



External Assessment Report 2012

Subject(s)	Latin
Level(s)	Standard Grade

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

Interpretation

At all three levels, responses were generally very pleasing. Detailed knowledge of the Prescribed Texts was clearly demonstrated, and candidates gave very laudable answers showing confidence in, and engagement with, the texts. They clearly enjoyed sharing their views and offering evaluating responses. Those who did not achieve in the upper paper did well in the lower paper.

Translation

Responses at all three levels were of a high standard, and there was a noticeable improvement in spelling, handwriting, paragraphing, and punctuation, and candidates made a clear effort to express themselves in lucid English. Almost all candidates finished the papers in good time to allow for some re-drafting where required.

Investigation

Candidates engaged well with their chosen topics and appeared to enjoy their research very much. The standard of some Investigations was very high.

There was good use of primary evidence, and some interesting comparisons were made. Although there is an increasing reliance on the internet for information, it was pleasing to see so many candidates using a mixture of books and websites. Although there were a few more unusual topics, the range of subjects did seem fairly limited, with army, gladiators and fashion being the most common. Biographical topics were rare and seldom well done. Among the more unusual topics were: 'How the Romans flaunted their wealth', 'The development of medieval Latin', 'Great fires in Rome', 'Gods' encounters with mortals', 'The relevance of Roman fiction' and 'The Roman class system'.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Interpretation

Foundation: Candidates were keen to share their opinions, and questions which provided this opportunity were particularly well done, ie 1(d); 3(c); 5(b). They also answered well question 4 on Martial's poem about the pet dog.

General: Apart from question 1(a), which asked for the job which Androclus's master did in Africa, the other four questions on the Gellius text (1(b) – (e)), were very well answered. Question 3(d), about Martial's personality, elicited much personal engagement. Question 5 on the Ovid text was also well done, and candidates gave thoughtful answers about how we should treat strangers nowadays.

Credit: There were a very pleasing number of excellent answers to challenging questions. Question 2(b) on the Seneca text was well answered, with candidates having plenty to say and many being awarded the full four marks. Question 4, comparing the two pet poems, was also very well done and gave able candidates the chance to demonstrate their detailed knowledge of both the content and language of poems 9 and 10. Question 5(b), about Latona's personality, again elicited responses based on very detailed knowledge of the Ovid text.

Translation

Foundation: This was very well done — everyone finished the story and expressed themselves well. Candidates also managed the direct speech well.

General: Most candidates made sense of the narrative and coped well with some tricky constructions, eg line 4: *omnes superati et necati erant*; lines 5-6: *ubi Atalantam vidit*.

Credit: There were a very pleasing number of extremely competent responses, which were well-expressed. Many candidates spotted the pluperfect tense in lines 3 and 8 *docuerat*. In line 10, the ablative absolute *sed audito psittaco* was very well done, as was the accusative and infinitive construction *dixit se satis talium domi habere*.

Investigation

It was encouraging to see some 'mainstream' topics being given an unusual slant, eg 'Comparing Roman chariot racing to Royal Ascot' and 'The treatment of slaves compared to treating modern pets'.

There were a pleasing number of examples of very active learning, eg one candidate listened to recordings of Roman music, another included personal photos taken on trips to Rome and Pompeii, another was photographed modelling some Roman clothes she had made, and another reproduced a Roman food recipe using Roman replica utensils. There were several excellent 'Pompeii' investigations this year, with good comparison. Generally, there were few sustained comparisons and evaluating responses, but most candidates scored well in this area by using a number of short reasoned comparisons and responses.

It is pleasing when a candidate can pass some comment on the source eg 'Clearly Martial is exaggerating here to make people laugh'.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Interpretation

Foundation: Candidates found question 1(b) difficult, as many could not explain what Catullus did not know. Question 2(a), a multiple choice question asking candidates to identify who Lesbia would prefer to marry, also caused confusion.

General: Very few candidates seemed to know what job Androculus's master did in Africa (question 1 (a)), despite the answer being in the prescribed text. This did not require any prior knowledge, as some candidates thought.

Although Catullus's Poem 4 was in English, some found it difficult to identify what might interfere with the lovers' happiness (question 2) and re-wrote extracts from the text, rather than being specific. In question 3(c), although a considerable number of candidates could not accurately translate *tempora quid faciunt*, they still got the mark if they could explain its general sense, since they were not actually asked to translate it.

Credit: Question 1 on Gellius' story-telling techniques was not well done, as candidates tended to make generalisations rather than base their answers on the specific line references. Very few managed to get the full three marks. Question 3 on the Augustine text was not well done, as many candidates forgot the focus of the question was on Alypius and wrote instead about Seneca.

Translation

Foundation: Some candidates ignored the glosses typed above some Latin words and phrases. This then caused problems, as they would not have been able to find their meanings in the word-list because glossed words do not appear in the word-list.

General: Despite being told that Venus was a goddess, some candidates referred to her as 'he'. During the story, others were confused about who was overtaking whom in the race, especially in the final paragraph. Some candidates muddled *multi* with *multo* when referring to the word-list. The last line *victor felix ab arena puellam duxit* proved challenging for some, who either could not successfully translate *felix victor* and/or had the nominative *victor* and accusative *puellam* reversed in their English translations.

Credit: Some candidates were not able to translate '*erat*' lines 5 and 11 and did not recognise that it is from *sum, esse*. Others wrote the whole story in the present tense, rather than the past tense. Some candidates confused *ave* ('greetings') with *avis* ('bird'), when referring to the word-list, and others failed to spot the gloss underneath the passage. Others needlessly inserted the word 'to' into their translations eg *Augustus Caesar Romam rediit* = 'Augustus Caesar was to return to Rome', despite a bracket around the word 'to' in the word-list eg **redeo, -ire:** (to) return, in an attempt to prevent this.

Investigation

When choosing topics on mythology, candidates do not often see the difference between Greek and Roman myth and concentrate on the Greek. Also some simply re-tell the stories or list the gods. Greek vases were wrongly used as evidence of Roman life.

Julius Caesar as a topic caused problems to some, as they valiantly tried to cover his whole life and floundered in a sea of facts. Bibliographies were sometimes incomplete, inaccurate or omitted.

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Interpretation

- ◆ Candidates should ensure that the length of their responses match the value of marks available.
- ◆ Prescribed Texts that are in English need to be studied as thoroughly as those in Latin.
- ◆ When answering questions, candidates must ensure they keep their responses within the specific lines.
- ◆ When a question asks candidates to 'refer to the text', giving the quotation of Latin alone, without showing that the candidate knows what it means, will not receive full marks. The candidate must, either explicitly or implicitly, demonstrate knowledge of the meaning of the Latin reference.

Translation

- ◆ Candidates should ensure that they score out rough work, particularly when it precedes the fair translation, and should also avoid using pencil.
- ◆ Candidates need to use the word-lists carefully, to avoid looking up the wrong word by mistake.
- ◆ Because the word-list is specific to the passage, ideally candidates should look up every word for the meaning specific to its context. There is time to do this.
- ◆ Candidates who are being presented for Foundation level should be given practice in the Foundation format (which is very different from the other two levels).
- ◆ Candidates should avoid copying out the English links.
- ◆ If the passage is being typed, candidates should use a big font and generous spacing, as very dense typed texts can be difficult both for the candidates to review and for Markers to mark.

Investigation

- ◆ Centres should re-familiarise themselves with the SG Arrangements for the Investigation on the SQA website eg 'only one side of the paper should be used ... the pages should be numbered and fastened together.'
- ◆ Candidates must include the number of words and ensure that the number is accurate. Too many candidates are leaving this part of the form blank.
- ◆ Most candidates select 'mainstream' topics and do them well. There is no need to find unusual, quirky topics.

- ◆ When citing sources, 'Wikipedia' or 'Google Images' is not enough. The precise link to the website is required.
- ◆ Centres should give advice to candidates about the poor quality of some websites — several candidates included wrong information found on a website. Photos found on the internet are also sometimes inaccurate.
- ◆ Avoid over-long quotations.
- ◆ Although not essential, having chapters or sub-headings, rather than just one long continuous text, adds to the overall appeal of any Investigation.
- ◆ Pictures should have captions and be linked to the text in some way, rather than being scattered throughout the Investigation at random.

Statistical information: update on Courses

STANDARD GRADE

Number of resulted entries in 2011	372
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Number of resulted entries in 2012	411
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Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of overall awards

Grade 1	73.5%
Grade 2	15.3%
Grade 3	6.6%
Grade 4	2.9%
Grade 5	1.0%
Grade 6	0.2%
Grade 7	0.0%
No award	0.5%

Grade boundaries for each assessable element in the subject included in the report

Assessable Element	Credit Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		General Max Mark	Grade Boundaries		Foundation Max Mark	Grade Boundaries	
		1	2		3	4		5	6
I	25	17	12	25	15	12	20	14	10
T	50	36	25	50	32	25	50	34	25