific Greek words, as required by the question. Many translated lines 10 and 11, but did not discuss what they had translated. The surprising number of candidates who could not spell the word simile, even though it was in the question, did not impress.

Q2(d) Most candidates got the three elements – Apollo, Euphorbus and Hector – although some gave inadequate additional detail from the text to support their argument.

Q2(e) There were many points that could be used here. Most candidates could spot a number of good points, but the quality of discussion often left something to be desired. Most of the best candidates set out their answer in four paragraphs, which helped them to see that they had explained each point and so move on to another. In weaker scripts, candidates made a reference to some Greek and translated it, but thought the point self-evident. The point must be explicitly made, even if the idea is simple. For example, 'Hector is compared to a lion, so he is brave' is not adequate for two marks. Similarly, a sentence on why it is cruel for vultures to eat Patroclus' body in the specific context of this passage was required, with the best answers referring to the need for burial. This type of question benefits from specific practice.

Q2(f) Recall was very good for this question.

*Report on the units taken in June 2009*

Q2(g) The issues arising here were similar to those outlined in 1(g) above. A number of essays showed a prepared 'line' on the role of the gods. What impressed more were those essays that went through the text, giving a number of examples of what Zeus does, followed by what Apollo does with short, sensible comments on each example. Even if not particularly sophisticated, this would receive a good mark. Some candidates talked at some length about "fate" which was tangential to the question asked; there was also some confusion as to whether Zeus or fate had the upper hand.

# Grade Thresholds

Advanced Subsidiary GCE Classics - Classical Greek (H040)  
June 2009 Examination Series

## Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
F371	Raw	100	73	62	52	42	32	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
F372	Raw	100	73	62	52	42	32	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0

## Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (ie after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
H040	200	160	140	120	100	80	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
H040	79.7	91.1	95.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	363

## 123 candidates aggregated this series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see:  
[http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums\\_results.html](http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums_results.html)

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
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