LATIN

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 13	14 - 28	29 – 41	42 - 53	54 - 66	67 - 78	79 - 100

Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 10	11 –21	22 - 30	31 - 44	45 - 58	59 - 72	73 - 100

There was a welcome and very significant rise in the number of candidates presenting for Latin, especially at the standard level. Unfortunately, while the best candidates were as good as ever there were far more weak candidates this session. The overwhelming problem was in Paper 1, at both standard and higher levels, discussed in greater detail below. Otherwise, there was as ever much evidence of hard work and good teaching. Where candidates stumbled on Paper 2 it was, as often as not, because they did not address the question actually posed. There was, very often, even in the case of otherwise very weak candidates, a welcome ability to scan.

Higher level paper 1

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 5	6 – 11	12 – 15	16 – 20	21 – 26	27 - 31	32 - 40

This paper attracted a range of responses from almost perfect to total misunderstanding. Where things did go wrong, it was often evident that no attention had been paid to the text and translation provided of the introductory and closing sections, and almost invariably evident that the candidates had little or no understanding of how to use a Latin dictionary .Far too often, candidates were either unable or unwilling to distinguish active from passive, accusative from nominative, singular from plural. I strongly suspect that, in many cases, if candidates were asked to parse a word they would do so correctly, but when they attempt to translate they ignore what parsing should tell them.

The Latin dictionary is not as easy to use as many candidates seemed to think. Far too many candidates, with an apparent complete ignorance of accidence, selected the wrong word; of those who selected the correct word very many immediately took the first meaning offered, however unsuitable. More lessons devoted entirely to developing dictionary skills would, I believe, bring quite disproportionate benefits.

Typical errors included taking the first word, *Cum,* to be a conjunction, taking *ferro* to be from the adjective *ferus,* taking *legibus* to be from *legio,* taking *tollito* to be a first person singular verb.

The supplementary questions were generally answered quite well, though, obviously, those who had little idea about the translation tended to be lost here too. Even amongst those who could translate

there were some who substituted paraphrase for analysis. In particular, it was disappointing that some who translated the relevant passages well failed to see that Livy's attention to the exact words of the ceremonies displayed both a desire to write accurate history and a reason to use direct speech.

Standard Level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 13	14 - 18	19 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 40

This paper attracted a range of responses from almost perfect to total misunderstanding. Where things did go wrong, it was often evident that no attention had been paid to the text and translation provided of the introductory and closing sections, and almost invariably evident that the candidates had little or no understanding of how to use a Latin dictionary .Far too often, candidates were either unable or unwilling to distinguish active from passive, accusative from nominative, singular from plural. I strongly suspect that, in many cases, if candidates were asked to parse a word they would do so correctly, but when they attempt to translate they ignore what parsing should tell them.

The Latin dictionary is not as easy to use as many candidates seemed to think. Far too many candidates, with an apparent complete ignorance of accidence, selected the wrong word; of those who selected the correct word very many immediately took *the* first meaning offered, however unsuitable. More lessons devoted entirely to developing dictionary skills would, I believe, bring quite disproportionate benefits, as would a thorough learning of the basic irregular verbs.

Typical errors included taking *teres* to be third person passive, or, alternatively to be *fromtere, tern5'* or *terio.* Some took *imbrem* to mean 'roofing tile', some took *nuda* to be nominative singular and in agreement with whateve*r trigidus* was going with, many took *pauisse* to be *frompaueo.fertur* ('is said') defeated many, *opposita* was often taken to be nominative and in agreement with *ianua.*

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 5	6 – 10	11 - 15	16 - 20	21 25	26 - 30	31 - 40

All sections were attempted but Virgil, Cicero and 'Love poetry' were the most popular. The context questions were generally well done, even by the very weakest candidates. The translation questions attracted both excellent responses and utter disasters, with quite a few candidates not answering the question at all. Scansion fell into three broad categories, perfect accuracy (the majority), gross ignorance about what mayor may not be long or short, and silence. The other questions, on the whole, displayed good preparation by the candidates; I was less aware, than I was last year, of candidates who thought that mere paraphrase would suffice. Some candidates wasted time by ignoring the clear indication that only a very brief answer was required.

The essays (Section B) ranged from excellent to very poor. As always, some gave excellent analyses, some contented themselves with plot rehearsal (usually, but not invariably, accurate) and some said almost nothing. The 'prepared essay' on a topic not sought was mercifully absent.

Standard level paper two

Component Grade Boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 - 6	7 - 12	13 - 17	18 - 26	27 - 34	35 - 43	44 - 60

There were far fewer very weak responses to this paper than to Paper 1; many candidates had clearly been well prepared for this paper.

Virgil was by far the most popular author.

Section A

Question 1

(a)   (i) While most candidates answered this well, a few placed the passage after the end of Sinon's deception.

(ii) Because of the misprint, all candidates were given the mark for the scansion.

(iii) The translation was generally well done; a few candidates took *uiribus* to be from *uir*.

(iv) Most candidates answered well; many candidates were more secure on 'how' than on 'why' .

(v) Generally well done; those who did less well used English paraphrase rather than Latin quotation.

(b)   (i) Generally well done, though many neglected to mention that Hector was a ghost or dream.

(ii) Most answered well; the minority who thought that the speaker was Hector naturally floundered in the rest of their answer.

(iii) and (iv) Generally well done.

(v) This question was well answered by some; too many merely reported what would happen next.

Question 2

(a) and (b) Very few candidates attempted Tacitus; those that did varied from good to poor.

Question 3

(a)   Not many candidates attempted Cicero.

(i) The identification was generally sound, though answers included Caelius and Publius.

(ii) Candidates mentioned repetition, but sometimes missed the opposites.

(iii) Many started the translation well: 'Who is more. ..' but then collapsed.

(iv) Most candidates knew the rhetorical changes but many were uncertain on where they occurred. One candidate thought that *scelere* was an infinitive.

(v) Generally well done.

(b)   (i) Generally well done.

(ii) Rarely did candidates mention Caelius' prosecution of Antonius.

(iii) There was one excellent response, but many floundered.

(iv) The translation was frequently quite poorly done.

(v) Generally well done.

Question 4

(a)   Horace was not very popular.

(i) There were good answers but not as many as one would expect.

(ii) Generally well done, though some candidates made no attempt to identify the places.

(iii) Generally well done except by the few who thought that the wolf was *inermem*.

(iv) Too many could not translate the passage.

(v) Generally well done.

(b)   Catullus

(i) The translation was surprisingly poorly done by many; others gave a perfectly accurate response.

(ii) Remarkably well done by many.

(iii) Very good and very poor answers; few moderately good answers.

(iv) Generally well done.

(v) Generally well done.

Question 5

(a) and (b) Juvenal.

The few Juvenal responses were generally well done.

Because of the misprint in the text at 5(a)(iii), all candidates were given the mark for the scansion.

Section B

The essays ranged from excellent to very poor. As always, some gave excellent analyses, some contented themselves with plot rehearsal (usually, but not invariably, accurate) and some said almost nothing. The 'prepared essay' on a topic not sought was mercifully absent.

Question 6

By far the most popular of the essay questions. As always, they ranged from plot rehearsal to analysis, with the very best providing relevant allusions to the text (in English or Latin). The general picture was clear in most essays though some neglected the various portents.

Question 7

Very few attempted this topic but those that did performed well.

Question 8

There were some truly excellent responses with extensive relevant quotation and good argumentation. Others were very poor, making desultory points with little or no textual support and little application to the jury. There were very few in between these extremes.

Question 9

The second most popular essay topic. Most chose to write about Catullus and those that did regarded him as primarily a lover. In most cases, little attempt was made to give any consideration to the alternative hypothesis; most were content to see Catullus' poetry as overwhelmingly autobiographical; there were, however, some dissenting voices, candidates who had noticed that not all of the syllabus was about Lesbia. Fewer chose Horace to write about but those that did tended to have a fuller and more accurate picture of their subject.

Question 10

This was not a popular topic but those who attempted it were generally well prepared.

Higher level internal assessment

Component Grade Boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0 – 3	4 – 7	8 – 11	12 – 13	14 – 15	16 – 17	18 - 20

This was a very encouraging session. Although Option A was by far the most popular, all three Options were attempted by at least one candidate.

In the case of Option A, where candidates understood that they were asked to produce a 'research dossier' they performed well. Those who thought that what was sought was merely a conventional essay by another name fared much less well.

The ideal response started with a research topic, a question (explicit or clearly implicit) which required an answer.

The statement of the question should be followed by a brief discussion on what evidence was available, and how best to use it with, if appropriate, some indication of its reliability.

Next should come examples of evidence, each example followed by a brief account of what contribution the evidence makes to answering the question.

Candidates chafe at the word limit, but that is part of the exercise. The candidate is not expected to solve the problem, only to explain how best a solution would be arrived at. Depending on the nature of the question and the evidence available, the candidate's opinion may become obvious but that is an outcome which candidate's should seek neither to achieve nor to avoid.

Option B is very difficult to do well unless the candidate is fearless in front of the microphone. On the other hand, for the right candidate, it can be very rewarding. The technical analysis and the performance itself will teach candidates so much about why classical literature still maintains its appeal.

Option C should be attempted only by candidates with a secure knowledge of syntax and accidence and, in the case of aspirants to verse composition, quantity and metre. It was gratifying to encounter candidates who could indeed take full advantage of this very attractive option; it was sad to see other candidates whose ignorance of the basic technical requirements was cruelly exposed by their submission.