

Improving Assessment in National Courses Research: Higher Latin

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Proposal

The following proposal was shared with learners and educators who said that they had studied or taught Higher Latin:

- We are proposing making the Literary Appreciation exam for Higher Latin shorter, reducing the time from 2 hours and 40 minutes to 2 hours.
- We are proposing a reduction in the number of questions, to reduce the total marks from 80 marks to 60 marks. For each author, marks would be reduced from 40 marks to 30 marks.
- We are suggesting these changes to improve the exam experience for learners and for schools, while making sure that the course content is appropriately sampled in the exam.

There are no proposed changes to the Translating question paper at this stage. The weightings of the two exams would remain the same.

The proposed changes for Higher Latin are:

Component	Current marks	Current duration	Current weighting
Component 1 – Literary Appreciation	80	2 hours 40 minutes	60%
Component 2 - Translating	50	1 hour	40%

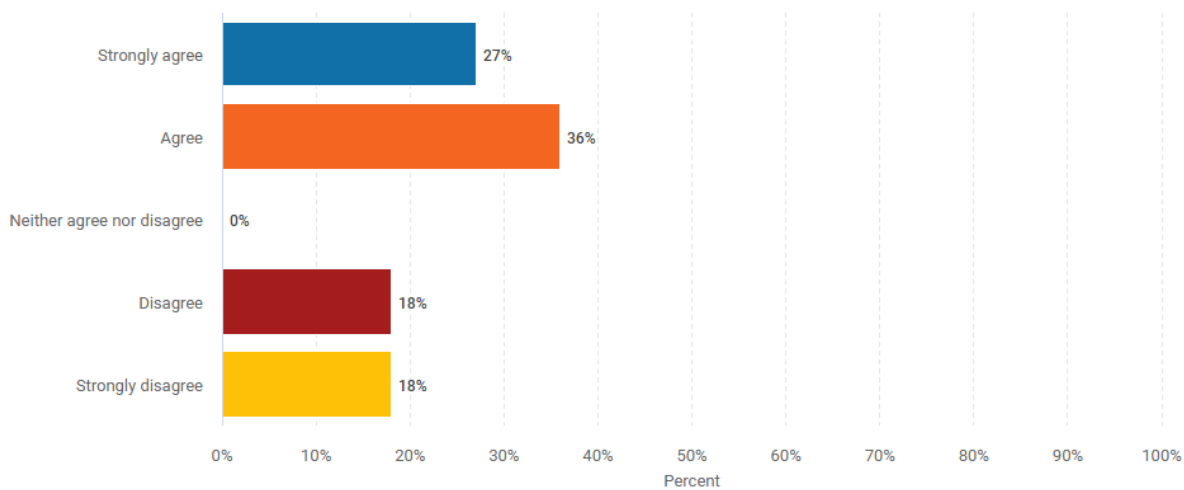
Component	Proposed marks	Proposed duration	Proposed weighting
Component 1 – Literary Appreciation	60	2 hours	60%
Component 2 - Translating	50	1 hour	40%

Findings: learners

We received responses from 11 learners who said they had studied Higher Latin. As shown in Figure 1, the majority of learner respondents (64%) agreed or strongly agreed that the change should be made from the 2026–27 session, while 36% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Figure 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes for Higher Latin? Learner views

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes for Higher Latin?

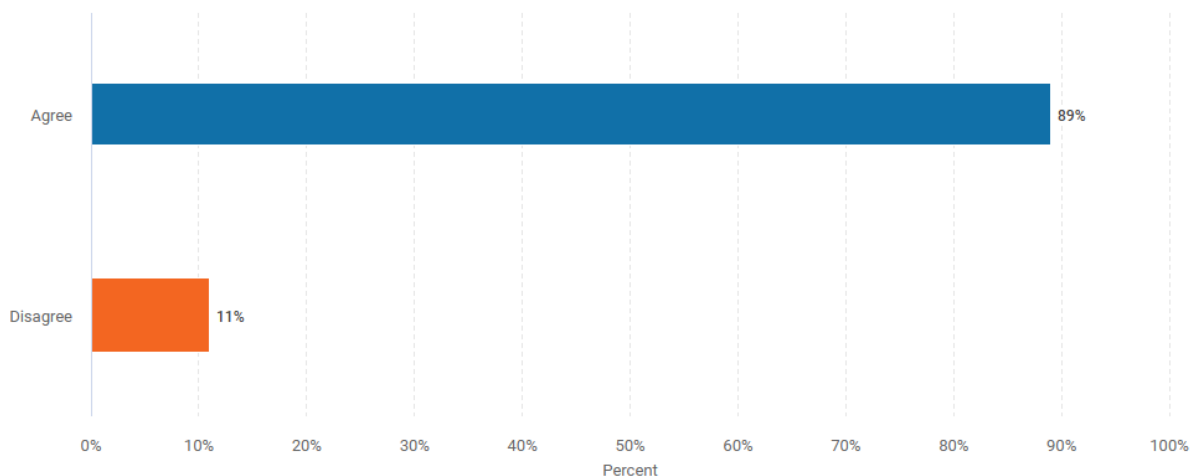


Base: 11 learners who stated they had studied Higher Latin

Respondents were also asked to what extent they agreed with the decision to begin the proposed change in 2026–27, should the change be made. As shown in Figure 2, the majority of learner respondents (89%) agreed the proposed changes should happen from session 2026–27, while 11% disagreed.

Figure 2: In the event that the proposed changes are made for Higher Latin, do you agree or disagree that this should happen from session 2026–27? Learner views

In the event that the proposed changes are made for Higher Latin, do you agree or disagree that this should happen from session 2026/27?



Base: 11 learners who said they had studied Higher Latin

Qualitative analysis

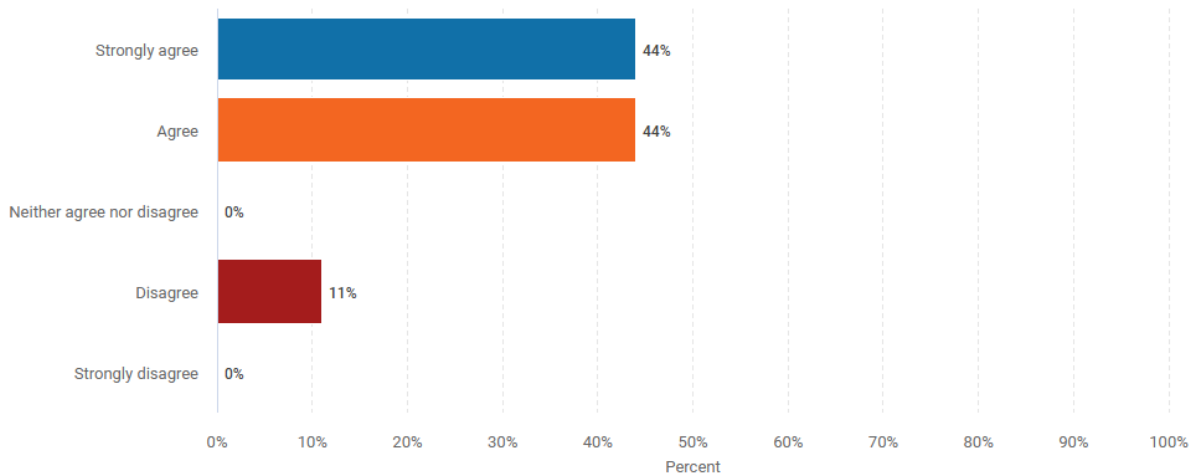
Learner respondents were asked if they had any further comments that they would like to share about the proposed changes to Higher Latin. One response was received from a learner who said that the timeframe for the exam should not change, suggesting that students were being assessed on knowledge, not time management.

Findings: educators

We received responses from nine educators who had taught Higher Latin. As shown in Figure 3, the vast majority (89%) of educator respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed changes for Advanced Higher biology, while 11% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Figure 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes for Higher Latin? Educator views

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes for Higher Latin?

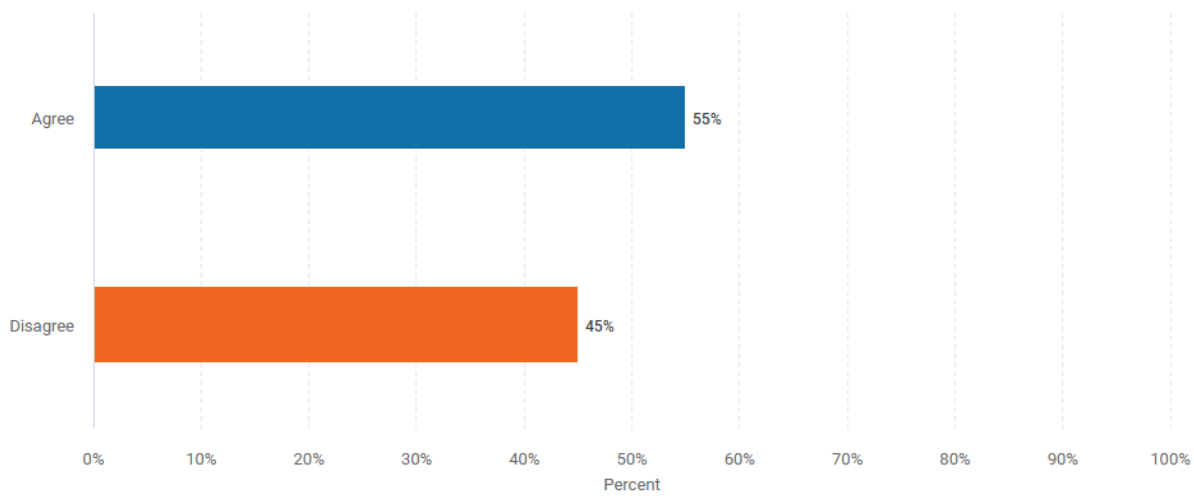


Base: 9 educators who stated they had taught Higher Latin

As shown in Figure 4, 55% of educator respondents agreed and 45% disagreed that, in the event that the proposed changes went ahead, they should be implemented from the 2026–27 session.

Figure 4: In the event that the proposed changes are made for Higher Latin, do you agree or disagree that this should happen from session 2026–27? Educator views

In the event that the proposed changes are made for Higher Latin, do you agree or disagree that this should happen from session 2026/27?



Base: 9 educators who had taught Higher Latin

Qualitative analysis

Educator respondents were asked if they had any further comments they would like to share with us, and six respondents left a comment. Most responses were in agreement with the proposals, with just one against. Most comments received from educator respondents were in relation to the length of the exam and the weighting of marks.

Benefits of implementing this change

The main benefit that emerged from open text comments was related to the shortening of the exam duration. Several respondents said that the exam was currently too long and welcomed the reduction to two hours for the benefits they perceived it would bring to learners, especially those with extra time.

‘The Higher Latin exam is far too long, especially as a non-significant number of candidates now use extra time, which puts the exam length at over three hours.’

‘This would make it more manageable to students I would imagine.’

Challenges with implementing this change

Concerns about the weighting of exam components was brought up among a few respondents. One respondent expressed that the literary appreciation and the translating components should

be weighted equally, while another felt that the number of marks for the translation should be reduced to 40 to make it in line with the weighting.

‘If you are reducing the lit app [Literary Appreciation] to 60 marks and 60%, then does it not make more sense to reduce the translation paper to 40 marks and 40%?’

‘[...] weighting should be changed to 50% Lit App [Literary Appreciation], 50% Translation [...]’

One educator respondent said that there had been insufficient engagement to make the proposed changes for 2026–27 session.

Conclusion

While the number of learners who study and educators who teach Higher Latin is smaller than a lot of the other subjects in this survey, the response to this survey was particularly low. The low response rate raises questions about the reliability of the data, and readers should be wary of attempts to generalise these responses to the rest of the Higher Latin learner and educator population. As such, professional judgement will be taken when making a decision about the proposed changes.