GCSE

Latin

General Certificate of Secondary Education **GCSE 1942**

Reports on the Components

June 2010

1942/R/10

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations

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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 specification 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

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REPORTS ON THE COMPONENTS

Chief Examiner's Report

It was with some sadness that Examiners witnessed the final stages in the awarding of this series of examinations; the last time the legacy specification was to be examined. It is the opinion of Examiners that the specification served its purpose very effectively, offering as much choice to Centres and candidates as had the two previous parallel specifications put together.

This year's entry, at nearly 9,800, was marginally up on that of last year: a positive note to finish on. The standard achieved by the candidates was impressive, providing a strong testimony to the dedication of their teachers and to their own determination to master a challenging subject.

The only negative feature of candidates' work was the often disappointing standard of written English. Certainly for many candidates their ability to express their thoughts accurately in English fell some way behind their understanding of the Latin.

The Examiners wish everyone involved with the new specification as much success and satisfaction as they have enjoyed while operating the outgoing one.

1942/06 Latin Coursework

In this the last year of coursework, the Latin entry was considerably higher than last year, with 148 Centres entering 1536 candidates. Some Centres submitted both Latin and Classical Greek coursework.

As in previous years, the moderators enjoyed reading work on a wide range of topics, with very little work of a low standard, and much work of a very high standard. There has been little change over the years in the topics that have been most popular: entertainment (especially the amphitheatre), women and the Roman Army.

Titles
Many titles were phrased as a question, which invites understanding and evaluation provided it is a real question. Most titles were central to the topics, but there were some that were too historical. Others were too literary: the coursework option is an alternative to the Roman Life paper, and Roman life aspects of the prescribed literature should take precedence over literary studies that overlap with the content of other components. It is to be hoped that the literature units in the new Specification, with the extended writing questions, will offer increased scope for the exploration of broader literary themes. There were fewer empathy pieces, which in the past have been very well done, with only a few being too speculative; those that were submitted this year similarly worked well.

While some proposed titles submitted to OCR for advice have proved impossible to relate to the prescribed topics, it has been the practice of advisers to indicate ways in which candidates' own enthusiasm can be accommodated if at all possible.

Criteria

AC1 Factual Content & AC2 Use of Primary Source Material
Research on factual content is almost invariably thorough, and now the majority of candidates are aware of the importance of using primary source material. This they do with varying degrees of success, some candidates demonstrating their use of primary source material as a source of factual content very effectively. A series of solid paragraphs with neither primary source material nor references to any secondary sources is less impressive than content derived from primary sources with the candidate's own comment and interpretation. On the whole, however, there has been steady improvement both in the use, integration and analysis of primary sources and the referencing of material. These are skills that will stand candidates in good stead in future extended writing tasks, whether in examinations or in work.

AC3 Organisation
Candidates' work is still sometimes far too long, but regularly shows signs of planning, with good use of headings and paragraphs. Sometimes there is repeated material or an unclear path through the material. This can sometimes be traced to unfinished editing or to pasting errors.

AC4 Understanding and Evaluation
Candidates generally engage with their material with enthusiasm and very few pieces of work are lacking in at least some comment and interpretation of the evidence. Modern comparison or comparison in Latin coursework with aspects of Greek life occasionally becomes too dominant at the expense of the Roman aspects, but to a lesser extent in recent years. In both Greek and Latin coursework, there has been very balanced comment on topics where bias and limitations in the sources need to be addressed, such as women and Sparta.

AC5 Quality of Written Communication
Nearly all candidates achieve both marks on this criterion, which is common to coursework in all specifications.

Marking
The marking of work by Centres is for the most part thorough, with helpful comments and indications of where marks have been awarded in relation to the Mark Scheme. Marking is generally consistent, accurately reflecting the criteria. Exceptions are some Centres that are new to coursework (of which there were a substantial number this year) and therefore less familiar with the Mark Scheme and the procedures, Centres that are reluctant to use the whole range of marks by awarding full marks to outstanding work, and Centres that tend to award too many marks on AC2 Use of Primary Source Material where there is either very little integrated source material or little use made of it.

Suspected Malpractice
There has not been massive evidence of the problem in this Specification, but every year the work of some candidates has had to be referred for investigation as suspected malpractice. Early signs are that in the Sources for Latin and Sources for Greek papers, under the new Specification, candidates are proving they can use primary source material effectively and independently under examination conditions without the risks and temptations that arise from the internet.

Administration
During the course of this Specification, the administrative procedures for Centres and moderators have changed from time to time. There are always some problems in procedures that are necessary but complicated, but these are minimised by the careful completion of forms, punctuality and thoroughness of teachers and examinations officers at Centres, for which the moderators have been very grateful.

Conclusion
Moderators have been impressed by the ability of GCSE candidates to produce coursework of a high standard based for the most part on primary sources. It is this ability that has inspired Sources for Latin (A405) and Sources for Classical Greek (B405), the source-based Units in the new Specification that replace both coursework and the legacy Roman Life and Classical Greek Life written papers. The hope is that these new papers will be as attractive to candidates from Centres with a tradition of doing coursework as to those from Centres who have favoured the written paper.

1942/11 Paper 1 – Language 1 (Foundation)

This year's paper was a little more challenging than that of last year, but more in line with those of the previous years. Many candidates struggled to follow the story-line, mainly because of vocabulary weaknesses. Candidates varied in ability and preparation, as in most years, ranging from the exceptional, who clearly would have achieved a high grade in the Higher Tier, to those at the lowest end of the ability range, who in many cases seemed to have very little knowledge of Latin. Whilst some candidates are to be congratulated for the effort they applied to the examination, it was disappointing to see that others, armed with good linguistic knowledge, made only a perfunctory attempt at the paper.

The standard of English was often disappointing. More noticeable in this tier was the percentage of candidates who ignored the instruction to write their translation on alternate lines; this made the task of the Examiners more difficult.

Q1

Q1 (a) was answered well by most. The two common errors were the translation of *feminam* as either 'women' or 'girl'. Poor spelling often made it unclear as to whether candidates thought 'women' was singular or plural.

In Q1 (b), generally answered well, many omitted *iam*; others confused *habebat* with *habitabat* (an error that pervaded the whole paper).

In Q1 (c)(i), half the candidates answered correctly; the other half had problems in face of the unfamiliar *dona* and *dedit*. The same was true of Q1 (c) (ii), where the stumbling blocks were *illa* and *reliquit*.

Both parts of Q1 (d) and Q1 (e) were handled well.

Q1 (f) proved to be beyond the capabilities of the candidates: although the strongest candidates were able to score half the available marks, most struggled to gain a single mark. The combination of the comparative *divitiorem*, the ever-difficult *invenit* and the unfamiliar *iussit* and *abire* proved to be too challenging.

Q2

Octavius tristis et iratus erat, quod Pontia non iam eum amabat.

This opening sentence was handled well by the great majority of candidates. Many did not know *tristis*, and many omitted *iam*.

octavius in epistula nuntiavit se tot dona Pontiae dedisse ut omnem pecuniam exhausisset;

No candidate was able to cope with both the indirect statement and the result clause. Vocabulary knowledge was poor: *nuntiavit*, *tot*, *dona* and *dedisse* were rarely known. Most ignored *in* and made *Pontiae* dependent on *nuntiavit* (usually either 'sent' or 'wrote'). *Exhausisset* was usually converted into an indirect statement.

eam oravit ut ad se rediret.

A few translated this correctly. Most did not know the meaning of *rediret* and ignored *ad se*.

ubi Pontia non respondit, Octavius ad domum eius ivit,

A good proportion translated the first half correctly, and some went on to complete the sentence without error, but most were defeated by *domum* ('master'), *eius* (unknown) and *ivit* (variously guessed).

ut offerret vitam suam, quam solam nunc habebat.

Few took notice of the purpose clause ('and offered' was usual). Many did not know *vitam* or *quam*. *Solam habebat* was usually 'lived alone'.

cum tamen illa eum avertisset, Octavius aliud consilium cepit:

Most handled the *cum* clause well, but few knew the difference between *illa* and *eum*. Guesses at the meaning of *avertisset* were varied and sometimes sensible. Most were defeated by the vocabulary of *aliud consilium cepit*.

unam noctem cum ea rogavit.

This sentence, translated almost word for word in the introduction, was in practice rarely correct, because most candidates, anxious to include the statement in their translation, but unable to relate it to the Latin, had already committed themselves to it at least once earlier on.

'si hoc donum mihi dederis,' inquit, 'numquam iterum tibi appropinquabo.'

While the strongest candidates translated this sentence flawlessly, candidates at the lower end of the ability range gained marks only for *inquit*, which was universally known. It was pleasing to find that many recognised the future, even though most thought *tibi appropinquabo* meant 'you will approach'. Surprisingly, very few candidates knew *numquam*.

Pontia, quamquam perterrita erat, hoc facere constituit, quod credidit Octavium tum abiturum esse.

This was an effective discriminator, with most candidates able to gain at least a few marks, but few achieving all the sense. Few knew *quamquam*, but almost all knew *perterrita erat*. It was clear that candidates had been trained to take note of punctuation, and dutifully reproduced the commas; unfortunately, few showed understanding of the function performed by the commas here ('Pontia, was terrified' was probably the most common rendering). Very few knew *constituit* or *credidit* or *tum* or *abiturum esse*. Most made *Octavium* the subject of whatever they had taken *credidit* to mean. A small number delighted Examiners by showing knowledge of the future infinitive.

Q3

In Q3 (a), most scored at least half of the marks available; omission of *optimam* and *suum* were the commonest errors.

In Q3 (b), candidates in the middle and lower end of the ability range gave the answer to parts (ii) and (iii) under part (i) and then the responses they gave to the other parts often did not make

sense. Examiners were generous in rewarding correct responses to (ii) or (iii) given under (i). Again, average and less strong candidates made much of the glossed *tunica*, creatively imagining many different uses for the carrying of a tunic. Candidates at the lowest end of the ability range thought that the freedman was actually a gladiator (*gladium*).

In Q3 (c), most understood the two actions, though there were many unexpected alternatives to 'making love'.

Q3 (d) was answered correctly by all but the weakest candidates.

Most answered both parts of Q3 (e) correctly. Omission of one or both adverbs was the main error.

In Q3 (f), only the strongest candidates could cope with *intellexerunt* and *quis*; candidates in the middle of the range knew *omnes* and sometimes *eam necavisset*.

In Q3 (g), although there were a few complete and accurate answers, most did not understand the Latin here, and resorted to making up a response to fit in with their understanding of the story. *Manserat*, *domo* and the indirect statement with *se* were usually insurmountable hurdles.

Both parts of Q3 (h) were answered well; these two questions were the main sources of marks for candidates at the lowest end of the ability range.

1942/12 Paper 2 – Verse Literature (Foundation)

General Comments

In the last two years there has been a decline both in the number of entries for this component and in the quality of candidates' performance in the examination. Examiners felt that some of those who were out of their depth on the Higher Tier version would have been able to achieve more if they had attempted this paper instead. Candidates for Section B (*the Cambridge Latin Anthology*) outnumbered those for Virgil by 2 to 1, and these turned out to be generally the stronger group, though a handful of outstanding results was achieved on both. As in previous years, whilst a general familiarity with the poems studied was enough to enable candidates to respond to questions dealing with context and factual content, only a minority succeeded in doing so consistently across the paper. Any question relating to specific details of the Latin text presented an insuperable hurdle to many, and the short translation passages were more often than not omitted altogether.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A: Virgil *Aeneid VI*

Question 1

The scene here was easily recognised, and most got off to a good start with (a)(i). The bough (or 'bow'), the sibyl, Charon and the river Styx, all seemed to be present in candidates' minds, but pinning this information down to specific Latin words in the relevant lines proved elusive for many. Problems started immediately in (a)(ii) and continued to cause confusion to candidates all the way down to (e), where the chance to describe Cerberus often came as welcome relief. In (c)(i), for example, many incorrect answers were given for the boat and (ii) was often answered with 'rust-coloured' – recalled from a different part of the text altogether. *Tandem* – usually one of the items of vocabulary most familiar to GCSE candidates – was rarely recognised as the only plausible answer to (d)(i), and in (f) translations only occasionally included more than a few of the words featured in the two lines concerned.

Question 2

Again a general acquaintance with the context took candidates a little way. For example, the concept of reincarnation regularly turned up in (d), and (g) was a gift to those – unfortunately not all – who could draw on the wide range of features mentioned in the passage preceding this one. Even here, however, there was a tendency for candidates to go off in the wrong direction by not digesting the questions or using the guidance provided by the line references. For (g), many used the material applicable to (b)(iii), or answered (a) with the bees and meadow which really belonged to (b). Questions dependent on recognition of specific pieces of Latin were predictably liable to take a wrong turn. Almost every answer to (b)(i), for example, was flawed by taking *volabant* as 'want' rather than 'fly', and answers to (e) went well outside anything in this passage because candidates did not understand the two lines of Latin. Even when a translation of the relevant Latin was provided for (f), few candidates were able to deconstruct Anchises' meaning – some interpreting Aeneas as a tourist 'enjoying discovering more of Italy', and giving no response to this question.

Section B : Selections from the *Cambridge Latin Anthology*

Question 3

Here too there was a noticeable disparity between responses to questions referring to the story-line and general context, and those which could only be answered with genuine understanding of the Latin words. Most got off to a good start with (a) and could find something worthwhile to say about questions such as (b), (d)(i) or (e). However, many incorrect names turned up for (i)(i) as well as Aeneas, while responses to (j) tended rapidly to lose focus on the issue of mistakes made by Nisus and Euryalus. In between, (c), (d)(ii) (e)(ii), (f) and (h) all received some correct answers but often suffered from vagueness regarding what was actually going on in the lines indicated, while the translation of (g) rarely amounted to more than an isolated correct phrase or two – which did, however, receive some credit.

Question 4

Though the gist of this colourful poem seemed familiar to most, the details frequently were not – especially, once again, where questions probed specific items in the Latin. Candidates seemed encouraged by finding (a) and (c) quite straightforward, but answers in between to (b) were handicapped by failure to grasp precisely what lines 3-4 actually say, and in (d), though most understood why Ovid considers the charioteer to be lucky, very few could locate the equivalent Latin – virtually every word in line 7 being offered as an adjective, sometimes in English instead. It was more surprising that candidates, who basically understood that Ovid is trying to picture what it would be like to be a charioteer himself, could say so little in (f) about the techniques of chariot-driving described in lines 11-12. Much of the information that was provided was generic and seemed to have been drawn from the chariot-race in the film *Ben Hur* rather than from Ovid's words here – slackening the reins rarely being mentioned and, when it was, frequently misunderstood as the way to slow the horses down rather than the reverse. Examiners enjoyed reading a small number of balanced and well-referenced responses to (g): most candidates at least found something to say – if only that Ovid is not serious about horses but that he is extremely serious about impressing the girl he fancies in the crowd.

1942/13 and 1942/23 Language 2 (Foundation) and Language 2 (Higher)

Paper 3 Foundation Tier (Component 13)

Examiners were once again impressed by the overall quality of the work. The majority of candidates seemed to make good sense of the passage with its slightly unusual story-line. The second half of the passage, with its more narrative content, was perhaps done better than the first. As ever, pupils with a weak knowledge of vocabulary were more likely to struggle; words which caused difficulty this year were *lego, alter, tempus, impero, aliud and melior*.

In the first section, most realised that Aristotle did not expect to live much longer but the meaning of *lego* caused difficulty in the second sentence, as did the participle *rogantes*. It is a common error for candidates to take every example of *ut* as 'in order that', even after common verbs of asking which are often followed by an indirect command: few got 'many friends therefore came asking him to choose a new principal.' The sentence that followed was badly done, as the future infinitive *facturum esse* was often not recognised ('he replied that he would do this'). With the exception of the temporal phrase *illo tempore* ('at that time'), the next sentence was generally well done.

There were one or two references to a dog in the next sentence (*cenam* not *canem*) but mercifully no one wrote that Aristotle was eating one. *cum*, as ever, caused problems. Here, being followed by *olim* rather than a noun, it had been hoped that candidates would see that it must mean 'when' and went with *consumeret* ('once when Aristotle was eating dinner among his friends'). In the sentence beginning *statim servis imperavit*, weaker candidates translated the words in the order they appeared in the sentence without apparently being able to spot that the -*it* ending of the verb showed that it must have a *singular* subject. The use of terminations rather than word order to communicate meaning is the single biggest difference between an inflected language like Latin and English, and it is vital that candidates are taught simple clues for working out who did what to whom. In this case, candidates who took *servis* as the subject lost only a mark, even though the mistake was generally fatal to the overall meaning of the sentence. Under the system for marking unseens in the new specification for GCSE, this sort of failure to distinguish subjects and objects will be taken into consideration when the marking grid is applied.

The last part of the story was generally well done and most grasped the point about Aristotle's choice of a wine to indicate his choice of a successor, though it was disappointing to see some who took *amici intellexerunt* as 'his intelligent friends' (the same was true at Higher Tier). Again, candidates at this level need to be able to distinguish between basic noun endings *(-a, -am, -us, -um* etc.) and verb endings (especially the third person forms *-t and -nt*).

Paper 3 Higher Tier (Component 23)

Examiners felt that this was an appropriately testing paper in line with previous years' papers. The mean mark was higher, perhaps because the nature of the story meant that a number of easy words had to be repeated (especially *vinum*). As at Foundation Tier, the vast majority seemed to grasp the point of the story. There were too few answers to Section B (English into Latin sentences) to comment on but some excellent work was in evidence from those who had been trained well to answer them.

In preparing for Latin-English translation, candidates need to be encouraged all the more to learn their vocabulary list, not least as ignorance of vocabulary is likely to have a more serious effect on their marks under the new system for marking unseen translation in the new

specification. In this case, words often not known included *iam, validus, oro, lego, quam celerrime, vereor, nonnulli, forte, idem, muto, alius, coepi, paulisper, dubito, faveo, sic and itaque*.

The first sentence of Section A was generally well handled but in the second the meaning of *eum oraverunt* ('they begged him') was problematic, *ut* was taken as 'in order to' (even by candidates who got the correct meaning of *oraverunt*) and *lego* was not always known. *vereor* ('I am afraid') made its final appearance at GCSE (it is not included in the new GCSE vocabulary list) and it duly produced some interesting variations. In the next sentence, candidates often lost marks on the simple phrase *illo tempore* ('at that time'), and the omission of *eius* ('in his school') was common.

In the second paragraph, as at Foundation Tier, *cum* caused difficulty. The meaning of the word *forte* and the form *eosdem* ('the same') were also sometimes problematic. The gerundive *mutandum est* ('it must be changed') was not done well, though candidates who took it as an imperative ('change it!') won two of the three marks available for it. With regard to the sentence beginning *deinde servum misit* ('then he sent a slave …'), the advice in the Foundation Tier section above is worth repeating here. Weaker candidates tended to translate the words in the order they appeared in the sentence (eg 'the slave sent …') without apparently being able to spot that the -*um* ending of the noun must have meant that it was the object of the verb. Since the use of terminations rather than word order to communicate meaning is the single biggest difference between Latin and English, it is vital that candidates are taught simple clues for working out who did what to whom. It is a safe rule that any noun ending in -*m*, unless it is a second declension neuter noun like *vinum*, will be the *object* of a verb. Centres who choose to use this passage as a mock exam or classroom activity in future might be well advised to check what their candidates do with *servum misit* and make a big issue of it if they get it wrong. In the same sentence, as expected at this level, relatively few spotted that *ferrent* was a purpose clause subjunctive after *qui* ('he sent a slave to look for').

In the last part of the story, the phrase *paulisper dubitavit* ('he hesitated for a short while') caused difficulty, as did the phrase *cum dixisset se Lesbio favere*. At this level, it was disappointing to see that the *intellexerunt* was often taken as an adjective rather than a verb ('all intelligent people') but most showed that they had grasped the point of the story here. Surprisingly, even candidates who translated the rest of the story well nigh perfectly tended to ignore *sic* ('that it was not the wine but his successor that he had chosen *in this way*). The omission of 'little' words like *iam, mox, sic and tum* is something to advise future candidates about, as the mark scheme for unseen translation in the new specification places importance on translating all the Latin words that are there. In the last sentence, too many ignored the obvious nominative *Theophrastus* by writing 'everyone agreed that Theophrastus should be made …') when what was needed was 'Theophrastus was made the new principal of the school with everyone's agreement'.

Conclusion

Examiner's reports necessarily tend to concentrate on what candidates did not do well. It is therefore worth concluding that the Examiners were generally as impressed by the large number of high quality answers as they have been in previous years. The majority of candidates had been well-prepared for sentences containing a variety of grammatical constructions and posing a consistent level of difficulty. The vast majority of the 5689 entries scored in the 30-40 bracket - those that were legible were a pleasure to mark.

1942/14 Paper 4 Prose Literature (Foundation)

General Comments

This year the overall standard was good at this level and very similar to that of 2009. Several candidates produced excellent responses and could well have been entered for the Higher Tier.

Most candidates answered the questions on Section A: Prose Selections from the *Cambridge Latin Anthology,* and only a few chose Section B: *Selections from Pliny's Letters.* Those who answered the questions on Section B were less successful and scored marginally lower marks than those who opted for Section A.

As with the Higher Tier there were a number of mistakes in the spelling of basic words such as Britons, legionaries, cavalry and auxiliaries, as well as words like where and their. There was no evidence that candidates were short of time this year.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A: Prose Selections from the *Cambridge Latin Anthology*

Question 1

This question was well answered, with a few candidates gaining full marks.

Candidates answered (a) well, but in (b) some had difficulty in explaining what jobs the Druids performed. There were some vague answers, referring to public and private matters rather than sacrifices. (c) (i) and (ii) were generally fine. In (d) many omitted to say that the honour was great. Candidates found it hard to get full marks for (e) because they tended not to know *controversia.* (f) was well answered and candidates generally opted for *gravissima* in (f) (ii). (g) differentiated well between the better and the weaker candidates.

Question 2

This question was less well answered than question 1. Some candidates who scored almost full marks for Question 1 did not know the passage in this question at all well.

In (a) *angustiis* was not generally known, nor was *immota.* (b) (i) was well answered, although one or two hedged their bets and gave a list of weapons despite the wording of the question. In (b) (ii) the weaker candidates generally picked out *certo* correctly but frequently gave *exhauserat* as the second word. (c) was fine but in (d) not everyone knew *ceteri.* (e) and (f) were well answered but in (g) many candidates did not read the question carefully and failed to see that they were asked to give information other than that given by Tacitus. Most quoted material that was already in the account. There were however some good answers from candidates who would have liked information on the feelings on both sides and the input of the two commanders.

Section B: Selections from Pliny's Letters

Question 3

Candidates did not answer (a) particularly well as many of them missed the comparatives, blacker and thicker. There were good answers to (b) apart from a few guesses, but (c) was less successful as few mentioned the sea. In (d) some candidates thought that Pliny's uncle fell down rather than lay down and (e) and (f) often contained random guesses. (g) was well answered, probably because the uncle's illness had been an enjoyable topic for class discussion. The

answers to (h) were rather disappointing. Candidates did not always understand the demands of the question and few gained full marks.

Question 4

In (a) virtually no one knew that the province was Bithynia. (b) was generally well answered apart from a few candidates who managed to confuse (b) (ii) and (b) (iv). (c) was fine but in (d) *fructuosum* was not always known. (e) was well answered by those who knew the text and (f) provided good differentiation. The strongest candidates produced thoughtful answers, but the weaker ones resorted to guesswork.

Because so few candidates answered Section B, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions, but they did appear to find the Latin quite challenging.

1942/15 Paper 5 Roman Life Topics (Foundation)

General Comments

This year the overall standard was quite good at this level. A few candidates produced excellent answers and could have been safely entered for the Higher Tier. There were also many answers, which reached a very satisfactory standard. A number of candidates however scored low marks because their answers were vague and lacked relevant detail.

Topic 1: Daily Life in Roman Society was much more popular than Topic 2: the Roman Army, but there was little difference in the standard of the responses to each topic.

In Section B there were some lively essays which reflected the candidates' enjoyment and empathy. Some essays however lacked the terminology needed to express ideas adequately. There were references to 'the politics house', presumably for the council chamber, and the couches at a dinner party were called variously sofas, loungers, long chairs and even tables to lie on! For some candidates there was also a lack of awareness of a Roman context. Potatoes were included in a meal and showers featured in the Roman baths.

Some candidates showed little care over presentation and spelling, and could be reminded to attempt to spell the Latin words, which occur in the topic, correctly. The Latin names for the rooms of the house were rarely completely correct.

Comments on Individual questions

Topic 1: Daily Life in Roman Society

Section A

Question 1 was not generally well answered. There were references to the statue bases and the appearance of the forum. In Question 2 the open space was sometimes identified as a *palaestra.* Questions 3 and 4 were quite well answered but some of the answers to Question 5 such as upcoming events and advertisements were too vague. Candidates needed to specify what these events were and what was being advertised. In Question 6 only the best candidates gave the Latin correctly and there were frequent misspellings. There were no problems with Question 7 and Question 8 produced a good range of answers as in the Higher Tier.

Section B

Question 9 was more popular than Question 10, but the best candidates gave good answers to both questions. Some however wrote too vaguely and were repetitive.

In 9 (a) candidates were expected to know the number of courses at a Roman dinner and of what food the meal consisted. Few candidates had any knowledge of the opening ceremony in 9 (b) and some did not name more than one type of gladiator. The best candidates however gave dramatic accounts of fights between *retiarii* and *murmillones* and of beast fights involving all kinds of exotic animals. Candidates tended to overlook what impressed them except by implication.

In Question 10 (a) there were some good details such as the fact that the writer had to wear shoes in the *caldarium* to prevent his feet burning on the floor. Not all candidates understood the meaning of facilities in this question. 10 (b) was probably the question least well answered, despite the help given in the bullet points. There was not much imagination evident either. Most of the businesses mentioned were just shops and some had no further details about what was

sold. Candidates often put too much emphasis on the visit to the baths and the evening dinner at the expense of the time spent with clients and in the forum.

Topic 2: The Roman Army

Section A

Question 1 was generally quite well answered. Question 2 produced many correct answers including *auxilia*. This correct use of the Latin word was impressive. In Question 3 candidates did not always notice that the specialists were needed for building operations and not for other jobs. As in the Higher Tier there were too many vague references in Question 4 to cleaning and repairing without specific details. In Question 5 most candidates noted that Rufus Sita was on horseback, but only the best candidates were able to quote a second piece of evidence for the fact that he was not a legionary soldier. Questions 6 and 7 were well answered provided candidates knew Roman numerals. Question 8 was a more challenging question, but it did produce some thoughtful answers, including the fact that his ornate tombstone showed that he was probably wealthy.

Section B

Again Question 9 proved more popular than Question 10, which was less well answered than Question 9.

Although a few candidates concentrated too much on the training of a legionary soldier, there were some lively letters and one ended by urging his friend to join the army today and not to miss out. 9 (b) was generally well answered.

In 10 (a) most candidates were able to give details of training and weapons, but few dealt adequately with the part played by the officers. In 10 (b) some candidates ignored the request to write a letter. Answers tended to focus on Agricola's Romanisation programme with little about his early career.

1942/21 Paper 1 – Language 1 (Higher)

This year's paper proved to be a little more challenging than last year's, but in line with those of previous years. Most candidates were still able to score very highly, and well over one hundred gained full marks. The two comprehension passages were dealt with effectively by the great majority.

The story-line proved accessible to almost all candidates; indeed there were very few who had lost the thread by the end. The main uncertainty among average and less strong candidates was distinguishing correctly between the actions of the two principal characters in the translation.

The standard of English was particularly disappointing this year. In particular the linking of subordinate clauses and phrases to main sentences and the use of punctuation were frequently incorrect. A very large number of candidates, who clearly had difficulties handling indirect statement in English, converted large sections of the translation, including many simple direct statements, from the third to the first person, though never with inverted commas. A significant number of candidates had difficulty writing coherently in English once a sentence exceeded eight or nine words in length.

Another disappointing feature of translations was the reluctance of most candidates to depart from the literal, even where the result was not natural or sensible English. Examiners regretted the fact that there were no 'bonus' marks with which to reward candidates who took the trouble to think about the sense of what they were writing.

Q1.

The biggest ever percentage of candidates scored full marks on this question.

Q1 (a), (c) and (d) were usually well done, although very weak candidates simply guessed "she didn't want to marry him" for (a).

In Q1 (b), marks were lost by middle range candidates going into purpose-clause mode just because of the word *ut* in line 2; it is worth noting here that most candidates appear not to be aware that *ut* has any other function but to introduce purpose.

In Q1 (e) the comparative *divitiorem* wasn't always picked up and the word *invenit* wasn't known by many, who made *virum* the subject ("a man came along"); a good few candidates did not answer the 'how' half of the question at all.

Q2.

Octavius, ubi Pontiam non diutius videre potuit, et tristis et iratus erat.

Few candidates recognised *diutius*. Very common was 'when Pontia did not want to see him', even among the better candidates. Only the most observant candidates spotted the need to translate the first *et* as 'both'.

statim epistulas scripsit,

About half the candidates rendered *epistulas* as singular.

quibus conabatur Pontiae persuadere ut amorem suum acciperet;

About half thought that *quibus* was the subject. Many associated *Pontiae* with *scripsit*. Many weaker candidates mistook *amorem* for a verb.

dixit se, multis donis ei datis, omnem pecuniam exhausisse;

Se wreaked havoc, even among strong candidates. Only a small minority identified the indirect statement, and even fewer could render that construction adequately into English. 'He said to himself', 'he himself said' and 'he said to her' were about equal in popularity. Very common among those who did appear to recognise the construction was 'He said he, ..., all the money was used up'. Surprisingly, nearly half the candidates turned this into direct speech. The great majority of candidates also had difficulty with the ablative absolute, even though this has been a regular feature of GCSE translations for many years. Few candidates recognised it, and most of those who did could not translate it into acceptable English. This made the small number of successful translations of this section all the more impressive.

timebat quoque ne inter cives famam pessimam iam haberet.

Here and in the next section there was confusion either through continuing direct speech, or making Pontia the subject.   The superlative *pessimam* was often missed by the strongest candidates, and from others *ne* elicited a negative.

tandem etiam vitam suam oderat, quam solam nunc habebat.

This sentence, unsurprisingly, caused the most confusion. Many did not know *oderat* or, if they did, got the tense wrong. Large numbers did not know either *tandem* or *etiam*, or both. *Quam* caused the usual problems for the many who only knew one meaning for it. Those who recognised the feminine in *solam* stood out. The few candidates who saw the meaning and were brave enough to write, 'which was the only thing he now had left' impressed Examiners.

cum tamen illa eum avertisset,

A lot of marks were available to those who recognised the nominative feminine *illa*; most did not. Very strong candidates were able to analyse *avertisset* and deduce the meaning; most could not. This was a legitimate use of a regular compound verb, in which the prefix carries its usual meaning.

Octavius, alio consilio capto, eam oravit

Insecurity over the meanings of *consilium* and *captus* led to even more problems over this ablative absolute than the previous one. *Consilium* was regularly 'planned', while *capto* was equally often 'in his head'. Only slightly better was the frequent 'he planned to capture her'. Those who did fight a path successfully through the ablative absolute all too often cast a mark aside with 'captured a plan', which is clearly nonsensical.

ut unam noctem in_cubiculum se acciperet.

It was regrettable to see, in a number of scripts, the words "begged her to ..." crossed out in favour of poorer English, usually as a final clause. In this way, marks were lost by candidates who had apparently understood perfectly. The problem otherwise was *se*, which few could relate to the subject of *oravit*. The accusative of "time how long" was also usually lost: 'accept one night in her/his bedroom' was by far the most common rendering.

'si hoc unum donum mihi dederis,' inquit, 'numquam iterum tibi appropinquabo.'

This apparently long and complex sentence was often translated correctly even by those who had struggled with the rest. The weakest candidates rendered *mihi dederis* as 'I give to you'. Many did not know *iterum*.

Pontia, quamquam perterrita erat, hoc pati constituit, ut e_manibus Octavii effugeret.

Most got the concessive clause correct, but *hoc pati constituit* proved too difficult for the majority, who did not know what sort of word *pati* was. As in previous years, *effugere* was regularly confused with *fugere. Manibus* was often made singular.

Q3.

In Q3 (a)(i), the future tense escaped candidates at the lower end of the ability range; most however did well to recognise the future.

In Q3 (a)(ii), nearly all candidates scored well here. The commonest errors were the omission of *fideli* or *suum*.

In Q3 (b), many gave the impression of not knowing what a tunic was ('he was carrying a tunic').

In Q3 (c), most wrote 'they gave love', making *amori* the object of *dederunt* but not considering to whom they might have been giving the love. Almost all got the second activity right.

Q3 (d), (e) and (f i) were nearly always answered correctly.

In Q3 (f)(ii), many linked *invento omnes* to give 'everyone found the body'. *Corpore* was as often plural as singular, as was *feminae*. Equally many converted the indirect question into an indirect statement ('that he killed').

In Q3 (g), many thought the fact that the freedman remained in Pontia's house was irrelevant; in fact, as the more observant realised, this was the first part of the deception. Most failed to understand the force of *pro Octavii iniuriis*, but were still able to score full marks if they achieved accuracy in the rest, because more points could be made than marks were available.

Few failed to understand the Latin for Q3 (h); a good few, however, lost marks for the nonsensical 'who had restored her health' or 'whose health had restored'.

Q3 (i) was answered well by all who did not think that *captus* meant 'head'.

1942/22 Paper 2 – Verse Literature (Higher)

General Comments

Once again the Cambridge Latin Anthology selection proved more popular than Virgil. The general level of performance was almost identical, with some very high marks recorded on both sections, though there seemed fewer really top-of-the-range performances than in previous years. There was also a significant proportion for whom the Foundation Tier paper would clearly have been more appropriate, as well as a few who did not seem to be familiar with the texts. In questions demanding reference to the Latin text, the words quoted by candidates often did not fit their accompanying English comment precisely enough. Some failed to appreciate that the questions on style did not all stipulate the same criteria (which might be sound, rhythm, choice or position of words), or that answers ideally need to refer to two (or occasionally three) *different* features rather than multiple instances of the same kind. Technical terminology, whilst a useful shorthand for those who have mastered it, does not by itself answer these questions and sometimes actually gets in the way of candidates' first-hand observations: comments on metre, in particular, were often quite arbitrary and not related to the sense of the line concerned. Too many – under the impression that the punctuation in the text is original – still try to make comments based on an author's supposed use of commas, exclamation-marks, etc. Handwriting, spelling, and the layout of answers in the answer-booklet often made it difficult for Examiners to understand candidates' responses.

Comments on individual questions

Section A : Virgil, *Aeneid VI*

Question 1

Nearly all knew the context well and could supply plenty of information in (a) about Charon's bad experiences with previous visitors to the Underworld and the Golden Bough (frequently misspelt as 'bow'). Some candidates, however, seemed not to have referred to the line numbers specified for several questions and so produced correct but irrelevant answers, whilst excessive reliance on memorised English was plainly exposed in questions such as (b)(i) and (e) where Examiners expected a proper correlation between quoted Latin and English comments. Candidates generally went to town on (d), though surprisingly few seemed to sense Virgil's irony here and risk pointing out that Cerberus does not turn out to be nearly as scary as legend would have him. Answers to (g) were frequently handicapped by focusing on Virgil's use of particular vocabulary – whereas the question referred only to 'the sound, rhythm, or *position* of words', in which categories candidates explored plenty of relevant material relating to emphasis by position, enjambement, assonance, and metre.

Question 2

The first of the two passages used here proved more stretching for some than had been envisaged. The focus of responses to (a) was often too little on Elysium and too much on the activities of the bees in the meadow. Answers to (b) and (c) tended to be rather hit-or-miss, if candidates either ignored the line references specified or could not relate a memorised English version to the Latin words themselves. The fairly tough but short passage for translation (d) often came out well, apart from omissions such as *equidem* and *magis*, or conflation of the three infinitives *memorare/ ostendere/ enumarare.* The second passage tested candidates' acquaintance with the various historical and mythological references and their sensitivity to the blatant hyperbole in Virgil's presentation of Augustus. Here the best candidates – no doubt finding that they had time in hand – produced magnificent essays on both aspects, touching appropriately for (f) on details of Augustus' campaigns and his defeat of Cleopatra. Good points

frequently cited for (e)(ii) were the repetition of *hic*, the portentous position of Augustus' name and the reference to the Golden Age of Saturn. Problems sometimes arose, however, with precise location of the Latin words needed to back up comments (eg *aurea condet* taken as equivalent to 'a Golden Age') and some candidates had little understanding of the implications behind the various places and figures mentioned. Even Hercules was not always identified in (g), while Atlas was sometimes assumed to be another brave hero or one of Augustus' conquests rather than an extreme indication of the distance of his travels.

Section B : Selections from the *Cambridge Latin Anthology*

Question 3

Most candidates – though by no means all – were comfortable with the context of this excerpt and so were able to write convincingly about (c), for example, or for (i) to recall factors which sabotaged Nisus and Euryalus' mission – the fatal stolen helmet being the most frequent. Other parts regularly done well included (a)(i) and (d), while the number of alternatives available made (f) very successful too. As in Section A, over-hasty candidates sometimes targeted the wrong line (eg for (b) citing Iulus' beauty, mentioned a line earlier) and some were unable to pinpoint the Latin words needed for questions such as (a)(ii) – and particularly (e), where *multis* was fairly easily explained but *exitio*, highlighted both by enjambement and by its final position in the sentence, could not be convincingly interpreted by those who did know the precise meaning of the word. The main problem some candidates had with (g)(iii) was their failure to analyse what stylistic features of Nisus' terse speech might be typical of 'someone giving orders', rather than simply offering a translation of most of what he says. Reliance on vague paraphrases was also at the root of many of the weaker translations offered in (h), especially for the final line – though Examiners accepted the version supplied as a gloss in the *Anthology* itself, so long as it was quoted in full. More accurate translations sometimes accidentally omitted anything corresponding to *sic memorat, ense, superbum,* or *forte,* while Rhamnes' name inspired some unexpected transformations – including 'a Rutulian'.

Question 4

The more story-centred questions on Nisus and Euryalus were balanced here by an emphasis on the style and mood of three love poems. It was disconcerting to find in (a), however, candidates who were unaware of the context of Ceyx's journey, or even whether Ceyx and Alcyone were male or female. Parts (b) and (e) were generally well done and for the latter some candidates focused on the consequences of a body remaining unburied, though there were also those who assumed that Alcyone had seen tombs without names or bodies (or clothes) washed up on the shore. The translation of (c) was often successful too, give or take the occasional word (*pias* and *prior* especially) and some rather approximate paraphrasing of *fletibus ora rigavit* (eg 'tears welled up in her eyes'). For (d) most candidates managed to make at least one point together with the relevant Latin, but as elsewhere on the paper Examiners found many a mismatch between Latin and English and not everyone attempted to explain how examples such as Alcyone's series of rhetorical questions and the repetition of *iam* indicate her anxiety. Most knew enough of the gist for (f), but only the best were able to analyse the Latin in sufficient detail to score full marks. Again in (g), there were few who did not know the poems or find something worthwhile to say about the confused feelings which both portray. Some, however, failed to notice that in (i) they were expected to probe the situation behind the poems, rather than to go straight to discussion of their format: the opportunity to mention the use of opposites, emphatic word-order etc came in (ii). There was, of course, considerable overlap between these sections and Examiners were happy to reward good points wherever they were made, so long as candidates addressed both aspects of the question and the same material was not simply written down twice *verbatim* – as did occasionally happen.

1942/24 Paper 4 – Prose Literature (Higher)

General Comments

The standard this year was very good and was in line with last year's performance. Most candidates demonstrated excellent knowledge and understanding of the texts.

The majority of the candidates answered the questions on Section A: Selections from the *Cambridge Latin Anthology* while only a minority chose Section B: *Selections from Pliny's Letters.* Questions 3 and 4 provided marginally more differentiation than Questions 1 and 2, but the standard of response was generally high.

This year fewer candidates ran out of time and most had a better understanding of what the questions required. A few however still wrote too much on questions which carried only one or two marks. They should only quote the Latin when asked to do so.

There were a number of mistakes in the spelling of basic words such as Britons, legionaries and cavalry, and presentation was in some cases very poor.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A: Prose Selections from the *Cambridge Latin Anthology*

Question 1

(a) and (b) were well answered but in (c) some candidates failed to distinguish between *hi* and *eos* and thought that the young men were held in great honour. In (d), as there were several possible answers, most candidates were able to score full marks. (e) (i) and (ii) were both well answered. In (f) (i) the best candidates answered in their own words with sentences like 'they were not given justice', but a few didn't fully understand the Latin and quoted literal translations such as 'justice was not given back to them'. (f) (ii) provided good differentiation. *gravissima* was a good answer to the question, but it was important to say to what the word referred. Some candidates quoted entire sentences without any translation or explanation or were too vague, especially in their comments on *neque…neque* and *contagione.*

Question 2

Many candidates treated (a) (i) as if it was a general knowledge question and gave a full account of the Romans' defensive strategy. The answer was given in the quotation. Most got (a) (ii) and (b) (i) right. In (b) (ii) some candidates gave *certo* with a correct translation, but then failed to give the correct meaning of *iactu.* A few incorrectly picked out *exhauserat* and some gave three words instead of the two requested. (c) and (d) were both well answered and (e) provided good differentiation. A number omitted *quidem* after *ne* and some failed to link the Latin words correctly. For example, *etiam* referred to the animals and not to the women. (f) provided further differentiation and the best candidates expressed *claram laudem* in their own words. There were plenty of excellent answers to (g). Candidates had obviously discussed the battle extremely thoroughly in class and many got full marks for their comments on strategy, weapons and tactics.

Section B: *Selections from Pliny's Letters*

Question 3

(a) (i) was generally well answered but (ii) was less successful. Some candidates did not identify the comparatives, but most picked up on the use of *nox* to describe the darkness. (b) and (c) (i) and (ii) were all well answered. In (d) only the strongest candidates scored two marks as many failed to pick out *alios* and *illum* as part of the contrast between Pliny's uncle and other people. There were plenty of good answers to (e) and this appeared to have been a popular subject for class discussion. (f) also produced some very good answers, apart from the few candidates who confused physical characteristics with character. Obesity, for example, was not accepted as an example of Pliny's uncle's character.

Question 4

(a) was generally well answered, but in (b) surprisingly few knew that Pliny was governor of Bithynia. (c) (i) produced good answers but candidates found (c) (ii) quite challenging. However, because they had to think harder, many did quite well. The weaker candidates failed to pick out the contrast between *modico sumptu et labore* and *magno labore maiore impendio,* although the stronger candidates picked up on the repetition of vocabulary, the use of synonyms and asyndeton. They did not need to use the technical terms. (d) and (e) were well answered, but a few candidates, who did not notice that the Latin quotation started at *nam,* included the previous sentence in their answer and could not be awarded a mark for this. (f) generally caused no problems and (g) was answered particularly well. The best answers linked Trajan's comments quite precisely to the information that Pliny had given him in his letter. Most answers were well considered and knowledgeable.

1942/25 Paper 5 – Roman Life Topics (Higher)

General Comments

Once again the standard on this paper was very pleasing. Most candidates had been well prepared and wrote with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Topic 1 was far more popular than Topic 2, but there were some excellent answers to both topics. All but a very few candidates appeared to have been entered for the correct tier.

In Section B most candidates made an encouraging effort to answer the questions rather than just giving a long list of facts.

There were a small number of rubric errors for this component. A few candidates answered the questions on both topics and in Section B one or two answered part (a) of one question with part (b) of the other.

The quality of written communication was generally good, but in some cases handwriting proved difficult to decipher and the exact spelling of Latin terms could have been better. Time management did not seem to have been a problem this year, with very few candidates failing to finish the paper.

Comments on Individual Questions

Topic 1: Daily Life in Roman Society

Section A

Some of the answers in this section were too long, containing information which was not asked for in the questions.

Question 1 was generally well answered. In Question 2 some candidates thought that the picture showed a *palaestra* and, among those who knew that it was the forum, there was often overlap between shopping, business and trading. Question 3 required candidates to give three separate types of building. Some candidates gave three named temples as their answer, but this only gained one mark. Question 4 was well answered, but in Question 5 candidates again needed to give three separate types of information. Advertisements for festivals, plays and gladiator fights are all for shows and merited one mark. It was not enough to mention 'important events' without being more specific. In Question 6 most candidates gained full marks and the use of the plurals *triclinia* and *cubicula* by some candidates was impressive. A few confused A and B and only one or two did not know the Latin terms. Question 7 was well answered and there were some very well thought out answers to question 8. Candidates mentioned the cool tiled or marble floors and the white walls which reflected heat as well as the more obvious answers.

Section B

Question 9 was more popular than Question 10 and this year candidates had made pleasing efforts to answer the question.

The answers to Question 9 (a) were enlivened by the frequent use of contemporary phrases. One wrote 'I would serve statement food' and *secundae mensae* became 'mains'. Spelling errors sometimes caused problems, particularly where these changed the meaning, such as 'peasant' for 'pheasant', and 'liar' for 'lyre'. There were however some excellent accounts by candidates of how they would impress their guests, making reference to elegant couches, fine wall paintings, mosaics and the summer dining room overlooking a beautiful garden. It was important however

not to forget that this was a dinner party and candidates had to include details of the three course meal, wine and entertainment to gain full marks. Some candidates wrote in the third person even though they were asked to describe it from their own point of view and included inappropriate comments like 'according to archaeological evidence'. A few failed to focus on the question and gave long accounts of recipes from Apicius.

Question 9 (b) also produced some excellent answers. Candidates made a wide range of points as to why the Romans visited the baths. Most started with the main reason for the visit, which was to get clean as few Romans had piped water at home, and then continued by describing all the different facilities. Some gave a variety of reasons but omitted to add any examples or details to support their point of view. A few candidates went to the other extreme and included information about Bath, some of which was not relevant, or descriptions of the hypocaust system.

Question 10 (a) required candidates to imagine that they were taking part in the elections of a Roman town. There were some lively, detailed accounts, which made good use of sources. Candidates mentioned election support from trade groups, including one who referred to 'Asellina and her girls from the bar'. They presumably influenced their clients. The best answers came from those who focused on the elections and were not too side-tracked by a visit to the baths and the evening dinner.

In question 10 (b) only a few confused the theatre with the amphitheatre this year. Sometimes candidates gave reasons for the popularity of the theatre without giving any information about the performances or gave long accounts of the performances without including any reasons why people looked forward to the shows. On the whole however candidates made good efforts to answer the question.

Topic 2: The Roman Army

Section A

Questions 1-3 were generally well answered. Modern terminology was again evident, with soldiers sporting 'the legionary dress code'. Question 4 produced vague answers from some candidates such as 'cleaning' and 'repairing'. Candidates needed to say what was being cleaned and repaired. Questions 5-7 were well answered except by the few who did not recognise the Roman numerals. Question 8 was more challenging and only the best candidates gained both marks. One observant candidate commented on the lions on the tombstone and noted that these indicated bravery.

Section B

Question 10 was slightly more popular than Question 9.

In 9 (a) there were some excellent accounts of what attracted men to join the army. Again some candidates made excellent use of sources and quoted Vegetius on a soldier's training.

There were also some very good answers to 9 (b). Many, quoting Tacitus to support their comments, knew a great deal about Agricola's programme of Romanisation and his conquests in Wales and Scotland, pointing out that the fact that he remained governor of Britain for longer than anyone else was a mark of his success.

10 (a) was answered more successfully than 10 (b) where there seemed to be some uncertainty about the meaning of the word 'facilities'. The best candidates, however, produced comprehensive answers. One noted that the fort was like a small town because it included most of the same facilities. Some were more critical and commented on aspects such as the overcrowding in the barracks.

It was very gratifying to see that so many candidates were prepared to think for themselves and to make a real effort to answer the questions in Section B this year.

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

OCR Customer Contact Centre

14 – 19 Qualifications (General)
Telephone: 01223 553998
Facsimile: 01223 552627
Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

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