

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

LATIN

J282

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

Paper 3 series overview

The short comprehension questions were generally very well answered and candidates scored highly in these questions. The 4-mark and 8-mark analysis of a passage questions were good differentiators and candidates that did not have a firm understanding of the text found these more difficult. Some candidates did not refer to the Latin when asked to do so in the question and lost marks because of that. On these questions, the candidates must be sure to answer the question explicitly. Candidates who simply quoted the Latin and translated did not answer the question. Care must be taken to make sure that some personal response to the question has been made. The translation question was challenging for some and showed that there is no substitution for knowing in detail the meaning of the text. In the translation it was relatively common for the smaller words (e.g. conjunctions) to be omitted. The overarching 10-mark question was generally well answered, and candidates seemed to have a very good overall knowledge of the set text. Candidates must avoid vague answers and give evidence from the text to back up their answer. Reference to the Latin text is not necessary for the question.

Question 1 (a) (i)

1 Read the passage and answer the questions.

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Caesar, *Druides: The power of the Druids*, lines 2–10

(a) *ad hos ... honore* (lines 1–2):

(i) who flocked to the Druids?

..... [1]

Very well answered. Some candidates did not make clear the meaning of *adulescentium*.

Question 1 (a) (ii)

(ii) *discendi causa* (line 1): what further information does this give us?

..... [1]

Well answered by nearly all candidates.

Question 1 (b)

(b) *et, si quod ... controversia est* (lines 3–4): what specific crimes or disputes are referred to here? Give **two** examples.

.....
..... [2]

Generally, well answered. The question asked for *specific crimes or disputes*, so reference to 'a crime' was not sufficient for a mark.

Question 1 (c) (i)

(c) *si quis aut privatus aut publicus eorum decreto non stetit, sacrificiis interdicunt: haec poena apud eos est gravissima* (lines 4–6):

(i) what was the consequence for anyone who did not obey the decision of the Druids?

..... [2]

Well answered.

Question 1 (c) (ii)

(ii) write down and translate the **Latin** word that tells us how this punishment was viewed.

Latin word
English translation

[2]

Some candidates did not translate the superlative. Some candidates translated *gravissima* as 'very heavy' which was the wrong translation in this context. Care must be taken to look at the context of the Latin word in this type of question.

Question 2 (a)

2 Read the passage and answer the questions.

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Caesar, *Druides: Their education*, lines 23–30

(a) *Druides a bello ... habent* (lines 1–2): what did the Druids not have to do? Give **two** examples.

.....
.....
.....
.....

[2]

Well answered by most candidates.

Question 2 (b)

(b) *et sua sponte ... mittuntur* (lines 2–3): state **two** reasons which led these men to train with the Druids.

.....
.....
.....
.....

[2]

Candidates must be careful to look carefully at the Latin lemma, from where the answer should be taken. Reference to *tantis praemii* was not accepted as it was outside the lemma.

Question 2 (c)

(c) *magnum ibi numerum versuum ediscere dicuntur* (line 4): what are they said to learn?

[11]

Some candidates omitted 'a great number' or similar translation. Some candidates also did not translate the Latin word *versuum*. It is important that candidates look at the lemma and give as complete answer as possible to make sure they get full marks.

Question 2 (d)

(d) *neque fas ... utantur* (lines 5–6): what do we learn about the Druids' use of writing? Make **two** points.

-
-
-
-

[2]

A number of candidates did not give the full information needed in the mark scheme so lost marks accordingly. In the first part of the answer, some candidates omitted what the Druids didn't think right to write down, i.e. verses / teachings etc. In the second part of the answer, a common error was for candidates to omit the word 'almost'. Variations of this, such as 'most/usually/generally' etc were accepted, but it was incorrect to state that the Druids used Greek writing in all other matters.

Question 3

3 Read the passage and answer the question.

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Caesar, *Druides: Their religion*, lines 40–44

Translate this passage into English.

56

[5]

This translation was generally well answered, although a minority of candidates clearly had not learnt the Latin well enough and included other parts of the translation in their answer, or omitted phrases. Common errors included the omissions of *omnis*, *magnopere*, *ob eam causam* and *ea. morbis* was translated as 'death' by some. The future infinitive *immolaturos esse* caused problems.

Question 4

4* Read the passage and answer the question.

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Tacitus, *The Druids' last stand*, lines 3–12

How does Tacitus convey a vivid and dramatic scene here?

In your answer you may wish to consider:

- the description of the Britons
- the reactions and actions of the Romans.

You should refer to the Latin and discuss Tacitus' use of language.

[8]

The 8-mark analysis of a passage question proved to be the best differentiator in the paper. There were many points that could be made by candidates both with respect to style and content, and a large number of candidates wrote excellent answers. Some candidates did not refer to the Latin and lost marks accordingly. Candidates should also make sure they show that they understand the meaning of the Latin. This could be through a direct translation or paraphrase, or by making it clear in their answer as a whole. Answering the question is the final requirement, in other words saying how Tacitus conveyed a vivid and dramatic scene by using the Latin phrases quoted by the candidate. The best quotes are short and pithy rather than long and rambling. For candidates to get in top two levels, some comment on the style must be made, in addition to content points. Candidates should aim to make at least two style points. There were quite a few mistranslations and quotes that did not match up to the candidate's translation this year. Some candidates confused the use of the present participle with the historic present. There was some confusion over the difference between a simile and metaphor. Candidates must take care not to simply write a commentary with little or no reference to the actual question.

The candidate answer below is an example of a good style point in the 8-mark extended writing question. The candidate has quoted the Latin, made clear an understanding of the Latin and analysis has been made in order to answer the question. Candidates who do not do all three of the above will not get full credit for their answer.

Exemplar 1

Tacitus uses the promoted verb 'stabit' (was standing) to create a dramatic and vivid scene, since the promotion of the verb illustrates that that is the first thing that the Romans saw on the shore — was standing the opposing ~~op~~ battleline — creating a sense of intimidation from the Celts and this a dramatic scene.

Question 5

5 Read the passage and answer the question.

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Tacitus, *tumultus et rebellio: Boudica's rebellion*, lines 3–9

How does Tacitus, by his style of writing, emphasise the savage nature of the Romans? Make two points, each referring to the Latin.

[4]

This question asked about the style of Tacitus' writing so reference to content points did not receive credit. Candidates must read the question and where it asks for style of writing in the question, candidates must make sure they do so. Candidates must answer the question directly, rather than just mentioning a point of style. This passage was full of drama and there were plenty of possible answers given on the mark scheme.

In Exemplar 2, the first point made by the candidate has been given only 1 out of 2 marks as the candidate has not made clear the meaning of the Latin in their answer. In the second point, full marks (2 out of 2 marks) have been given as the candidate has quoted the Latin, shown that they understand the meaning of the Latin and analysis of the quotation has been made.

Exemplar 2

- *He uses violent, strong words to show the savage way in which Boudica & her daughters were treated, 'verbata' & 'stupro violatric' these are damning language for the Romans.*
- *The Placing 'regis' and 'securi' close together highlights what they have turned the Britons into - from kings to slaves, emphasising the savage nature of the Romans.*

[4]

Question 6

6 Read the passage and answer the question.

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Tacitus, *tumultus et rebellio: Boudica's rebellion*, lines 31–36

How does Tacitus convey the drama of this scene before the start of the battle? Make **two** points, each referring to the **Latin**.

[4]

Question 6 does not specifically ask for the style of writing in the wording of the question so candidates can use both style and content in this question. There was a wide range of permissible answers and candidates generally answered well. Some candidates gave Latin quotations which didn't match up with their explanation, so clearly understanding of the Latin is crucial.

Question 7 (a)

7 Read the passage and answer the questions.

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Tacitus, *tumultus et rebellio: Boudica's rebellion*, lines 37–43

(a) *angustiis loci* (line 1): why do you think the Romans chose a narrow place for the battle?

[1]

Generally, well answered. Some candidates incorrectly thought that the narrow place was chosen so that the Britons would not be able to escape. Vague answers about it not being easy for the Britons to attack were also not given any marks. Candidates should aim to be as specific as possible in their answers.

Question 7 (b)

(b) *postquam ... validum erat* (lines 1–4): why were the Romans' tactics so effective in this battle?
Give **two** reasons.

.....
.....
.....
.....

[2]

Candidates should read the lemma to find the answer to the question, so vague answers which did not refer to the information in the lemma were not given any marks. Most candidates remembered the point about the Romans using the wedge formation and the accurate use of the javelins. Some candidates repeated what they had written in Question 7(a) which was not in the lemma for this question.

Question 7 (c)

(c) *ceteri ... abitus* (lines 4–5): why do you think Tacitus' description of the actions of the Britons is so brief compared to his description of the Romans' attack?

.....
.....

[1]

This question, which a required personal response from the candidates, was generally well answered. Most candidates answered that Tacitus's brevity reflects the quick defeat of the Britons or that Tacitus, being a supporter of the Romans, was biased against the Britons. The question was very well answered by candidates.

Question 8

8* How do Caesar and Tacitus maintain the interest of the reader in their accounts?

You should support your answer with a range of references to the texts you have read, and you may include passages printed on the question paper.

[10]

Most candidates answered this overarching 10-mark essay question well. Common pitfalls were not backing up personal response with clear evidence from the text. Vague answers were relatively common. Some candidates referred too much to Tacitus and Caesar's style of writing. Credit was given for this, but a wider range of answers, such as the interest raised in the authors describing the power or education or punishments of the Druids and other such themes, was required. In this question candidates should aim for at least 5 points, with each point giving their own personal response as well as evidence from the text. Latin quotations were not required for this question.

The candidate answer below is an example of a well-made point in the overarching 10-mark extended writing question. The candidate has given their own personal response to answer the question and has used specific evidence from the text to back up their answer.

Exemplar 3

Caesar creates interest through his description of the Druids' power. He rule on almost all disputes both public and private, which shows the breadth of their power as they have religious duties as well making them powerful leaders of the Celts. Caesar also complements their education as they learn many things from natural sciences to astronomy and celestial geometry and they know about the gods. This is similar to the scientific education of the Greeks which who are highly advised by Caesar.

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