



## Course Report 2017

Subject	Latin
Level	Higher

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any Post Results Services.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers, lecturers and assessors in their preparation of candidates for future assessment. 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 assessment documents and marking instructions.

# Section 1: Comments on the assessment

## Summary of the course assessment

### Component 1: question paper: Literary Appreciation

The question paper performed as expected. Candidates engaged well with the questions in every option and the level of the responses was generally very encouraging. Most candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of the texts and answered the questions in detail. The Grade Boundary was set at the notional figure.

### Component 2: question paper: Translating

The question paper performed as expected. The level of challenge was appropriate for Higher and there was a good range of marks. Some blocks proved more challenging than others and provided discrimination among candidates. Feedback from centres suggested that the passage chosen was fair and reasonable, with short, manageable sentences and phrases and a good storyline. The Grade Boundary was set at the notional figure.

# Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

## Areas in which candidates performed well

### Component 1: question paper: Literary Appreciation

All candidates showed a good understanding of the authors they had studied. The 8-mark question in each section was done well, with many candidates achieving full marks.

The extended-response questions allowed candidates across the ability range to demonstrate not just their knowledge and skills but also their engagement with the texts. There appeared to be relatively fewer 'prepared' answers for the extended response, and instead candidates provided many imaginative and creative responses, showing original thinking.

### Component 2: question paper: Translating

Almost all candidates completed the question paper and followed the storyline, with almost all gaining good marks within a wide range. Many had made good use of their time by producing a rough draft before writing a final version.

Almost all of the candidates produced a coherent narrative, making sensible use of the English italic linking sections to keep them on track for the following block.

## Areas which candidates found demanding

### Component 1: question paper: Literary Appreciation

No individual section or question appeared unduly demanding to candidates who had prepared properly for the examination.

### Component 2: question paper: Translating

Blocks 7 and 14 (involving separation of noun and main verb) proved challenging to many candidates. Some candidates also struggled to distinguish plural from singular endings. Some candidates had difficulty in identifying tenses, and some failed to differentiate between similar-looking words.

## Section 3: Advice for the preparation of future candidates

### Component 1: question paper: Literary Appreciation

In the vast majority of cases, candidates were well prepared for the assessment and were familiar with the texts, enabling them to engage creatively and confidently with the question paper. This thoroughness in preparation is to be commended, and can be developed by encouraging debate around the values and literary techniques encountered in the texts.

Some candidates had a tendency to echo the question repeatedly in their responses, which although motivated by a desire for clarity, is unnecessary.

### Component 2: question paper: Translating

Most candidates were very well prepared for the Translating paper, resulting in strong performances for the majority. However, some issues would be worth considering in preparing for future assessments:

- ◆ more careful use of the word list should be encouraged; for example, some candidates confused *ferret* and *ferrum*, *interim* and *interdum*, *navis* and *navigo*.
- ◆ Checking/recognising plural forms would have gained additional marks for a number of candidates; *deos*, *hospites*, *manus*, *remigum* were frequently translated as singulars.
- ◆ A few candidates missed out Blocks 12 and 13, so candidates should be encouraged to check carefully for omissions and deal with clauses individually. Credit was given for fluent clause linkage where the first clause was a participle (eg Blocks 9–10, 17–18).

Whilst it was pleasing to see that the conditions of assessment for coursework were adhered to in the majority of centres, there were a small number of examples where this may not have been the case. Following feedback from teachers, we have strengthened the conditions of assessment criteria for National 5 subjects and will do so for Higher and Advanced Higher. The criteria are published clearly on our website and in course materials and must be adhered to. SQA takes very seriously its obligation to ensure fairness and equity for all candidates in all qualifications through consistent application of assessment conditions and investigates all cases alerted to us where conditions may not have been met.

## Grade Boundary and Statistical information:

### Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2016	310
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Number of resulted entries in 2017	286
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### Statistical information: Performance of candidates

#### Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark -				
A	64.0%	64.0%	183	70
B	18.2%	82.2%	52	60
C	10.8%	93.0%	31	50
D	2.8%	95.8%	8	45
No award	4.2%	-	12	-

## 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, SQA therefore 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 Business Manager 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.