

May 2016 subject reports

Latin

With a new curriculum on the menu for the next six years, this report will be slightly longer than usual, although teachers will notice that, apart from the most obvious changes, many remarks from the last report are still valid.

Overall grade boundaries

Higher level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-16	17-35	36-48	49-58	59-67	68-77	78-100

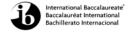
Standard level

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-17	18-35	36-49	50-60	61-70	71-80	81-100

Higher level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-7	8-13	14-16	17-18	19-21	22-24



Standard level internal assessment

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-3	4-7	8-13	14-16	17-18	19-21	22-24

The range and suitability of the work submitted

Discarding the oral presentation and the Latin composition options was not a light-hearted decision, but now we can confidently say that it has helped students to submit suitable pieces of work. Hopefully, this will not prevent teachers from including the practice of expressively reading aloud and writing Latin in their regular teaching.

The new marking criteria, although not radically different form the old ones, stress the importance of linking sources and annotations to the research question, and of building a coherent argument. It is therefore vital that candidates choose their research topic carefully and make clear the rationale behind the choice of sources.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A (Sources)

There is still some confusion about what constitutes a suitable source. A 'primary source' is 'a product of classical antiquity, textual or material' (classical languages guide, 'Internal assessment details' section (HTML); p. 41 (PDF)). Secondary sources do not count as sources, and examiners are instructed to ignore them altogether. This inevitably affects the marks awarded for criterion A (few/some of the selected sources are relevant) and C (little focus and coherence of the argument). Examiners are also instructed to ignore annotations to secondary sources (even if they contain good material) and criterion B is affected consequently. Unsuitable sources commonly presented as 'primary sources' tend to include scholarly articles, cartoons, images from movies, modern lyrics, etc. On the other hand, the content of modern maps, drawings and diagrams (e.g. the reconstruction of a destroyed temple or a map of the Roman *municipia*) based on ancient sources are primary sources.

The number of sources is now more prescriptive, and any source exceeding the prescribed number is not taken into consideration by examiners.

The referencing of translations can still be substantially improved in many cases, and candidates should be reminded that a complete reference includes the name of the translator. Examples like 'www.poetryintranslation.com' or 'translation from Perseus' do not constitute accurate referencing.



Criterion B (Annotations)

Inaccurate referencing is not penalized per se, but may affect the performance under all three criteria (for example, a source whose origin is not clear may not be really relevant, or may not be annotated in detail, or may not show a logical progression in the argument). Satisfactory referencing usually indicated awareness of what constituted a good source.

In the top band, full marks were gained by those dossiers that analyzed the sources critically, i.e. setting sources in their context and assessing their nature (e.g. to what extent a poetic passage from Juvenal, or an invective by Tertullian, can be taken as reliable historical evidence).

Criterion C (Argument)

'Argument' must be understood in a broad range of senses that can include 'logical argument' or 'train of thought', but is basically about the rationale for the choice of sources (why have those particular sources been chosen? An answer such as 'a Google search' will never score very high marks), relevance (how does each source contribute to the exploration of the topic) and consequentiality (sources should be linked to each other and support a reasoned conclusion).

Native speakers of languages other than English, for whom the term may have meanings ranging from 'topic/subject' to 'logical demonstration', can safely take 'argument' as a synonym of 'logical progression'.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

The requirement for the title to be in the form of a research question has helped candidates to give more focus to the topic investigated, but some questions were still rather vague, usually because the context was not clearly set (e.g. 'What was the status of women in Ancient Rome?') or because they did not provide a real question ('What was Roman cuisine like?'). Generic questions such as 'How does Catullus express emotion in his poetry?' also seldom managed to engage in a detailed way with the topic. Comparisons with the modern world invariably scored poorly. Topics like 'A comparison of the Roman political system and American democracy', or 'Julius Caesar and Adolf Hitler' should be reformulated in a precise way or avoided altogether. The comparison of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* with modern painting continues to be the most popular IB research dossier ever, but candidates should remember that this is a research dossier in classical languages (and culture), so the focus must be on ancient sources, and that a rationale should always be given for the choice of specific sources (ancient but also modern, for the sake of comparison).

Further comments

Teachers' marking was in line with that of previous years, and the examiners' task ranged from no changes to substantial adjustments. Teachers should mark their candidates' work with the utmost care, one of the reasons being that, especially in schools with many candidates, if the



sample scripts are found to have been marked too generously or too harshly, the application of a moderation factor inevitably affects all the candidates. As always, schools that adopt the excellent practice of second-marking internally very seldom had their marks changed.

Finally, it was very much appreciated that this year there were very few candidates who tried to elude the word limit by using the footnotes for annotations. Footnotes must only be used for referencing or short remarks, and examiners have very clear instructions to ignore anything that does not comply with this policy (e.g. a long discussion of Plutarch's historiographical approach).

Higher level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-40	41-81	82-91	92-109	110-126	127-144	145-180

General comments

The problem of bad handwriting has been exacerbated by the onscreen marking, and I am afraid some candidates may have missed marks because of illegible handwriting. Teachers are urged to strongly encourage their students to devote as much care to good handwriting as they do to the content of their answers.

The grade boundaries this year have seen a meaningful shift, mainly as a result of the introduction of the new markscheme. It was only too evident in the last years of the previous curriculum that the markscheme was causing an inflation of marks, with the marks awarded potentially bearing little relation to the quality of the translation. The new markscheme has addressed the problem and has fixed this issue, to a certain extent. Candidates seemed to be more focused on producing a meaningful and fluent, rather than word-by-word, translation, and it can be confidently argued that the final marks much better reflect the candidates' level of preparation.

The paper was considered by most teachers to be of adequate level. Most candidates chose Ovid.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Text 1 (Cicero) presented, for students in the middle range, difficulties with the comparison in line 3 (*geri quam parari*), the string of ablatives in lines 3-4 (*cupiditate* etc.), and the impersonal



concursum est in lines 6-7. The upper range students performed very well, some translating difficult sense units with grace. Students at the lower end of performance, as usual, foundered on sentence structure and word and word-type identification, sometimes grasping simply at a root meeting not appropriate for the context.

For Text 2 (Ovid), difficulties arose in translating the interrogative *quae* in line 33, the vocatives *progenies*, *Phaeton* in line 34, the passive *credar* in line 39 with the predicate nominatives *vera propago* in the previous line, and the structure of the last three lines. The range of paraphrases seems to be an indicator of how well the candidates knew the story of Phaethon. Candidates should be encouraged vigorously to scan the hexameter lines in order to avoid significant errors.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

Paper 1 is still the component in which candidates perform less well. It cannot be emphasized enough that the knowledge of the language, and the ability to translate unseen texts, is the first and most important skill of a classicist. Literary analysis is important, but little can be achieved without a solid understanding of the language and knowledge of its grammar and vocabulary. This vision is shared by many countries (mostly European) where Latin is studied, and in which the unseen translation is weighed more heavily as the most important part of the final exam.

Standard level paper one

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-27	28-54	55-63	64-68	69-72	73-77	78-90

General comments

The paper was considered by most teachers to be of adequate level. Here too most candidates chose Ovid.

In general terms, the same observations highlighted for Higher level apply.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Text 1 (Cicero) presented difficulties with the double datives (saluti civi) and the predicate genitive (hominis non esset, etc.); a range of translations for qui fuisset may indicate an imperfect command of English more than a lack of understanding in Latin. The final indirect



statement was a challenge for candidates to render accurately although it seemed many had the gist of the sense units.

Text 2 (Ovid) was in general done very well. Some phrases, e.g. *fit luminis artior orbis* and *officioque pedum ... duorum*, were indicative of the level of achievement of the candidates more so than other phrases (this is always the case). It seems that few candidates properly recognized and translated the *ne* clause at the end of the passage. As with HL, candidates should be encouraged to scan the hexameter lines.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

The same observations as for Higher level apply.

Higher level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-7	8-15	16-23	24-27	28-32	33-36	37-52

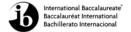
General comments

The paper was considered by most teachers to be of adequate level.

The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Section A

The first question of the paper was the kind of question that teachers have got used to in the last years. When there is a geographical reference in a poem, we can assume it is there for a precise reason and, as the ancient audience probably was, modern students too should be aware of what it is referring to. Geography questions can always be expected, and teachers might consider that knowledge of the geographical context is not just a key concept of the *Altertumswissenschaft*, but also very much in line with the international perspective of IB. Ideally, candidates must be able to pinpoint the precise location on a map, but the markscheme allowed for a wide area of uncertainty, such as 'the south-east Aegean'. Some candidates relied very heavily on assonance with answers such as 'the Carpathian whirlpool', but there were also some very precise references (in spite of the odd spelling given by Perseus). The markscheme



was very generous with the second reference, allowing simple answers such as 'Emathia', but candidates must be able to locate the reference at least in northern Greece or Thessaly.

Question 1 (b), as many others, asked to support the answer by quoting the Latin text. Any of the variants *vincla/vinclis/vincula* or *vis/vim/vi* was adequate, but examiners would only accept it when the English and Latin match. It is obvious that examiners would not award any mark for 'chains (*vi*)', but since this too was seen, candidates should take extra care to correctly match their answer with the supporting Latin.

The markscheme for translation questions such as 1 (c) has slightly changed from the old curriculum, with more stress on the communication of meaning than on errors, but examiners have found it easy to apply consistently. For teachers, it may be useful to explain that a [3] is a practically perfect translation, a [2] a translation where the majority of meaning has been conveyed, a [1] something with more than 'inaccuracies' while a [0] is basically loose words.

Scansion questions like 1(d) now routinely ask to indicate elisions. This seems to have had a very positive effect, with candidates paying more attention to this aspect and therefore making fewer errors in the scansion. Candidates have not been penalized for indicating the quantity on an elided syllable, but this should be avoided. Altogether, scansion questions have been answered very well, and it was a relief to see that most candidates could comfortably tackle even very tricky lines such as in question 7(c).

Questions that ask to explain a reference, such as 2(a), may require some thought, but many candidates were able to correctly identify the two elements that required an explanation to get the two marks. Since some candidates identified *Pallas* with the Palladium or with Juno, or did not give any reason for the expression *non aequae*, teachers should ensure that their students are familiar with the whole of the *Aeneid* and the background of the Trojan War.

Finding details from the text may seem an easy task, but some candidates struggled to correctly interpret *Eoas* in question 2(b) as a direct reference to Eos/Dawn/the East. Once again it must be stressed that these are prepared texts, and candidates may be asked to explain any single detail that contributes to the understanding of the extract. Too many candidates failed to recognise that *nigri* modifies *Memnonis*, making it wrongly agree with *arma*.

The style (6-mark) questions always give a thread. It seems that the quality of the answers to this questions is markedly improving, but with the total marks having now been brought down from eight to six, it is even more important that students do not just give a list of rhetorical devices, but that they link the stylistic analysis to the question. In Vergil, the prompt was about 'fighting heroes', which means that any remark about, e.g., Priamus, would not count towards the coherence of the argument. Examples of good answers included remarks on the position of words such as *infelix*, figures of speech such as the polysyndeton *cervixque comaeque*, the pathos of expressions such as *ipsum corpus amici*. Please note that these questions usually are about 'poetic art' (Vergil), 'literary art' (Tacitus), 'style and literary topics' (Tibullus), 'rhetorical technique' (Cicero), 'poetic style' (Horace), so they do not necessarily have to be a list of 'figures of speech' (or 'rhetorical figures'), but can comment on the content, the literary topoi, the emotional tone, as long as their stylistic intention is clear. Just pointing out the expressions *Eoas acies*, *nigri Memnonis* or *lunatis peltis* does not constitute satisfactory stylistic analysis, unless it explains how Vergil, through this accumulation of exotic descriptors, adds to



the vivacity of the scene with warriors convening from all over the world to fight in Troy. The same about Troilus, where many stylistic devices are employed to convey a sense of pathos due to the overwhelming superiority and ferocity of Achilles. No marks are awarded for a simple description or paraphrase.

These questions always require precise quotations from the Latin, and unfortunately many marks were missed where no Latin, or irrelevant Latin, was given. Please refer to the markscheme for examples of what may be expected. Markschemes are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive, but apart from being necessary for examiners, they also try to give some guidance to candidates.

Question 3(b) asked about the political relationship of Syria and Armenia with Rome. This quite straightforward question required the knowledge of the very basic distinction between provinces and allied states, but not all candidates answered correctly (especially on Armenia). Over the years it has been observed again and again that knowledge of the precise historical context tends to be a very weak area, both in the IA and in P2. Not all the IB World Schools in different countries give the same weight to the systematic study of history, and there seems to be a recognisable trend in papers sat in different parts of the world, but this is an area which many teachers should try to strengthen. It is clearly stated in the classical languages guide that the study of classical languages is not just about literary analysis, but also about knowledge of the historical, geographical, social and cultural context. In this particular case, it seems very difficult to follow Tacitus's complex narrative of Germanicus's undertaking in the East without a basic understanding of the working of Roman foreign policy.

Question 5(a) required some careful consideration in quoting the correct Latin, with the most obvious options being *contactum nullis cupidinibus* and *fastus* (the latter being mentioned hardly ever). References to *prima me cepit* or *docuit castas odisse puellas* needed some explanation in order to show how this may have affected Propertius's attitude.

Question 7(b) showed that some teachers should probably insist on explaining the context of poetical works. Factual knowledge is tested in P2 as much as literary analysis, and the serpent should not have been considered a person involved.

My last remark on this section is about option F, where at least question 9(b) asked to follow a simple, argument by Seneca about engagement in public life (*ut...ita...nam*). Not all responses managed to convincingly break down the argument, a fact that has repeatedly been observed over the years in the Lucretius and Seneca questions. Teachers, especially from those countries where history of philosophy is not offered as a curricular subject, might try to use this as an opportunity to introduce their students to the fascinating world of ancient (and less ancient) philosophy, and students who choose this option might well want to do some additional philosophical reading.

Section B

The new section B was of course the one that caused more concerns among teachers and candidates. With a hefty portion of the total marks allocated and a fairly open task, the anxiety may have been justified, but it is reassuring that the overall mean mark for section B was proportionally slightly higher, on average, than that for the individual questions of section A,



with the notable exception of question 15 (Good living), which presented a significant drop. As a rule, there was a quite close correlation between the marks of section A and section B across all grades.

The best essays were the ones that included or demonstrated some kind of planning and organization, which is an excellent practice for essays no matter the length. The task is assessed in first place by considering the range of evidence presented. 'Weak' and 'specific' evidence must be understood with some flexibility. While exact referencing such as 'Aeneid 1.490' is never required, it is clear that vague allusions such as 'Vergil's description of the fall of Troy in the Aeneid can only be considered very weak evidence. Generic quotations from secondary literature such as 'Vergil the supreme poet of Latin literature – J. Griffin' also do not count as relevant evidence from additional reading, since evidence should always be supportive of a focused argument. A good example of specific evidence, found in some answers, would be a reference to Aeneas's killing of Turnus at the end of book 12 of the Aeneid, the moral dilemma raised, how various interpretations have tried to link the episode to various events or protagonists of Roman history, and ultimately to a possible judgement of Vergil about Augustus and/or his contemporary world. Good references from supplementary reading included the rest of the Aeneid and the other works by Vergil (not just the Georgics, but the Bucolics as well), Augustus's Res Gestae, some Horace and Livy. Very limited use was generally made of secondary literature, with only a few references to classics of historiography on the civil wars or Augustus's propaganda, or literary essays on Vergil's poetry. Many of these works are extremely good reading, and teachers could encourage their students to read them during vacations or over the course of the year.

Some candidates asserted (without any presented evidence) that the *Aeneid* was propaganda for Augustus. While this is a valid view, too many candidates reversed the question, by explaining how the propaganda forced a certain worldview to be presented in the *Aeneid*. Thus, they failed to show how Vergil interprets his world through myth. Some students unfortunately showed very little awareness of the historical context.

The prompt for the Roman love poetry option (question 13) elicited use of evidence from elegy as well as Catullus and Propertius, mostly from the prescribed reading. There were precise references to the *servitium amoris* and the exact nature of the power exerted over the lover, but also very generic ones, which would not count as specific evidence. The very common reference to Catullus's *odi et amo*, with little or no comment, could hardly be considered evidence for the argument at all. More adventurous allusions to Petrarch and Shakespeare warmed the examiners' hearts by showing what a splendid use enthusiastic candidates can make of material well beyond the prescribed syllabus.

The second assessment criterion is based on the understanding of the context and the developing of a coherent argument linked to the prompt. The History option (question 12) showed some good examples of the first, addressing questions such as Suetonius's use of archive sources in the compilation of his biographies and, of course, Tacitus's political agenda, his support of the senatorial ideology and his personal experience under Domitian.

The Women option (question 14) presented a good range of essays from the brilliant to the dismal. There is a tendency to make sweeping assumptions about the social expectations of women and men. Many candidates used this question to criticize Roman gender roles, and



failed to show any relationship (or show there was no relationship) to men's excellence. While there is nothing wrong with critiquing gender roles, candidates thus missed the point of the question.

The Good living option (question 15) was the one in which the lower marks were awarded, mainly because of a lack of precise references and because of little awareness of the importance of the topic in the ancient world, not just Roman but also, if not especially, Greek. The theme of good living was paramount in Hellenistic and imperial philosophy, and candidates reading Lucretius, Horace and Seneca might want to deepen their knowledge at least of Stoicism and Epicureanism, if not of the other philosophical schools, by reading some of the many excellent books on the topic. Hopefully, Seneca will not be presented anymore as an Epicurean.

We must restate that in this section there is rarely a 'right' or 'wrong' answer. Students can well argue that Roman women were never evaluated in relation to the ideal of men's excellence, and be assured that their answer will *only* be assessed on the basis of the strength of their argument and the evidence provided to support it. When preparing for this task, it might be worth re-visiting the IB learner profile: this is the place to show intellectual risk-taking as well as solid factual knowledge.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

The remarks to Standard level below, apply equally well to Higher level.

Standard level paper two

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mark range:	0-4	5-8	9-14	15-20	21-27	28-33	34-45

General comments

The paper was considered by most teachers to be of adequate level.



The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

Most of the remarks on Higher Level P2 can be applied to Standard Level, so I will only comment here on specific questions.

- 1(a) was about events from outside the extract. This does not mean that candidates need to learn all the prescribed reading by heart, but whenever there is a reference to specific facts, they can expect to be asked to explain the reference. Many candidates could refer very precisely to the fall of Carthage, the rise of Rome, etc., which is what Juno actually fears.
- 1(b) tested the understanding of the text, and a simple translation of the four points contained in lines 26-28 could have sufficed, with the proviso that 'the honours of snatched Ganymede' does not make much sense without some sort of paraphrase or explanation. The principle that examiners apply is that every answer must make sense in itself, also to somebody without any knowledge of the original text.
- 1(c) required some precise answers. *maria omnia circum* is not 'around the whole sea' but 'around all the seas'. Since the question required both the English and the Latin, candidates must strive to give an exact translation.
- 2(b) was usually answered very well, in spite of the numerous elisions.
- 2(d) proved to be a difficult questions, so some words of explanation are needed. Whenever there is a simile, candidates can reasonably expect to be asked to analyse it, which means recognise its basic elements (A=B) plus all the accessory descriptions. In this case, this would mean to recognise (swans *cycnos* = ships *puppes*), plus (reaching land *terras capere* = reaching harbour *portum tenet*), etc. Even in simpler cases some candidates find difficult to break down similes, so this is an exercise on which teachers should insist. Simile questions will always appear.
- 3(a) Knowledge of the precise meaning of *imago* and *pumpa* may not be high in a candidate's priorities list, but here the mention of these two details is functional to Tacitus's argument: even without *pumpa* and *imagines* (or perhaps precisely because of their absence) the funeral was remarkable for other reasons.
- 4(a) Cf. previous question.
- 4(c) The expression 'figures of speech' (analogous to 'rhetorical figures') has a very technical meaning, so any reference to factual details or the general tone of the passage was not an acceptable answer.
- 4(d) Again, the mention of Tarracina is instrumental to the argument. Tacitus is a complex and dense author, and when he mentions apparently secondary details, there is usually a good reason for it. Despite the clear wording of the question, Tarracina was not always recognised as a place.



- 5(d) The function of a figure of speech is usually to stress certain details or aspects of a situation. In this case, explanations such as anticlimactic effect, return to desire, determined resolve, etc. were appropriate. Questions such as this are becoming more common in Paper 2, and candidates are invited to always ask themselves why a certain figure of speech has been used and what aspect the author wanted to underline.
- 5(e) Candidates who answered well clearly read the question carefully and addressed the theme of conflicted feelings. Saying that 'Catullus is in love with Lesbia' is not in itself a conflicted feeling.
- 6(a) A remark of the utmost importance, to which teachers will hopefully pay close attention. When quotation of the Latin is required, it is paramount that candidates give the relevant words, avoiding the use of ellipses that might lead to omit words that convey vital meaning. For example, *magicis...focis* would not be accepted for 'perform rituals', because this is expressed by *sacra piare*. Same, for example, for *agedum...nostrae*, where the important words are *mentem convertite*. Please note that the instructions to examiners have become very strict in this regard.
- 7(d) Again, little knowledge of Roman history, even if the fact that Cicero mentions these glorious examples should be in itself a good reason for investigating who they were.
- 9(e) Despite the emboldened 'and', not many candidates located and described the places.
- 10(c) As in HL 9(b), some candidates found it hard to follow and break down a simple philosophical argument.

Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

A short note on answering-technique (which applies equally well to Higher level):

Many answers benefit from being founded very closely on the text. Quotation of relevant Latin (at least when required) followed by exact translation will earn marks in many cases. Further deduction is often desirable (and sometimes required) but will receive little credit if basic comprehension of the text is absent. Cf. e.g. the following answers to question 1(e), which for the most part was poorly tackled:

Candidate's answer	Examiner's remarks
Pallas's actions could justify Juno's reaction because she feels that if Pallas can act out of revenge then so can she. Pallas attacked the Greeks, so Juno feels that she had the right to take revenge on the Trojans.	No marks awarded, since knowledge of the text is inexact ('attacked' is too vague for exurere classem Argivum atque ipsos submergere).



Pallas burnt the Argive fleet and drowned the men.	2 marks. A very meagre answer but sufficient, since the candidate has proved that the text is understood in detail.
Pallas punished Ajax for his rape of Cassandra by burning the Greek fleet and sinking it with all hands, so Juno feels that she should be allowed to take revenge on the Trojans by destroying Aeneas's fleet similarly.	2 marks. An ideal answer, demonstrating close comprehension of the text and awareness of its context.

A final word of caution (only for Standard level): some candidates have missed marks for answering questions from three different options (e.g. extract 1, 3 and 5). In such cases, only the answers from two options can be considered (either 1 and 3 or 1 and 5 or 3 and 5).