Course Report 2014

Subject	Latin
Level	National 5

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 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 assessment and marking instructions for the examination.

Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

Component 1: Question paper: Translating

Candidates are required to translate into English a passage of Latin of approximately 120 words, and with the support of a specific word-list. This component is worth 30 marks and the allotted time is one hour.

For marking purposes, the passage is always divided into fifteen blocks and each block is worth 2 or 1 or 0 marks. If candidates translate the block correctly or almost correctly, then they are awarded two marks for the block. If they just get the 'essential idea', then they are awarded one mark. If they do not get the essential idea, then they receive 0 marks.

A block review is also used at the marking stage and '+1' is available, if it is felt that a candidate deserves more than 0, even if he/she has not translated the essential idea.

Component 2: Question paper: Literary Appreciation

Candidates are required to choose any two authors from five (Catullus, Ovid, Virgil, Pliny, Cicero) and answer questions on prescribed texts. Both the questions and the answers are in English. Each section is worth 15 marks and this Component is worth 30 marks in total, to allow equal weighting with Component 1. The allotted time is one hour.

Each author's section of questions assesses the same skills: identifying and explaining main ideas and themes; identifying and explaining literary techniques; communicating appropriate critical responses; and identifying and explaining aspects of Roman culture.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Component 1: Question paper: Translating

The passage 'Andromeda and the Monster' had a strong and lively story line, and a momentum which encouraged candidates to move on positively from one sentence to the next. No special difficulty was encountered by the vast majority of candidates. Most candidates understood the story very well and produced orderly and carefully observed versions, with the word-list applied intelligently and sensibly. There was a good standard of English, with fluent expression and accurate punctuation. Several candidates produced faultless responses.

Some candidates could have taken time to check their work a little more carefully, given the plentiful time available, but most showed evidence of thought, care and effort over their response.

Although some found some of the grammar tricky, they had been well prepared and coped well.

Component 2: Question paper: Literary Appreciation

The overall performance was very good, with the great majority of candidates scoring over half marks. Some achieved full marks, and there were no very poorly done papers. The quality of writing, spelling and grammar in answers was very good.

All five authors were attempted, with Catullus and Pliny proving the most popular. Candidates clearly applied themselves, were well prepared, wrote lucidly and with keen engagement with the texts, showing eagerness to give thoughtful answers. The vast majority of candidates attempted every question in the sections they chose.

The 'Roman culture' questions were particularly well answered, and there were many interesting and imaginative responses, often writing far more than the three marks available. The ingenuity displayed when answering the culture questions was very impressive.

Section 3: Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: Question paper: Translating

Candidates generally maintained the correct tense throughout the passage and successfully managed the tricky word order in places.

Candidates coped well with the unfamiliar Greek names eg *Cepheus*, *Cassiopea*, *Nereides*.

They also handled the ablative absolute well: *quo audito* line 5 and as well as the future tense in lines 6–7: *sacrificabis*, *abibit*, *redibit*.

The subjunctive mood was also well done.

Component 2*:* Question paper: Literary Appreciation

Section 1: Catullus

Question 3(b): This culture question on Roman traditions was well done, with lots of imaginative ideas expressed. Some candidates restricted their answers to funeral/burial traditions, while others discussed traditions more generally. Both approaches were equally valid.

Question 4: Candidates were very keen to discuss Catullus' appeal in the modern world and gave many strong responses.

Section 2: Ovid

Question 2: Candidates were able to select and identify the hints of the disaster to come very well indeed.

Question 3(a): Although this question about the purpose of listing all the place names of the journey was only worth one mark, candidates wrote very varied and thoughtful responses.

Question 4: Candidates were able to explain lucidly the differences between Talus and Icarus.

Question 5: The culture question about why Romans liked Greek myths so much was extremely well done, with candidates writing at length and making very pertinent points.

Section 3: Virgil
Question 1: Candidates clearly knew the context of the extract.
Question 2(b): They showed good understanding about what made the 'horse' unusual.
Question 5: The culture question about beliefs concerning the gods' behaviour was also very well done.

Section 4: Pliny
Question 1: This question required detailed knowledge of specific lines, which nearly all candidates were able to give.

Question 2: Candidates gave very creative responses, when discussing the reasons why Athenodorus wanted to rent a haunted house.

Question 3: The culture question about attitudes to death was very well handled with lots of interesting points made.

Section 5: Cicero
Question 1 and Question 2: These questions required detailed knowledge of specific lines and both were very well answered.

Question 5: The culture question about how Romans ruled their provinces elicited very good responses, although candidates restricted their answers purely to the text, which was a totally valid approach

Section 4: Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: Question paper: Translating
Some candidates did not recognise the pronoun *eum* line 3 and were confused over *in* + ablative and *in* + accusative.

Some had problems with the result clauses: *tam ferox erat ut* line 5; *tam territus erat ut* line 6.

There were difficulties over singular/plural of nouns eg *deum* line 3 and 6 was frequently read as plural and *deae* line 3 as singular. Many candidates were not able to spell 'goddesses' correctly in English.

A lot of candidates seemed unsure how to deal with the word 'savage' *saevam* line 4. Although it was given as an adjective, it was often translated as a verb or used to describe the sea.

Component 2: Question Paper: Literary Appreciation

Section 1: Catullus

Question 1(b): A lot of candidates were confused over the meanings of *lux* and *nox* in this context.

Question 1(c): The question about the use of repetition was worth two marks, but few developed their answers enough to gain the second mark.

Section 2: Ovid

Question 1(b): The question on the simile was worth two marks, but few developed their answers enough to gain the second mark.

Question 3(b): Although the question asked for Icarus' 'feelings' in the plural and there were two marks available, many candidates wrote down just the one feeling.

Section 3: Virgil

Question 3: This question on the effective of alliteration was not well done with a lot of vague answers.

Question 4: This question specifically asked about Laocoon's behaviour, but instead many wrote about him in general terms instead.

Section 4: Pliny

Question 4: This question on the use of language to emphasise excitement proved too challenging for some. Even the strong candidates did not manage to get the full four marks.

Section 5: Cicero

Question 3: Candidates were vague about the order which Verres gave at this point in the story.

Question 4(b): The question on the jury's reaction was not well done and answers were muddled and confused.

Section 5: Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Component 1: Question paper: Translating

Candidates who type their responses may find it helpful if they used a slightly bigger font than normal.

Candidates should take advantage of any spare time and use it to check their work carefully.

They should be able to handle singular/plural nouns, especially in the nominative and accusative cases.

They need to change proper names into the nominative case before inserting them into their responses. The word-list shows the nominative case and also identifies the type of proper name, eg name of a man, name of a monster, which candidates should find helpful.

Component 2: Question paper: Literary Appreciation

Candidates need to know the details within specific lines, as well as whole themes.

They should develop their answers, to ensure that they have written enough for the marks available.

They need to be able to discuss and explain literary techniques.

If a culture question suggests that candidates can draw on wider knowledge, it might be helpful if they do so, to gain all the marks available.

If candidates are quoting Latin, they need to show knowledge of what the Latin means, either with a direct translation or a paraphrase of it.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2013	0

Number of resulted entries in 2014	347

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	90.5%	90.5%	314	42
B	4.9%	95.4%	17	36
C	3.7%	99.1%	13	30
D	0.3%	99.4%	1	27
No award	0.6%	-	2	-