



Course report 2022

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| Subject | Latin |
| Level | Advanced Higher |

This report provides information on candidates' performance. Teachers, lecturers and assessors may find it useful when preparing candidates for future assessment. The report 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 assessment documents and marking instructions.

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any appeals.

Grade boundary and statistical information

Statistical information: update on courses

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|------------------------------------|----|
| Number of resulted entries in 2022 | 35 |
|------------------------------------|----|

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

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|-----------------|------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|
| A | Percentage | [c] | Cumulative percentage | [c] | Number of candidates | 15 | Minimum mark required | 125 |
| B | Percentage | [c] | Cumulative percentage | [c] | Number of candidates | 10 | Minimum mark required | 107 |
| C | Percentage | [c] | Cumulative percentage | [c] | Number of candidates | 5 | Minimum mark required | 89 |
| D | Percentage | [c] | Cumulative percentage | [c] | Number of candidates | 5 | Minimum mark required | 71 |
| No award | Percentage | [c] | Cumulative percentage | N/A | Number of candidates | [c] | Minimum mark required | N/A |

All figures are rounded to the nearest five. Figures between one and four inclusive have been suppressed to protect against the risk of disclosure of personal information. All percentage figures for a course have been suppressed where values between one and four inclusive have been suppressed. Cells containing suppressed figures are marked up with the shorthand [c].

You can read the general commentary on grade boundaries in appendix 1 of this report.

In this report:

- ◆ 'most' means greater than 70%
- ◆ 'many' means 50% to 69%
- ◆ 'some' means 25% to 49%
- ◆ 'a few' means less than 25%

You can find more statistical reports on the statistics page of [SQA's website](#).

Section 1: comments on the assessment

Question paper: Literary appreciation

The question paper was in line with national standards and performed as intended. It sampled the course content effectively and contained a good mix of question types. This gave candidates varied opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. There was an appropriate balance between questions on texts in Latin and in English, and candidates engaged well with the paper.

This session candidates were given advance notice of the specific texts to be in the question paper (apart from in the essay question).

Many candidates opted for Latin Love poetry, with only one candidate choosing the Letters. These observations refer to the second (poetry) section of the question paper.

Question 9(a) worked well as an opening question, giving candidates a strong and confident start. The final question before the essay (question 15) proved more challenging, although most candidates who tackled it accessed the marks. The inclusion of more than one style of question meant candidates had opportunities to demonstrate their analytical skills. Candidates who struggled with question 11(a) generally performed better in question 13, which made question 11(a) an effective discriminator. Question 12 (on types of love) was open to allow for a variety of approaches, and most candidates had several points to make.

The 20-mark essay question (question 16) generated a range of marks. Most candidates showed some knowledge and gave their point of view. The poet, Catullus, was cited in the question, and while most discussed his poems as one of their main examples, some discussed other poets successfully. Many candidates drew on the texts included in the earlier part of the paper, but many discussed examples from the wider prescribed text list, especially the poems of Horace.

The challenges experienced by candidates generally reflected the differentiation that was integral to the paper. However, it was clear that disruption to learning and loss of time for learning and teaching affected some candidates' ability to apply examination techniques effectively.

The grade boundaries were adjusted accordingly.

Question paper: Translating

This question paper was in line with national standards and performed as intended. Candidates performed in line with previous years and produced a good range of marks. There were no issues regarding timing.

The paper sampled a broad range of accidence and syntax and offered a wide range of linguistic features reflecting progression from Higher.

The mix of straightforward and more demanding blocks was appropriate, allowing most candidates to demonstrate knowledge and skill. The opening and closing sections proved to

be the more accessible (blocks 1, 2, 6, 14, 16 and 19) and most candidates handled them well. Many of the more challenging features lay in the middle, and some candidates struggled with blocks 4, 5, 9, 18 and 20. However, the structure of the passage meant those who lost the thread of the story in these places were able to pick it up again in later, more straightforward blocks. Block 7 was very effective in this way, as many candidates who struggled with blocks 4–6 got back on track here. Although blocks 18 and 20 were more challenging, many candidates were able to grasp the essential idea.

Minor errors in the more demanding blocks did not prevent candidates from achieving the full 2 marks.

Project–dissertation

This year, the quality of the projects selected by candidates was high. Overall, dissertations were well researched and strongly argued. Most candidates chose topics that offered the appropriate level of demand and were conducive to in-depth analysis and argument. Most candidates engaged actively with their chosen topic. Many candidates chose areas of study that related to their academic interests. Topics often reflected current issues, from gender to culture wars.

Most candidates had a good grasp of what a dissertation entails, and were able to produce a piece of work that fulfilled the main criteria. The use of both primary and secondary sources was good, even if referencing was not always consistent. Evidence in Latin was handled more effectively than in previous years and most candidates were able to offer some analysis of their key Latin quotations. Most candidates recognised the importance of analysis and, even if they struggled to develop a sustained argument, most were clearly working towards illustrating a point of view.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Question paper: Literary appreciation

Most candidates performed well in this question paper. Candidates had prepared well for the assessment and most could demonstrate some detailed knowledge of the texts and appropriate use of critical analysis skills.

Most candidates handled the content questions well, and were able to explain aspects of the text, especially where the question's line references were near the beginning of the text. However, when the line references were near the end of the text, a few candidates had difficulty with the finer details. Some did not stay within the lines cited in the question. For some, drawing out implications caused difficulties. For example in question 14, while many candidates were able to move from the poet's words to the attitude they imply, some found it hard to see beyond the immediate content and struggled to characterise the poet's attitude.

Most candidates engaged well with analytical questions where there was a lot of relevant and easy-to-find information in the text but where they had to consider the details of the text in more depth, some candidates found an analytical approach much more difficult to maintain, for example:

- ◆ question 11(a): some candidates tended to discuss the points the poet made rather than his use of language
- ◆ question 9(b): in this mythology question, most candidates did well in evaluating the references, but some missed the instruction to 'explain'. They were too quick to proceed to evaluation, without showing that they knew the myth in question
- ◆ question 15: a few candidates did not realise this was a personal response question and answered entirely from the poet's perspective
- ◆ question 16, the 20-mark essay: this produced both the strongest and the weakest performances. There were several very strong performances, where candidates were able to gather a wide range of relevant examples and develop thoughtful discussions that fully addressed the question. At the other end, some candidates were able to compile a long list of examples but struggled to develop any analysis or to engage meaningfully with the term 'genuine' in the question. Despite the allocation of an additional 15 minutes to this question paper, a few candidates struggled with timing and had to be too brief in their responses

Question paper: Translating

Most candidates performed well. There were few errors of tense, and most candidates produced a translation that flowed naturally. Some candidates translated *hunc militem* (block 15) in the plural, but many were able to discriminate effectively between singular and plural forms. Many candidates handled the more challenging ablative absolute in line 10 very well.

Use of the wordlist and English linking sections varied. Some candidates did not make enough use of the English linking sections, resulting in translations that missed the point or expressed the opposite of the Latin. When using the wordlist, many candidates selected the wrong word, even when it fitted very poorly into the sense of the sentence. A few translated *rem* as king and some confused *cuncti* with *cunctati*.

In terms of constructions, a few candidates noticed the indirect statement in lines 2–3, but most did not, with block 4 being the most frequently mistranslated of the whole passage. A few candidates were able to deal successfully with the connecting relative in block 9. Few candidates translated the deponent verb in line 6 and *plus...quam* in line 11 successfully.

When trying to make sense of difficult blocks, few candidates took punctuation into account. The punctuation is intended to help candidates navigate complex sentences, but few made effective use of this valuable tool, and a few ignored it completely.

Project–dissertation

The quality of candidates' written English was variable. There were some exceptionally well-written responses, but the overall standard was not particularly high. In a few cases, it was hard to determine whether candidates were on the right track or not.

Most candidates chose their topics wisely and were able to formulate their research aims in a way that opened up productive lines of inquiry. A few candidates had difficulty pinpointing the aims of their research, and as a result they found it harder to develop a coherent discussion. A few had taken on more than they could reasonably manage. Some candidates demonstrated their intellectual curiosity and ambition by pursuing complex and demanding themes with an impressive degree of sophistication.

Most candidates engaged effectively with the research process, assembling data that demonstrated breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding. They were able to access a range of relevant sources, both primary and secondary. The quantity and quality of candidates' secondary reading was particularly good, with many consulting specialist, academic texts, as well as more generic works. Candidates' use of Latin was good. Many were able to offer their own translation of at least a few of their Latin quotations, and almost all recognised the need to engage actively and critically with the Latin. Many did this effectively, using evidence in the Latin to develop and substantiate their argument.

Referencing proved more difficult for some candidates and there was inconsistency in terms of what they cited, and how they cited it. Most were able to cite primary sources in their footnotes, but few were able to reference their secondary sources as effectively.

Most candidates demonstrated skill and understanding in writing their findings. Most candidates' dissertations were sensibly structured and pursued a reasonably clear line of argument. Most succeeded in writing a clear introduction and in producing a conclusion that was at least summative. The level of analysis and argument was generally very encouraging, with most candidates managing to demonstrate some analytical skill. By weaving together the insights gathered from their critical analysis, many were able to produce sustained arguments.

There were several examples of excellent textual analysis and candidates generally showed a willingness to evaluate source evidence and reflect on possible limitations. Many candidates showed skill in engaging with scholarly opinion and were able to synthesise a range of views to reach their own, reasoned conclusions.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Question paper: Literary appreciation

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ read the question and, if specific lines are cited, base their responses on these lines alone and not stray beyond them
- ◆ read and understand the question before they begin the 20-mark essay, highlighting any key terms to ensure they address the question as fully and effectively as they can
- ◆ are aware the essay question is open to allow a variety of approaches, but whatever approach candidates take, they need to develop their own argument and analysis. A list of points, however relevant, is unlikely to access the full range of available marks
- ◆ are sure they understand the references they find and can recall that knowledge when needed in the exam as they are often asked to explain mythological references
- ◆ write their points in full so that markers can understand them
- ◆ know that in attitude questions they must identify at least one attitude based on reasonable inference from the author's words. They should refer to the text to justify the attitude they identify, but a detailed explanation of content alone is not enough to gain the marks
- ◆ revise the closing lines of texts as thoroughly as the beginning
- ◆ are prepared to answer literary style questions on all the specified texts in Latin

Question paper: Translating

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ practise using the wordlist effectively
- ◆ prepare to use all the clues available to them: the introductory and linking sections in English, and the punctuation in the Latin text
- ◆ know that indirect statements using the accusative and infinitive are a standard feature of Latin at this level. These can be difficult to recognise because there is no obvious trigger word (for example *ut* in subjunctive constructions) and often, as here, the verb of saying is implied rather than stated. Candidates should work on strategies to help them to handle this construction effectively
- ◆ practise using connecting relatives as they feature in translating papers at this level

Project–dissertation

Teachers and lecturers should ensure candidates:

- ◆ know that the dissertation is intended to be a research project and not simply a long essay that can be pulled together from existing knowledge
- ◆ cite the secondary and primary sources of their information during their discussion. This is good practice and is the main proof candidates have that their points are valid but not

plagiarised. A footnote identifying the work in question, following any of the standard conventions, is all that is needed

- ◆ show some awareness of the date and genre of their sources and are able to comment on issues of reliability or bias. This applies, in particular, if tackling historical topics
- ◆ proofread their final draft carefully, checking not only for grammar and spelling but also to ensure that what they have written makes sense and can be understood. Reading the text aloud can be helpful. It can also be helpful to ask a supportive and trusted person, sometimes referred to as a 'critical friend', to review the final draft objectively and critically

Appendix 1: general commentary on grade boundaries

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

For most National Courses, SQA aims to set examinations and other external assessments and create marking instructions that allow:

- ◆ a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional grade C boundary)
- ◆ a well-prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional grade A boundary)

It is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level. Therefore, SQA holds a grade boundary meeting for each course to bring together all the information available (statistical and qualitative) and to make final decisions on grade boundaries based on this information. Members of SQA's Executive Management Team normally chair these meetings.

Principal assessors utilise their subject expertise to evaluate the performance of the assessment and propose suitable grade boundaries based on the full range of evidence. SQA can adjust the grade boundaries as a result of the discussion at these meetings. This allows the pass rate to be unaffected in circumstances where there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more, or less, difficult than usual.

- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more difficult than usual.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been less difficult than usual.
- ◆ Where levels of difficulty are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

Grade boundaries from question papers in the same subject at the same level tend to be marginally different year on year. This is because the specific questions, and the mix of questions, are different and this has an impact on candidate performance.

This year, a package of support measures including assessment modifications and revision support, was introduced to support candidates as they returned to formal national exams and other forms of external assessment. This was designed to address the ongoing disruption to learning and teaching that young people have experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, SQA adopted a more generous approach to grading for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses than it would do in a normal exam year, to help ensure fairness for candidates while maintaining standards. This is in recognition of the fact that those preparing for and sitting exams have done so in very different circumstances from those who sat exams in 2019.

The key difference this year is that decisions about where the grade boundaries have been set have also been influenced, where necessary and where appropriate, by the unique circumstances in 2022. On a course-by-course basis, SQA has determined grade boundaries in a way that is fair to candidates, taking into account how the assessment (exams and coursework) has functioned and the impact of assessment modifications and revision support.

The grade boundaries used in 2022 relate to the specific experience of this year's cohort and should not be used by centres if these assessments are used in the future for exam preparation.

For full details of the approach please refer to the [National Qualifications 2022 Awarding—Methodology Report](#).