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Classics: Latin

Advanced GCE **H439**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **H039**

OCR Report to Centres June 2016

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Advanced GCE Classics: Latin (H439)

Advanced Subsidiary GCE Classics: Latin (H039)

OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

F361 Latin Language

General Comments:

Entry numbers were substantially lower than those of last year but included a similar number of resit candidates. The overall standard was pleasingly high. Question 1 generally yielded high marks, with only a few sections proving too difficult for the average candidate. Question 2, as in most years, proved rather more taxing, with the result that few candidates achieved very high marks on this question. Question 3 attracted similar numbers to last year's paper.

Errors tended to fall into several categories. Most obvious and costly was ignorance of vocabulary; this year there seemed to be more words than usual that many candidates did not know. Indirect statements, particularly those involving *se*, were a problem for most candidates. Participles caused many problems; most candidates appear to be reluctant to translate them into English participles, instead converting them into main clauses; this is perfectly acceptable if they add appropriate conjunctions, but mostly they do not. Simply linking two main clauses with a comma is not acceptable at this level. Many candidates did not recognise result or indirect command clauses.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1

tertio post proelium die Perseus Amphipolim advenit. Romani eum secuti castra haud procul posuerunt.

Many candidates did not know *tertio*. Many either did not know *secuti* or converted it inaccurately into a main verb. Many did not know what to do with *eum*. *Haud* and *procul* were frequently split. *Posuerunt* was rarely known.

propter tantam victoriam multae urbes Romanis cesserunt; aliae, metu victae, idem facere parabant.

The first difficulties here were the case of *Romanis* and the meaning of *cesserunt*. The phrase *metu victae* defeated most candidates ('fearing defeat' was very common).

itaque legati, ad proximas urbes a Perseo missi ut auxilium contra Romanos peterent, eis persuadere non potuerunt.

Many offered 'commanders' for *legati*, which was not acceptable in this context. Some gave 'to Perseus' for *a Perseo*. The rest was done well.

rex igitur civibus convocatis orationem facere coepit;

The only difficulty here was the ablative absolute, made more challenging because many could not guess the meaning of the verb.

sperabat enim se eos ad misericordiam moturum esse.

The indirect statement defeated most candidates; very many turned it into the passive without stating the agent; others treated *misericordiam* as a verb.

quotiens tamen loqui incepit, lacrimae eum impediebant.

Most had to guess *quotiens.*

rex amicum rogavit ut pro se diceret.

This was probably the most accurately translated section in the unseen. The main difficulty was the meaning of *pro.*

cives autem, quamquam lacrimis regis conspectis ipsi quoque lacrimaverunt, verba amici audire noluerunt.

Most candidates found their way successfully through this complex sentence. The main difficulties were how to translate *ipsi* and how to turn the ablative absolute into a main clause correctly.

nonnulli clamaverunt, 'abite, ne nos etiam propter vos pereamus.'

Many were unsure of the meaning of *abite. Ne* was clearly unfamiliar to most.

horum ferocia vocem amici clausit. deinde rex ad navem suam discessit desperans.

Horum was the most difficult word in the paper, with only a small minority getting it right.

ceteri milites, simulac regem se recepisse audiverunt, ad domos suas regressi sunt.

Se recepisse was probably the second most difficult phrase in the paper. The construction, the function of *se* and the meaning of the phrase combined to defeat the great majority.

Perseus, ab omnibus sociis iam relictus, solus fugit.

The only difficulty here was the participle.

ubi imperator Romanus Amphipolim intravit, tot cives contenderunt ad eum salutandum

In a generous mood, Examiners allowed 'emperor' as well as 'commander / general' for *imperator.* Many did not know *tot.* Most recognised the gerundive of purpose.

ut intellexerit Perseum velut hostem inter suos cives fuisse.

Very many failed to recognise the result clause or, if they did, they could not express it in correct English. Many did not recognise *fuisse* or grasp that *Perseum* was its subject.

Question No. 2

cum ego haec non solum suspicarer, sed plane cernerem (neque enim obscure gerebantur),

Many failed to make sense of *suspicarer. Cernere* was also frequently unknown. The majority gave 'waged' for *gerebantur*, which makes no sense in the context.

dixi in senatu me popularem consulem futurum esse.

Many moved *in senatu* out of context. The indirect statement was usually recognised as such, but *futurum esse* was rarely understood.

quid enim est tam populare quam libertas? quam non solum ab hominibus peti videtis,

Nearly all translated the question correctly. Many did not know what to do with *quam*, while *peti* and *videtis* (moved in the Mark Scheme to aid marking) were usually taken out of context. *Peti* was rarely construed correctly. Many gave 'from men' for *ab hominibus.*

sed etiam a bestiis atque omnibus rebus anteponi.

The phrase *omnibus rebus anteponi* defeated the great majority of candidates ('all things were placed before you' was very frequent).

quid est tam populare quam otium? quod tam iucundum est,

The main problem here was the meaning of *otium*, which few knew. Many took *quod* to mean 'because'.

ut vos maximos labores suscipiendos esse putetis, si aliquando in otio possitis esse.

Many failed to recognise the result clause. Many made *labores* singular. Many confused *suscipere* with *suspicari*, and also did not understand the gerundive usage. 'In leisure' was not fully acceptable for *in otio* (idiom requires 'at leisure').

Question No. 3

In Q 3(a), for 'arrived' many gave the wrong part of the verb for the conjunction they chose. Few knew the principal parts of whatever verb they chose for 'departed'.

In Q 3(b), there was a frequent lack of agreement between 'so great' and 'crowd'. Fortunately for many, *tam magna* was accepted. The other difficulty was finding the correct part of *vulnero*.

In Q 3(c), few could form the superlative correctly or find the right ending for it. Few knew *quis*, with *qui* almost universally preferred, even with a singular verb. Most correctly gave *posset*.

In Q 3(d), many failed to identify the fearing construction.

In Q 3(e), the time phrase was rarely correct (wrong use of preposition, lack of agreement). Few tried to give the genitive plural of *hostis*; fortunately the singular was accepted. 'Would perish' was rarely correct.

F362 Latin Verse and Prose Literature

General Comments

Examiners felt that candidates were more confident in their handling of these particular set texts in their second year, with short questions and the Cicero 6/8 markers being particularly well done. Candidates had clearly revised thoroughly. Some found it more difficult to show analysis and link their answers to the questions set in the Ovid 6/8 markers, and centres are again reminded that candidates must go beyond repeating the wording of the question in order to obtain the discussion mark available.

We are grateful as always for the clear commitment and hard work of teachers in preparing candidates so well for F362.

Some points of advice for candidates

This year's advice is similar to the advice from 2015. Examiners feel it will still be useful to centres and candidates.

1. Note the requirements of the question: give Latin when asked and include at least one style point when asked. Equally, if the Latin is not required in the question, putting it in may lead to time management difficulties later.

2. In content and style questions you do need to demonstrate clearly that you understand the meaning of the Latin. You can translate or you can simply show your understanding through discussion. For instance, it is not enough to give an example of a rhetorical question from the Latin and then make a generic point about why authors use rhetorical questions. You must explain the purpose or effect of the particular rhetorical question being used in the example you have given.

3. Try to focus quotations from the Latin in discussion of style points. Avoid just giving the start word, three dots and the end word if the style point relates to Latin within the ellipsis. The whole sentence is rarely needed, but do aim to give a decent Latin chunk; even if your style point is primarily based on a single word, you should show knowledge of the clause/phrase which contains it for the text mark, and explain relevant context, and how it relates to the question, for the discussion mark.

4. In translations, omissions of words (including 'little words') will usually lose a mark, so be careful to learn complete translations. We are of course more open to 'style' in verse, but all the words which appear in the Latin still need to be conveyed in the translation.

5. 10-markers test your understanding of the whole story, not just the printed passages, which may be used as a starting point. When you prepare for these questions, think of what the themes in the text might be, and trace them through. To earn a top level mark you will need a wide range of detailed references across the text, coherent argument and tight focus on the question actually set.

Comments on individual questions

Section A: Prose Literature

Question 1

1a
Both parts were generally correctly answered. A few candidates lost marks by not reading the question carefully enough.

1b
As in previous years, the most common errors were omissions of 'little words'. Every word in the Latin must be in some way conveyed in the translation to earn the mark, as per previous reports. Common omissions included *enim, sic, has, oportere, igitur* and *umquam. est quae* was also sometimes omitted in section 1 ("what thing could make…").

1c:
Generally this question was well answered. Understandably many candidates tended to repeat the same kinds of point, for example about Pompey's training from a young age or fast rise through the ranks (since Cicero does that himself). Obviously as long as they remembered to include at least one style point they could still earn their 8 marks here. A few candidates lost marks by rephrasing the question rather than showing an understanding of what Cicero was actually saying.

1d
Very few candidates lost a mark here.

1e
Generally this was answered well. A handful of candidates missed out one or both of the emphatic adjectives which seemed to examiners crucial in discussing the possible reasons for "such a remarkable" achievement.

1f
As with 1c, candidates sometimes missed out on discussion marks because they paraphrased Latin or rephrased the question rather than carefully explaining Cicero's point. Otherwise, this question was well tackled.

1g
Generally this was answered well.

1h
The majority of candidates produced solid essays, discussing in particular the lack of choice of good and honest men for the position under discussion, the corruption of officials, the poor behaviour of campaigning generals, and the regular contrasts of their poor conduct with Pompey's brilliance and achievements for emphasis. The best clearly knew the text thoroughly, and were often succinct in their analysis but comprehensive in their detail; they also concentrated on the officials and commanders. A handful of essays had the feel of pre-learned answers on the greatness of Pompey which candidates then struggled to adapt to a question they might not have directly considered.

Section B: Verse Literature

Question 2

2a
The majority scored full marks on both parts, although there were some interesting spellings of Tiresias. Both valid variations and misspellings were accepted as long as it was clear that the candidate was referring to the correct person. 'Tiberius', for example, was not accepted!   Only a handful mistranslated the Latin they quoted in part ii.

2b
Generally this was answered well, although less well than the equivalent Cicero questions. Candidates tended to avoid word choice such as 'foedabis', instead making more general content points about the horror of Tiresias' predictions. There were some good discussions of word order and a pleasing number commented on Ovid's use of metre. Some candidates could have been clearer in presenting their four points.

2c
There were fewer omissions in the Ovid than in the Cicero, but some missed *festis* or *ignota.* A handful also translated adjectives with the wrong nouns. Examiners felt it appropriate to be even more flexible than usual with the translation of this section, with *dicta fides sequitur* and *mixtaeque … feruntur* in particular producing a rather impressive range of renditions. Teachers and candidates are to be congratulated on the flair demonstrated here!
Examiners did want to see a passive sense to *feruntur*, eg "they are swept along to the unknown rites" rather than simply "they go to the unknown rites", to show how they are powerless to resist.

2d
As with 2b, this was not as well answered as the Cicero equivalents, but still generally fine. There were some nice comments on the use of present participle and direct speech, especially to emphasise the speed of the changes to the sailors. Again word choices of, for example, *trunco* and *repandus* were rarely mentioned. Weaker responses listed things which happened and simply stated that they were vivid and dramatic, without explaining why.

2e
This was answered well with most candidates getting full marks, and many giving more than they needed to. Again, some lost marks due to a lack of detail or because they made something up (most commonly along the lines of making noises like dolphins).

2f
As with Cicero, most candidates were able to give a solid response, discussing Bacchus' power and deception in particular. The weaker answers focused largely on his physical descriptions, while the best gave a well-balanced response with both positive and negative characteristics. Examiners enjoyed reading some background details from Euripides' *Bacchae* (especially when used to support rather than given as an independent point); it was also pleasing to read about Bacchus as god of theatre with a flair for the spectacular and as god of wine with his apparent drunkenness and power over his worshippers. The discussions of Bacchus' effeminacy were often very detailed, and some linked it to his disguise when he is captured by sailors. A few could have explained more clearly that many of the characteristics described are in the context of Pentheus' or Acoetes' opinion, rather than Ovid's narrative.

F363 Latin Verse

General Comments:

There were many good candidates for this paper who performed well in both language and literature.

For the literature, more centres chose Virgil, although there was a healthy number of centres studying Catullus and answers on both authors were of a good standard. There were encouraging efforts at commentary questions, most of which favoured a chronological approach but thematic answers were also well done and duly rewarded. It was pleasing for examiners to see that once again few essay answers were adaptations of pre-learnt essays. For the most part answers to the commentary passage showed a good level of text knowledge and understanding, only let down by the incorrect use of literary terms such as alliteration for repeated vowel sounds and by factual inaccuracies (e.g. Ovid in Book 6 tells the story of Aeneid etc).The best answers avoided the tendency to use literary labels alone without connection to the question and vague references to unsupported literary features (e.g. the alliteration of 'a' (sic) in this line shows the deep angst of the character) were not seen in the best candidates answers. The best answers mentioned these effects and made good use of them to relate the point to the question.

In answers on Catullus, most of the commentaries were done in a linear way and the best candidates could identify appropriate elements from the text and explain why they were able to show despair and bitterness. In the essays would have been improved by further analysis beyond identifying that one poem or another was full of joy and laughter or not or by showing the interplay of both in a number of poems. Many candidates could refer to the text well, but the answers would have been improved by relating examples given to the definitions and the question.

An area of concern mentioned by a number of examiners was the presentation of scripts which, for most, was good but the hand-writing of some made answers difficult to follow.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No. 1

Translation and Comprehension

The candidates were able to access the story for the most part but it was sufficiently testing for the most able to show their understanding and translation skill.

The vocabulary proved less restrictive than in previous years and candidates seemed more able to engage with the story itself and most were able to provide a good effort at the comprehension questions and the translation. The best answers followed accidence in constructions through carefully, showing an understanding of their interrelation. The best candidates ensured that each Latin word was covered in the answer, thus avoiding omissions.

Comprehension

1a.   Most candidates answered this section well.

1b.   This question was generally well answered, but a surprising number of candidates were unable to guess *rustica.*

1c.   This question was generally very well answered.

1d.   This question was handled very well by a majority of candidates with the main error being to say that the feast was long.

1e.   The main requirement of this question was for candidates to show that they had identified a particular literary feature, quote it <u>and</u> connect it with the question. The vague reference of the type 'polysyndeton creates a loud atmosphere' even with correct quotation will not earn full marks. Candidates had obviously been rigorously taught how to tackle the literary criticism question although there were frequent comments '…. *this makes it vivid'*, without any real explanation of the impact of the choice of word on the sense. Candidates are still claiming to find 'hyperbaton' where it simply doesn't exist. Even in prose and particularly in poetry, it is commonplace for an adjective, for example, to be separated from its noun by one or two words and therefore barely worthy of mention. There has been a huge increase this year in candidates citing 'mimetic' or 'iconic' word order, perhaps as a substitute for 'hyperbaton'. Again this is claimed far more often than is valid. A good example of mimetic word order might be 'nox atra caput tristi circumvolat umbra' from the passage used in 2b), since the sense of the verb expresses the idea of 'surrounding a head' with the 'gloomy shade' and 'tristi ... umbra' aptly surrounds 'circumvolat'. However, candidates are claiming 'mimetic word order' where no such idea of surrounding, enclosing etc. exists.

1f.   The scansion was generally very well handled with most candidates only slipping up on the third and fourth feet of the first line and putting an anceps in the middle of the pentameter. For the last foot of each line only a long syllable (by position) and an anceps were accepted.

1g.   Most candidates managed to extract enough from the Latin to get 4 marks. *captat* caused some problems even though it was glossed. Some answers would have been improved by not repeating information and by succinctly identifying a part of the text to directly answer the question set.

<u>Translation</u>

Most candidates made some sense of the passage for translation although many did not follow the logical sequence of events suggested by the title and missed the fact that Priapus was the subject in the opening lines. There are also still instances of translation not written on alternate lines, although the instructions state the requirement explicitly.

1h(i) & 1h(ii) Only a few candidates correctly interpreted *et.* The most common answer was to start with 'And'. A number of candidates – even the most able – did not identify the oratio obliqua in the opening two sections. Some conflated the first two sections.

ne …. an was correctly interpreted – especially where *dubium est* was understood.

There was a lot of confusion over tenses in the opening lines.

1h(iii) *capit*: many settled for captured and a certain number struggled with *obscenam;* temptat*:* the most common mistake was to make this passive and translate *'he was tempted'.*

1h(iv) Most understood the meaning and there were some insightful translations.

1h(v) The position of *Silenus* caused many to interpret him as someone other than *senex.* Those who confidently managed *quo vectus erat* achieved good versions. The most common error was to change the order of the whole sentence, which often resulted in *gently sounding donkey.*

1h(vi) Only the strongest candidates worked out that *deus* was the subject of *ibat.* Most coped with *ut*, although more by good luck than judgement.

Some candidates lost marks on the second clause either ignoring *cum* or translating it as *with.*

1h(vii) Most candidates realised that there were three different subjects in this sentence. *infestas manus* caused considerable difficulty with candidates using *turba* as reason for translating *manus* as bands of men; *convolat* was misinterpreted as *convocat*; few candidates linked *territa* to *voce gravi:* most translations were '*the terrified goddess awoke at the noise.*

1h(viii) A number of opportunities existed for improvement and more candidates scored 2 / 2 this year.

Candidates, in some cases, did not read the examination paper carefully enough. Much help was given in the introduction to the passage and in the glossary, but this was often ignored.

Question No.2

Question 2 Literature

Candidates found the literature questions very accessible this year and many good answers were produced showing great engagement and enjoyment of the texts. Candidates should be aware of the time implications of essay plans which should not leave them lacking in time to actually write the essays.

In general too many students rely far too heavily on citing technical terms, imagining that that is sufficient analysis, adding 'and this shows ...', whilst failing even to mention what the words mean and how the device accentuates the meaning and impact of the words. Students should remember that it's words that convey meaning; stylistic devices are no more than tools to emphasise a point/accentuate an effect, etc. In essays 2a) and 3a) a number of candidates were trying to base arguments on far too small a foundation. It was fairly common, for example, to see candidates citing individual words in isolation (e.g. '*pium'* in l.2 Q 3a); *excrucies* l.10 Q 3a)), and stating what the word means, but then not developing their argument at all by looking at the interaction and impact of this word with and on the wider context.

In essays 2b) and 3b) a lot of students gave essentially narrative answers, summarising parts of the Aeneid or Catullus's poems which demonstrated triumph and success/sorrow and pain or joy and laughter/sadness and tears respectively. Stronger candidates analysed the subtleties of the texts, demonstrating the range of emotions within individual poems in Catullus or analysing the type of laughter in Catullus's poems, observing that sometimes it is at someone else's expense, for example.

Virgil – commentary

Most candidates had a very good knowledge of the content of the text and could quote their examples well, although there were a number of mistranslations of quoted examples this year. Most candidates could choose the appropriate parts to comment upon and show their appreciation of how those examples reflected the requirements of the question. This passage particularly lent itself to a chronological answer and most candidates followed this format with success. Improvements on answers would have come with clearer reference to the contribution of examples to the presentation of emotions. Although there were many good interpretations of the use of rhetorical questions and other literary devices, candidates must try to avoid vague explanations such as 'the chiasmus here clearly shows his anger' where rote learned chunks of the text quoted in full had little analysis afterwards other than to say ' …and this showed that the character felt happy/sad'.

Some candidates found a balanced answer difficult to produce because of the long introduction about Anchises reviewing the souls. Some candidates spent far too long on the minutiae of this section at the expense of the rest of the passage.

Good answers included reference to Aeneas' *pietas,* Aeneas' delay in Carthage and why this might have caused Anchises anxiety, and the fleet moored on the Tyrrhenian Sea. There was also interesting comment on the fact that Anchises was a ghost and reference back to Aeneas confrontation with the personified forms.

Candidates had too often memorised elaborate figures of speech of which they had no real understanding, for example comments on the use of hyperbaton (even when it did not really exist) and did not enhance their thoughts about the passage. Some essays tended towards regurgitated pieces of Latin with an attached explanation that was often not fully related to the question. The best candidates were able to incorporate some sense of tension in the passage because this was a final meeting.

Virgil – Essay

This question required a sophisticated interpretation of the journey through the underworld to arrive at a meaningful conclusion. Very few candidates were able to extrapolate successfully and acknowledge that Aeneas was dealing with his past in readiness to deal with his future. Some identified this as a pivotal point in the whole story and tended to write good essays as a result. More able candidates discussed the connection between triumph and success and sorrow and pain and illustrated the interplay between the two ideas throughout the book but there was a lot of misunderstanding about the scope of this essay with candidates not really understanding the implication of the question.

Most candidates were confident with the passage about Marcellus, although so many failed to identify his significance to contemporary Romans. Good candidates were able to use Marcellus as a paradigm for their essay – i.e. the cost of success and triumph.

The average candidate tended to focus upon what caused Aeneas pain – Palinurus, Dido and Deiphobus – and what did not: Elysium and the meeting with his father; sometimes the golden bough. 'Triumph' was often interpreted to mean any instance where Aeneas did not suffer pain or sorrow.

The use of extensive quotation usually added little to the candidate's essay and was often gratuitous. Some candidates referred back to 2a) and used Latin from there extensively to support the meeting with Anchises as causing pain / triumph. There was also scanty knowledge of Book VI as a whole, although most were aware of the 'geography' of the Underworld.

Time management was also a problem for some. Essay plans are good, but only in brief: some candidates had written such extensive plans that they compromised their essays.

Overall a good number of candidates were also able to balance their answers to cover the passage and the Latin prescription and the rest of the book to provide thorough answers.

Catullus – commentary

There was a lot to write about from this poem and the most successful candidates followed the structure and so managed to cover the whole poem.

There seems to have been some confusion over the interpretation of *dis invitis*: some saying that the *'gods were hostile/against'* Catullus, others that *'the gods cannot wish such unhappiness'* [Quinn].

Many candidates approached the poem by writing out and translating a few lines and explaining how this showed Catullus' pain and bitterness. More sophisticated answers were able to use the Latin to support their interpretation of his feelings.

Elaborate figures of speech were used and often to little effect. Most commented upon the apostrophe of *'Catulle'* with scant understanding of the point.

Most candidates were confident once they reached the third section and there were appropriate comments on the correlation between illness and heartbreak.

Catullus – essay

Most candidates approached the poem confidently and were able to support an interpretation with appropriate reference to the Latin. Some noted a tone of sadness in an otherwise 'happy' poem.

The pitfall, thereafter, was to give a catalogue of 'other poems' and say whether they showed happiness or unhappiness.

At a superficial level, most candidates were able to comment on a variety of poems but only the best answers incorporated mention of poem 64 and related it to Catullus' feelings.

Sophisticated answers were able to delve more deeply into the meaning of his poems and often highlighted moments of sadness in otherwise light-hearted poems and vice versa.

Conclusion

The examiners wish to congratulate both the candidates and their teachers on their preparation of the set texts which obviously engaged most in debate and discussion and this showed through in the answers written. Candidates had also worked hard on the language element showing overall a good knowledge and an ability to work through the passage and encouraging appreciation of scansion.

F364 Latin Prose

General comments

It is hoped that the comments which follow will help to guide those engaged in training the next cohort of candidates.

Examiners were delighted to see some impressive overall performances, but there were also numerous scripts in which one Literature response was markedly shorter than the other or where too much time had been 'borrowed' from one half of the paper to give to the other. Besides a solid knowledge of the set-texts and of the vocabulary and grammar required for Section A, strict time-management can also become a crucial factor in tackling this paper successfully.

Section A:

Q1: Unprepared Translation and Comprehension

As in previous years, approximately 2 out of 3 candidates selected this question. Those who rushed into the passage without taking time to work out the first paragraph regularly tripped up in the opening questions. Haphazard stringing together of vocabulary – such as 'some were put in charge of the bare bodies to collect the weapons' – was regrettably common. Many simply did not recognise key words such as *praecipitare* or *praebere*, and most found it impossible to unpack the meaning of the expression *omnem patientiam vincebant* in its proper context because they tried to interpret it in isolation from its grammatical subject *ea quae ... nuntiabantur*. Most identified the relevant phrase for c(i) but were evenly split between food being needed for a fight and food not being made available without a fight. There was a similar even split between Gerund and Gerundive for c (ii), with shots at various Participles also appearing from time to time.

Most were able to form a good grasp of the first half of (d), but were often stretched by the increasing 'gradient of difficulty' in the last three sections. Among the difficulties:
* *complevisset* : 'it filled', 'they filled' or 'the jars were filled'
* *nuntium misit* : detached from its subject and translated 'a message was sent'
* *deferret* : many did not pick up the significance of the *de-* prefix
* *insequenti nocte* : a surprising number did not realise that *insequenti* agrees with and therefore describes *nocte*
* *haerentia* : the single least understood word in the passage, variously associated with sand (*harena*), whispering (?), granaries (*horrea*), drinking (presumably *haurire*) or omitted altogether
* *postea … fallerent* : confusion often started with *cavebant* and then having to work out where it leads grammatically. Choosing the meaning 'they warned' usually led to a complete rewriting of the sentence, often turning *custodia* into 'the guards', followed by an Indirect Command – and many of those who did better than that fell down at the hurdle *ne quid*
* *fusae* : variously translated as routed, escaping, or falling

On the other hand, large numbers saw opportunities for stylish/idiomatic English and were able to amass enough examples for either 1 or 2 marks. Favourite ideas were to unpack the ablative absolute in (i) into a separate clause, 'carried downstream' for *deferret* in (ii), and 'occupied' for *tenebant* in (v).

(e) was - as usual - a major discriminator, dependent on candidates' ability to form a clear grasp what was going on. Failures frequently stemmed from reading merely vocabulary without reference to syntax, exemplified by such mongrel readings as: 'even the animals have left

(*abstinerent*) even the mice'; 'they dug up all of the grass for this type of mouse'; 'they were pulled down by a leather strap and chewed by mice', 'they threw turnip seeds at the enemy'. Weaker candidates saw improbable significance in assonance (usually labelled wrongly as alliteration) in the phrase *aliove animali abstinerent*. Hardly anyone worked out what Hannibal says at the end or appreciated how this might be relevant to the question.

The grammar questions also sorted out the sheep from the goats – *conarentur*, for instance, being identified as a Purpose Clause by many who couldn't work out where *ad id inopiae ventum est* was leading, and all sorts of guesses at the case of *inopiae*. At least candidates must try to follow the instructions: as normal on this paper, an infinitive was requested for (i), not *sedeo*! Some tripped and stumbled through these questions and clearly had not had sufficient preparation for them.

Q2: Prose Composition

Although there are always some thoroughly convincing versions, these were not numerous, and examiners were again struck this year by the number of candidates who seem to attempt this option without having an adequate grasp of basic Latin grammar, let alone subtleties of phrasing or knowledge of choice vocabulary. Though the passage perhaps looked superficially less challenging than some of previous years, beneath the surface there was plenty which only the most expert were able to handle convincingly. The best also found opportunities for idiomatic writing without indulging in the exotic or engaging in wholesale rearrangement of sections.

Most got off to a good start with the routine promotion of the subject in the first sentence, and handled the whole sentence pretty well. Problems arose with 'remembered', for which some had to resort to unacceptable stop-gaps such as *memoravit or revocavit,* or else periphrasis using *non oblitus est*. Either way, the case chosen for *oraculum* was frequently incorrect. Weaker candidates also forgot that the 'foretold' clause would need an Indirect Statement or were unable to produce an accurate Future Passive Infinitive. 'Afraid to stay', in (iii), produced a crop of over-complicated Fearing Clauses with subjunctive.

In (iv), candidates frequently failed to distinguish who/what was the subject of the sentence, Perseus (m) or the ship (f). 'People', in (v), entailed selection of the appropriate word for the job: *cives* was rewarded as stylish, whereas *populos* or *gentes* showed that the concept wasn't really understood. A more serious error was the construction after 'they persuaded', where an alarming number didn't employ an Indirect Command or provide the requisite Dative. 'By throwing the discus', in (vi), was another good discriminator, with many appropriately using a Gerund (though Gerundive was considered a bonus, as more idiomatic); sometimes however, not only the discus but the young men (accusative) were thrown, and it was sometimes grammatically ambiguous whether it was the discus or Perseus that was being carried into the crowd by the wind!

English syntax does not always transfer straight into Latin, as shown by 'striking King Acrisius and killing him instantly'. Here something other than two Present Participles was required: one practical solution was to make both actions into main verbs; another was to use a Passive Participle in the accusative, agreeing with the king who gets killed. The less expert, however, in their eagerness to try some participial subordination, easily became entangled in constructions which just didn't work. 'Shocked to discover' was handled adroitly as *perterritus intellexit* by those in the know. 'Of whose presence' made a high final hurdle: instead of writing something like *de praesentia,* candidates who practise this kind of exercise ought to be old hands at turning abstract expressions like this into concrete ones.

Section B: general comments

Despite the change to a less familiar book of the *Annals*, Tacitus remained much the more popular author and Pliny attracted no more than 25% of candidates. The quality of work seen on both authors, however, covered a similarly wide range. Many candidates might have achieved more if they (a) wrote less, (b) focused on the question from the first word they wrote, and (c) analysed the passages along more intuitive, less straitjacketed lines. Another good 'tip' is to consider at the outset what potential the passage contains, and what the examiner might expect to hear about. As it happened, for both authors, passage (a) contained more factual content, whereas passage (b) was full of features that cried out for attention under the heading of 'style of writing': many candidates, however, still approach every passage as a relentless plod from one line to the next, in which every conceivable item – unusual or 'bog-standard' – is treated at length as if of exactly equal significance. Examiners would like to applaud the increasing number of candidates this year who started their response with a quick summary of what they saw as the 'meat' of the passage, then tackled the detail either in order of importance or thematically, instead of starting with sentence 1, sentence 2 .... etc.

As mentioned repeatedly in previous years' reports on this unit, there is a tendency for candidates to pick on isolated scraps of Latin, rather than to give quotations in full which properly match the comments being made about them. Simply appending the occasional Latin word or sentence in a bracket is not the same thing as choosing a quotation out of which an observation or comment is then developed. Making reference to the text by quoting first and last words or by using line numbers is an acceptable method if the section quoted is lengthy, but full quotation of the Latin is generally preferable - and is really essential if the candidate is trying to discuss details of an author's style.

'Style' itself is often interpreted on too small a scale – often no more than an assertion that this or that word is particularly significant – and for some candidates seems to amount to a rather mechanical search for exemplars of technical terms. Too many seem to feel they have dealt satisfactorily with 'style' by collecting individual literary items, like coins or stamps – an approach which by itself says nothing about what these features add to the overall argument of the passage. Examiners would prefer to see fewer claims to have spotted chiasmus or polysyndeton and more evidence of sensitivity towards balance and contrast between adjacent clauses, for example, or the attitude conveyed by an author's phrasing, or the tone or positioning of significant words.

Q3: Pliny

(a) Many knew the gist of the passage quite well, though weaker candidates confined themselves to the less demanding material, and only the best could give a clear and precise account of important facts, such as the posts for which Pliny was recommended by Verginius. The danger with 'cherry-picking' of this kind is that an entire answer is built out of isolated words and phrases lacking any overall thread, with Latin quotation perhaps supplied but functioning as little more than decoration. One surprisingly common error was identifying *tutor* as a tutor rather than a guardian, and at least one candidate thought Pliny's uncle appointed a guardian to look after him while he was abroad. Another poorly handled phrase was *me huius aetatis per quem excusaretur elegit,* as candidates failed to see who might be excused and for what reason. Verginius' touching compliment to Pliny as a substitute son was often quoted, but without understanding of the circumstances which gave rise to it. Striking stylistic features which were often rightly picked out for attention included the emphatic repetition of *plenus* and later of *sic,* and the typical (but perhaps rather insensitive here?) multiple word-plays on life/death in the closing lines.

(b) A well-known story which gave plenty of scope for analysis, both on the level of the narrative itself and the breezily journalistic style of reporting which Pliny adopts. Candidates rightly homed in on well-turned phrases such as *se amari putat, amat ipse putari* and *neuter timet, neuter timetur*, and most could identify such features as historic infinitives, anaphora, chiasmus and asyndeton – though, as at GCSE level, some hide behind the technical terms without having much to say much about their effectiveness in a particular context. The apparent simplicity of the passage – with Pliny letting the 'amazing' facts speak for themselves – was perhaps lost on many, who often tried to complicate its generally transparent style. A surprising number had nothing to say about the last sentence, despite the prominence Pliny tries to give it as *incredibile, tam verum tamen quam priora*!

Q4: Tacitus

(a) Most had a clear grasp of the plot, identifying how Sejanus had so insinuated himself into the emperor's favour that he was able to get away with anything – even eventually murder. The passage was bursting with memorable phrases, and the majority (but not all) readily picked out 'house full of Caesars', 'partner of his labours' and 'small-town adulterer'. In a rich passage such as this, where there is so much waiting to be said, candidates are misguided if they waste time laboriously analysing tiny examples of questionable significance, such as alliteration (real or imagined) or polysyndeton. More valuable points cried out to be made – for example, about *vi tot simul corripere*, where the choice of vocabulary and word-order together convey a strong sense of Sejanus' violent intentions. Undue and questionable importance was sometimes attached to a single word – *coli*, for example, or *placuit*, which was often claimed to encapsulate Sejanus's evil delight: few, however, commented on its position or on its striking double construction with both *occultior via* and *a Druso incipere.* Many could spot a tricolon in the list of Livia's family connections, but would then fail to comment on the contrast that Tacitus is using it to hammer home. Almost all were alert to Sejanus' pressurising of Livia to commit adultery – with no tangible benefit to her, as some astutely pointed out – but the significance of Sejanus' quarrel with the emperor's son and heir was less easy to interpret, and so was simply overlooked by many. There is a clear difference between those who write, of the opening phrase *neque ... abstinebat*, 'the litotes gives a disturbing impression of Sejanus' rise to power' and those who take this a stage further: 'by pointing out that Sejanus didn't miss any opportunity to court popularity with the senatorial class, Tacitus clearly implies that he ought to have done, and the reader feels instinctive dread for where this is all leading'.

(b) There was again generally good awareness of what was going on, but answers tended to be slightly weaker than (a) – perhaps reflecting the more subtle material (b) contains, perhaps in many cases simply through poor time-management. Weaker candidates were satisfied with references to isolated phrases – such as *proximum successioni*, *modesta iuventa* and *vigilias, somnos, suspiria* – which, valuable as they are, could not make a convincing response to the question on their own. Stronger candidates traced connections throughout the passage, such as noting the theatrical imagery in the opening lines, sometimes even extending this to imagining *fautores* (line 12) as an invited audience. Most were able to describe how Nero's popularity began to fade, but in many cases analysis of *alius…quidam…plerique* was limited to identification of a tricolon, with only better answers adding the striking infinitives and climactic *variatio.* One recurring peculiarity was an impossible interpretation of the reported words of Nero Caesar's supporters (lines 4-7), which many candidates took to mean that they were working on Sejanus' behalf against Nero rather than trying to bolster Nero's confidence with the assurance that 'Sejanus would not dare to act against him' (a phrase clearly misunderstood by many candidates). Nearer the end, only a minority seemed to understand the phrase *traxit in partes* or were alert to the likely building metaphor in *iam labefactum*.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

Education and Learning
Telephone: 01223 553998
Facsimile: 01223 552627
Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

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