



Course Report 2018

Subject	Latin
Level	National 5

This report provides information on the performance of candidates. 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 Post Results Services.

Section 1: comments on the assessment

Summary of the course assessment

Component 1: question paper 1 Latin: literary appreciation

Now that each section is worth 30 marks instead of 15 marks, there is more scope for sampling. Each section had a range of questions worth a range of marks, and all included questions on Roman culture and literary techniques. It also included questions testing the skills of analysis, argument and evaluation, which were asked at least twice in each section.

Each section had insightful questions, designed to stretch more able candidates.

An 'A' candidate is expected to give full answers to most of these questions.

A 'C' candidate is expected to gain half the available marks for these questions.

All questions are designed to be accessible to all candidates.

The increased number of questions gave candidates the opportunity to display what they have learned and to share their own views. All authors were attempted, with the most popular being Catullus, Ovid and Pliny.

Component 2: question paper 2 Latin: translating

The passage entitled 'The Birds' Beauty Contest' was adapted from Pseudo-Aesop. A wide range of prescribed accidence and syntax was sampled including:

- ◆ verbs: regular and irregular, reflexive verbs, perfect, imperfect and pluperfect tenses, and infinitives
- ◆ nouns: all five cases, singular and plural
- ◆ agreement of adjectives
- ◆ superlative adjectives
- ◆ purpose clause
- ◆ relative pronouns, singular and plural
- ◆ accusative and infinitive construction

There were some embedded clauses, along with challenging word order in some blocks. The storyline would have been unfamiliar to candidates.

There was a good range of marks, suggesting the assessment was well pitched. A number of candidates gained marks in the mid-30s, some gained full marks.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: question paper 1 Latin: literary appreciation

- ◆ The open, critical-response questions showed a wide range of well-considered answers, reflecting full engagement with the texts.
- ◆ Candidate enthusiasm was evident through their often lively responses. This was gratifying to see.
- ◆ The cultural questions were very well handled.
- ◆ Candidates understood each question and were clearly aware of what was being asked of them.
- ◆ When asked to give personal opinions, candidates wrote very full answers.

Section 1: Catullus

Question 2 (a): candidates were asked to describe the scene in Poem 2, which some did in a very imaginative way, using clues from the poem to build up a possible scenario.

Question 3 (b) (ii): candidates were asked whether they thought the simile was a good comparison. Although the expected answer was 'yes', there were some very good responses of 'no' with valid justification.

Question 5 (b): this question asked candidates to identify evidence from the poem and was widely well done.

Question 6: this culture question asked candidates to discuss, in general terms, the Romans' love lives. The responses showed engagement. Some were heated and emotional and some included funny observations, all of which were valid.

Section 2: Ovid

Question 10 (b): this question asked if clues about how the story would end were 'spoilers'. This was very well answered, with many candidates giving a combination of 'yes' and 'no' responses, weighing up each side and then coming to a reasoned conclusion.

Question 12: candidates were asked to discuss the ways in which Ovid made the reader feel sorry for Daedalus. Many responded with care and attention to detail and gave good and sensitive explanations, not merely listing Daedalus' actions.

Question 13: the explanation behind why the bird was happy when Icarus was dead is complicated, but this question was very well handled, with detailed knowledge of the 'back story' displayed in many responses.

Section 3: Virgil

Question 17 (a): this question on the excitement of the Trojans was demanding and required a lot of detailed knowledge. Many candidates, however, achieved at least 3 of the 4 available marks.

Question 18 (a) and (b): these two questions were about two minor characters, whose advice the candidates needed to compare and evaluate. This was very well done, resulting in thoughtful responses and displays of wider knowledge, gaining the full 4 marks.

Question 19 (b): the culture question on 'fate' was well done, with some discussing Rome's fate, as well as Troy's, showing detailed knowledge of the whole story.

Section 4: Pliny

Question 23 (a): there were some very lively and imaginative reasons given as to why Athenodorus rented, rather than bought, the house. Some candidates showed a keen interest in the pitfalls of buying property.

Question 23 (b): the character analysis of Athenodorus was well done, with some imaginative views about how his mind worked.

Question 26: this culture question, on Roman beliefs in the supernatural, was well answered.

Section 5: Cicero

Question 31: candidates were asked to focus on the shocking nature of the attack on the temple, and their responses reflected a very good understanding of the events at this point in the story.

Question 32: the culture question on violence in the Roman world was very well handled, and many gained full marks for very detailed and thoughtful responses.

Question 34: the question on humour was very well done, with candidates finding several examples of humour in the lines, not just the joke about the 'boar'.

Question 35: this question asked candidates to weigh up the Senate's actions and come to a reasoned conclusion. It involved a high level of both knowledge and skill and most candidates did very well, giving well-reasoned and sophisticated comments.

Component 2: question paper 2 Latin: translating

Candidates seemed to respond well to the story and, in many cases, had time to work on a rough draft before completing a final version of the translation. A very encouraging percentage of candidates showed confidence and good sense throughout the passage, observing and applying grammar and vocabulary information carefully. The story was lively and interesting and encouraged candidates to make good sense of the Latin.

A few candidates produced a very stylish version of imperfects in Blocks 8 and 9 – 'began to collect' (*colligebat*), 'began to attach' (*figebat*). Although paragraphs three and four were testing, overall they were well done by candidates.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: question paper 1 Latin: literary appreciation

Across the five sections, any omitted questions were most often the literary technique type questions. This would indicate a lack of confidence in answering that type of question. Some responses contained 'set', prepared answers, which could be given to any literary technique question. These were written out, without any specific reference to the context of the question.

Section 1 Catullus

Question 3 (c): this question asked what Catullus's feelings were in this poem. Some candidates instead tended to discuss this poem in general terms, rather than focusing on Catullus' feelings.

Question 4 (b): often candidates did not address the 'impact' in their responses. To attain the full 3 marks candidates must discuss the impact of the poem.

Question 5 (a): to gain the full 2 marks, candidates had to make it clear that Catullus' brother was dead.

Section 2 Ovid

Question 11 (a): this question asked candidates to suggest reasons why Ovid included the scene in which the three men on the ground watch as Daedalus and Icarus fly over. This question was designed to make candidates think about something that they had possibly not considered before. Some candidates got 1 of the 2 available marks, but not many got both marks.

Section 3 Virgil

Question 16: candidates were asked to discuss the appearance and construction of the horse, but many strayed beyond the line references by writing in general terms about the horse, which could not gain marks.

Question 17 (b): responses lacked focus, and although candidates were asked to consider the use of *hic* ('here'), this was often ignored.

Section 4 Pliny

Question 22 (b): although this was a straightforward question about the ghost's spooky description, not many candidates gained the full 3 marks.

Question 24: many candidates failed to answer this question properly, as they did not discuss the build-up of suspense, as they were asked to do. Retelling the narrative was not enough.

Question 27 (a): some candidates failed to notice the focus of the question, which was the playfulness of the dolphin's actions, and instead they discussed literary techniques in general terms.

Section 5 Cicero

Question 36: this demanding question focused on Cicero's use of sarcasm. Some candidates did not seem to appreciate that Cicero was being sarcastic. It proved to be difficult for candidates to gain the full 4 marks for this question.

Component 2: question paper 2 Latin: translating

- ◆ The first block caused difficulty for a number of candidates, who perhaps did not have sufficient knowledge of the gods and had not heard of Jupiter. Some did not even know he was male.
- ◆ Some candidates lacked precision in their use of verb tenses. The perfect tense was frequently rendered as imperfect or pluperfect.
- ◆ Some candidates seemed to lack confidence with past participles, preferring to translate them as main verbs instead.
- ◆ Some candidates did not seem to know what 'glamorous' meant.
- ◆ There was evidence of careless use of the wordlist, with confusion of *deligo* and *diligenter*, *colligo* and *constituo*, *postremo* and *postridie*.
- ◆ Some candidates made very poor use of the amount of space given and crammed their writing in. Crossings out, words squeezed in, and words altered made marking some scripts difficult.

Section 3: advice for the preparation of future candidates

Component 1: question paper 1 Latin: literary appreciation

- ◆ Candidates need to read each question carefully, in order to identify what, in particular, is being asked of them.
- ◆ Candidates should expect questions on literary techniques.
- ◆ Candidates need to ensure that they do not stray beyond the line references given in the questions.
- ◆ Bullet point answers are acceptable, but they still need to be expanded. Single word bullet point answers are normally not sufficient to show what a candidate knows.
- ◆ To gain marks in high value questions, candidates can answer both 'yes' and 'no'. All valid points will gain marks.

Component 2: question paper 2 Latin: translating

- ◆ Candidates need to present their work in a tidy manner. Writing should be well spaced.
- ◆ Candidates should take care to look up words in the wordlist carefully.
- ◆ Candidates need to ensure that they do not omit blocks by accident, and need to check that they have translated every Latin word.
- ◆ Candidates should expect wide sampling of their knowledge of the prescribed list of accidents and syntax.

Grade boundary and statistical information:

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2017	363
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Number of resulted entries in 2018	390
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Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of course awards	Percentage	Cumulative %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum mark				
A	92.8%	92.8%	362	70
B	4.9%	97.7%	19	60
C	1.3%	99.0%	5	50
D	0.8%	99.7%	3	40
No award	0.3%	-	1	-

General commentary on grade boundaries

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.

SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which 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.

Therefore SQA holds a grade boundary meeting every year for each subject at each level to bring 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.

Grade boundaries from exam papers in the same subject at the same level tend to be marginally different year to year. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set by centres. If SQA alters a boundary, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter their boundary in the corresponding practice exam paper.