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# LATIN

Paper 0480/01

Language

## General comments

The general standard attained by candidates on this Paper remains encouragingly high. It is evident that vocabulary is especially well learnt and that even the more tricky aspects of syntax are understood and can be successfully handled, at any rate when translating from Latin into English. **Section C** (the English into Latin sentences), however, was tackled by only a third of candidates and was done well by comparatively few. In terms of marks gained, Centres which traditionally prepare candidates for this option should not be concerned about its omission from the new syllabus to be examined in 2004, for, generally speaking, candidates tackling **Section D** (Comprehension) do very well.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

No candidate had any difficulty in following the story and there were several scripts which were completely, or all but completely, without error. The first sentence was done well by all. A few did not know *potestatem* or *regnum* (line 2) but recovered and were not led to compound their error, while some did not see the idea of welcome in *accepit* (line 2). The ablative absolute in line 3 caused problems for many, as in past years, candidates often do not spot the construction at all, often recognising the ablative, however, and producing phrases beginning with 'by'. Others produce too literal a translation, evidently playing safe, but candidates should be encouraged to produce a version in natural English (for instance by a when or while clause here). One other common omission is the force of comparatives and superlatives, and many did not bring out the force of *laetissime* (line 3). Most candidates knew their numbers and translated *triginta* (line 3) correctly, and it was good to note that few were baffled by the third conjugation present passive infinitive *induci* (line 4). All candidates followed the point of the sentence *una ex eis.....vertit* (lines 4-5), though some translated correctly as far as *nomine* (line 4), then, without attempt at connection, started a new sentence with *oculos* (line 4) as the subject. The somewhat difficult phrase *maxime regis* (line 5) was translated well by most candidates. The subsequent result clause was also translated well, with *adeo* confusing only a very few. The most prevalent error in the passage was the taking of *Oxyarti* as the subject (line 6); here candidates often did not seem to think carefully about the obvious sense of what was going on, far less the case of *Oxyarti*; nevertheless, the accusative and infinitive construction was well spotted, only a few having 'Oxyartes told him to.....'. Comparatively few translated *hoc matrimonio* (line 7) as an ablative (possibly being put off by its occurrence so early in the sentence), others did not know *iunxerimus* (line 7), yet the general point of the sentence eluded few. The ablative absolute in line 8 was better done than the earlier one, though there were again some over-literal translations. Many did not spot *credens* in the same sentence as a present participle. Given that the earlier ablative absolute contained a present participle, candidates might do well to pay greater heed to this point of grammar.

### **Section B**

While a small number of candidates seemed daunted by this piece, most candidates followed the sense very well indeed and again there were some virtually faultless translations. In line 1, most knew *quandam*, but as often, many wanted *paruerunt* to mean prepare, while others forced *regi* to agree with *omnes*. The phrase *Tumus.....locutus est* (lines 2-3) posed problems: some did not know *locutus est* and translated placed, while others made *multa* agree with *arrogantia*. The difficult phrase *ad regem salutandum* (lines 3-4) was well translated by most candidates. The comparative *plura* (line 4) was correctly translated by only a few (this corroborates an observation made under **Section A** and suggests that candidates should pay greater heed to the learning of the forms of comparatives and superlatives). *Ausus erat* (line 5) was not well known and the tense was rarely spotted. The sentence *rex..... cepit* (lines 5-6) was translated very well; so too was the following complex sentence *servum.....sineret* (lines 6-7), even if many did not know *sineret* and therefore could see no need for the passive infinitive *portari*. The next sentence was the one which was most troublesome: again, the ablative absolute was often not properly translated and was omitted by some,

while on this occasion rather a large number of candidates did not spot the indirect statement and were very confused as to who was killing whom. The next two sentences were well done (*quamquam*, *est*: lines 8-11): most saw that *minime* was a strong negative, though many translated *cum* as 'with' and took *omnibus* as if it agreed with *gladii* and some did not bring out the tense of *extracti essent*. Those who saw the point of the ablative absolute in line 11 translated it well. Virtually all conveyed the sense of the sentence *tanta.....mergeretur*, though few were absolutely accurate here (e.g., many said: 'the chiefs were so angry....': not a major point, but it is as well to try to be precise).

### Section C

A small number of candidates tackled this section very well indeed; others produced very inaccurate sentences and scored marks out of line with their performance in the other two sections. Surprisingly few knew the Latin for 'to ask' in (a), and many used an infinitive thereafter rather than a *ne*-clause. In (b), most saw that an accusative and infinitive were required: the accusative plural of *custos* caused difficulties, but many had a valiant and often successful attempt at the future infinitive of *invenire*, even if there were many occasions where the participle was left in the nominative. In (c), most had *si.....non* rather than *nisi*; candidates seemed to be aware that there was something unusual about the tense thereafter, and a few produced a correct future or future perfect verb. In (d), many did not make the verb in the indirect question a subjunctive; in (e), most saw that *-issimi* was required, but far fewer knew the stem of *fidelis*. Few endeavoured to use an ablative absolute in (f), instead using *postquam*; there were difficulties thereafter in forming the passive tense and virtually all tried to use *invenire* for, 'found out'.

Surprisingly, few knew *fugere* and tried to form compounds of *currere*, not usually successfully. There were the usual examples of *liberi* for *liberti*.

### Section D

This section was very well done by most of the candidates who opted to tackle it. The following points highlight comparatively minor issues. An accurate translation of the phrase *opere mirabili factum* in (a)(iii) was rare. Surprisingly often, *servis* (line 4) and *servos* (line 5) were translated as singulars in (e) and (f); while a few did not know *relinquere* (line 6) in (f). The force of obligation or necessity in *ponendum* (line 9) needed to be brought out in (h)(ii). When choosing English derivatives in (k), candidates must ensure that the English word is spelt correctly in order to gain full marks (e.g., there were several occurrences of 'nocternal').

Paper 0480/02

Verse Literature

### General comments

The overall standard was commendably high. The Verse Paper was done marginally better than the Prose Paper, perhaps because there is a clearer and more appealing story-line. As ever, those candidates who knew their texts thoroughly tended to score high marks on all the different types of questions. The summary questions were generally better done than before, with the majority of candidates taking note of the word limit. The essay questions produced some excellent and well-thought-out responses.

### Comments on specific questions

#### **Virgil**

Translation was generally accurate, although the gerund(ive)s in **Question 2 (e)** proved difficult for some candidates. The scansion (**Question 3(a)**) was either done well, or not at all. Background knowledge was generally very sound, and the context questions done well. Most candidates were able to identify stylistic points in **Question 2 (c)**. The two essays were well done, with better candidates looking beyond Sinon's involvement in their answers to **Question 2 (f)**, and offering a range of features in their answers to **Question 4**.

#### **Ovid**

Only one candidate answered this section

Paper 0480/03  
Prose Literature

General comments

See **General comments** for Paper 2.

Candidates coped equally well with the *Livy* and the *Cornelius Nepos*.

Comments on specific questions

*Nepos*

In answers to **Question 1 (a)** some candidates did not base their answers on the particular sentence indicated in the question and wrote in too general a manner. Some failed to offer different feelings in their answers to **Question 1 (b)**. Translation was generally accurate, although the phrase *studio suo* in **Question 1 (c)** was often mistranslated. Essays were well done, although some candidates failed to support their statements with reference to the text.

*Livy*

There was some confusion over the date, with answers to **Question 5 (a)** ranging from 800BC to 1932 (AD?). Technical knowledge of siege engines and siege warfare was sound, and most candidates were familiar with the details of the story. There were some good insights in answers to **Question 8**, with most candidates able to support their answers with reference to the text.