

Course report 2026

Higher Latin, SCQF level 6

We've written this report for teachers and lecturers. We recommend you read this with the published course assessment documents and marking instructions.

Note: we've made changes to the course assessment from session 2026–27.

Check your [subject page](#) for more information.

The report:

- provides a summary of how each course component performed
- highlights areas of the question papers and coursework where candidates performed well and areas where they did not perform well
- has advice you might find useful when preparing candidates for assessment

We collect and prepare the statistics in course reports before we complete the appeals process.

Statistical and grade boundary information

Course entries

Number of resulted entries in 2025: 158

Number of resulted entries in 2026: 191

Distribution of course awards (including minimum mark to achieve each grade)

Course award	Number of candidates	Percentage	Cumulative percentage	Minimum mark required
A	129	67.5	67.5	91
B	35	18.3	85.9	78
C	17	8.9	94.8	65
D	8	4.2	99.0	52
No award	2	1.0	100	Not applicable

We've not applied rounding to these statistics.

In this report:

- 'Most' means greater than or equal to 70%.
- 'Many' means 50% to 69%.
- 'Some' means 25% to 49%.
- 'Few' or 'a few' means less than 25%.

You can find [statistical reports](#) on our website.

General commentary on grade boundaries

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

For most National Courses, we aim 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's very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject, at every level. Therefore, we hold a grade boundary meeting for each course to bring together all the information available (statistical and qualitative) and make final decisions on grade boundaries based on this information. Senior Qualifications Scotland staff normally chair these meetings.

Principal assessors use their subject expertise to evaluate the performance of the assessment and propose suitable grade boundaries based on the full range of evidence. We 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.

- We can adjust the grade boundaries downwards if there's evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been more difficult than usual.
- We can adjust the grade boundaries upwards if there's evidence that the question paper or other assessment has been less difficult than usual.
- If levels of difficulty are comparable to previous years, we maintain similar grade boundaries.

Every year, we evaluate the performance of our assessments in a fair way, while ensuring standards are maintained so that our qualifications remain credible. To do

this, we measure evidence of candidates' knowledge and skills against the national standard.

For full details of the approach, please refer to the [Awarding and Grading for National Courses Policy](#).

How the course assessment performed

Question paper 1: literary appreciation

The assessment performed as expected, with high levels of candidate engagement and minimal requirement for adjustment to the marking instructions.

Question paper 2: translating

Candidates showed a solid performance, with a good spread of marks across the board. All candidates finished the translation, engaging with the story and demonstrating proficiency in syntax and grammar.

How candidates performed

Areas where candidates performed well

Question paper 1: literary appreciation

Candidates gained significantly above average marks in questions 5, 6, 7, 8(a), 10, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18(a), 21, 24(a), 24(b), 26, 36 and 38.

In each section, candidates did well in the 8-mark extended responses. Candidates took the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the texts, especially those who had found some of the earlier questions challenging. Many candidates clearly appreciated having the chance to express — and justify — their personal interpretation of the texts. Candidates who had learned the texts thoroughly achieved a high degree of accuracy when extracting information from the texts, and questions 13, 18(a) and (b), 22, 25(a), and 34(b)(i) were well done. Most candidates also showed skill in drawing out implications from the text, for instance in questions 9, 11, 12, 20(a), 30, 35(a), and 39. The language questions, as intended, stretched and challenged candidates in a way that offered effective differentiation. However, most candidates accessed some of the marks and even those who found this type of question challenging usually achieved at least 1 or 2 marks.

Question paper 2: translating

All the blocks were accessible, and candidates typically gained full marks or identified the essential idea, indicating that the candidates were fully prepared and had revised the Latin grammar syllabus. Strong areas were tenses, clauses, the subjunctive, and singulars and plurals.

Areas where candidates did not perform well

Question paper 1: literary appreciation

Candidates gained below average marks in questions 1(b), 29(a), 2(b), 4(a), 4(b), 35(b), 37 and 40. There were no areas that caused concern, but some candidates found the language questions more challenging than others. Some candidates did not recognise the relevant language features, but gained marks by explaining the

content of the texts. The language questions worked well as a form of differentiation. Performance at the weaker end tended to vary from candidate to candidate, with no consistent patterns emerging. No particular questions caused problems on a repeated basis. Even candidates who struggled accessed a few of the marks.

Question paper 2: translating

No blocks were particularly weak, but a few candidates found the use of the ablative in blocks 4 and 7 (ablative absolute) challenging. A few candidates missed the plural endings on the nouns *veterani* (block 19) and *ruinas* (block 25). Block 4, with its relative complexity, and block 20, proved good differentiators between candidates and allowed 'A' candidates to demonstrate their understanding of language. Some candidates misinterpreted the definition 'leading' given for *principem* (block 20) in the word list as a verb rather than an adjective.

Preparing candidates for assessment

Changes have been made to this course following feedback:

Literary appreciation question paper:

- Reduced the number of questions, and the marks available from 80 to 60.
- Reduced the marks allocated for each author from 40 to 30.
- Reduced the duration of the question paper from 2 hours and 40 minutes to 2 hours.

Translating question paper:

- Scaled to 40 marks — scaling table of marks added to appendix 2.

We've amended the question paper details in the course specification. There's no change to teaching and learning. Please ensure learners are aware of the changes and that they are using the most up-to-date version of this document.

Question paper 1: literary appreciation

Candidates should expect all parts of the prescribed text to be sampled, with a range of question types worth varying marks and a range of command words. Candidates should practise understanding the meaning of command words and question types. Questions on Roman culture and Latin literary and linguistic techniques appear at least once in every section. There will be questions addressing candidates' knowledge of the text and questions assessing their skills of analysis, argument and evaluation.

Many candidates found the language questions demanding. These questions explore candidates' knowledge and understanding of linguistic and literary techniques at a high level of complexity, suitable to the demands of the Higher course. You should develop candidates' skill levels in this important area, and provide opportunities for identifying and evaluating linguistic and literary techniques in the prescribed text. Candidates should clearly identify the techniques employed and the effect of these techniques in the specific part of the sampled text.

To answer the 'Roman culture' questions, candidates do not have to include information beyond what they have learnt specifically from the text, but will gain credit for correct information from their own knowledge.

Candidates should answer within the line references given in the question. A frequent cause of missed marks is when candidates refer to the wrong section of text, and they should be aware of this potential trap.

Bullet points are acceptable in extended responses, if they are sufficiently expanded. Single words are not normally sufficient to demonstrate knowledge.

Matching the length of answer to the number of marks available is a useful skill to practise. Over-long and repetitive answers are unnecessary and not an effective use of time.

Where appropriate, candidates can answer both 'yes' and 'no' to questions, and gain credit for any valid point. It may be helpful for candidates to practise writing 'yes' and 'no' answers to the same question. It is one way to achieve marks in high value questions.

Question paper 2: translating

Candidates should demonstrate their skills in handling a wide range of accidence and syntax. The list of prescribed accidence and syntax is available on page 5 of the Higher Latin Course Specification, available on our website page for Higher Latin. All the accidence and syntax specified is liable to be sampled. Candidates will gain marks for accurate application of accidence and syntax.

Candidates must read the words in the passage carefully and accurately. The word list supplies meanings for Latin words in the context of the passage. Candidates should find the correct meaning in the word list and review the sense of the translation. Even if they know the meaning of the Latin word, candidates should check the specific meaning, particularly as a repeated word in a passage may have multiple meanings listed. Candidates should practise using word lists and determining the correct choice by reference to context, rather than just taking the first meaning offered. It's important they recognise that Latin words may have related

forms that are syntactically different, for example *pugna*, 'fight' (noun); *pugno*, *pugnare*, 'to fight' (verb), as well as different forms depending on case, number, tense, mood, and voice. Being alert to the different endings is crucial to interpreting the meaning correctly.

Encourage candidates to check that they have not omitted any 'small' words: pronouns such as *ei* or conjunctions such as *que*, which are small in themselves but important for the narrative. Reading the passage two or three times before attempting to translate is helpful.