



External Assessment Report 2010

Subject	Latin
Level	Intermediate 2

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the Examination.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

All candidates finished both papers, and there were very few this year who would have been better advised to have sat Intermediate 1. Most candidates wrote at length in the Interpretation paper, and in some detail when required.

Most candidates were clearly well prepared for this paper, with some exceeding the amount of information required for the marks available. Candidates also coped well with the Translation passage about King Midas and his golden touch, with many scoring very high marks.

Candidates' time management in both papers was appropriate.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Interpretation

Candidates displayed a good standard of English. Questions 1 and 2 (on the Cicero text) were well answered, with candidates clearly showing understanding of the complexities of the narrative. Question 6, on Aeneas meeting Dido in the underworld, was particularly well discussed, with candidates keen to express their views. Some took a modern viewpoint when judging Aeneas, while others considered the episode within an ancient context. Both approaches were valid.

Translation

Candidates coped well with the passage, and despite losing marks for minor errors, no-one lost the thread of the plot, successfully reaching the end. The ablative absolute *prece audita* was generally well done.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Interpretation

In Question 1 (a), there was some confusion between the statue of Hercules and the temple itself. In Question 5, which asked whether Dido 'deserved to die', candidates had plenty to say, but their answers were generally confused, and unfocused. Some did not seem to understand what 'deserved' meant.

In questions asking for details from specific lines, eg 1 (b), 3 (a) and 4 (a), candidates often strayed beyond the lines specified.

Translation

Some candidates failed to recognise the neuter plural, eg *saxa*, *poma*. Some took no notice of singulars and plurals, eg *servos* was translated as singular. Some did not recognise

manus was accusative plural. Some did not take the idea of the present participle *tollens* into account, and translated it as 'he raised'.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

- ◆ In the Interpretation questions, candidates need to restrict themselves to the correct lines and to read the questions more carefully.
- ◆ If candidates quote Latin in the Interpretation, they need to show what it means in English. They will not normally get marks otherwise.
- ◆ Centres should ensure that the syntax and accidence lists for Intermediate 2 are covered in the Course.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2009	107
Number of resulted entries in 2010	122

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum mark — 60				
A	91.0%	91.0%	111	43
B	4.9%	95.9%	6	37
C	2.5%	98.4%	3	31
D	0.8%	99.2%	1	28
No award	0.8%	100.0%	1	—

General commentary on grade boundaries

While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.

Each year, therefore, SQA holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Head of Service and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.

The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.

The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.

Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in say Higher Chemistry this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related as they do not contain identical questions.

SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as Arrangements evolve and change.