2012 HSC Notes from the Marking Centre – Latin

Contents

Introduction

This document has been produced for the teachers and candidates of the Stage 6 Latin courses. It contains comments on candidate responses to the 2012 Higher School Certificate examinations, indicating the quality of the responses and highlighting their relative strengths and weaknesses.

This document should be read along with the relevant syllabuses, the 2012 Higher School Certificate examinations, the marking guidelines and other support documents developed by the Board of Studies to assist in the teaching and learning of Latin.

General comments

Translations of prescribed texts should be coherent and fluent, and not awkwardly literal. In translating unseen texts, candidates should read the heading and use the vocabulary provided. Candidates should also take care to read the short-answer questions carefully. Translations should be written on alternate lines as directed.

Better responses for short-answer questions were brief and succinct. For extended response questions, candidates who wrote better responses communicated understanding of the meaning of the extracts by supporting the explanation or analysis with relevant and valid examples, and explained the link between the examples given and the aspect being analysed. These candidates addressed all elements in a logical and cohesive way, focusing only on relevant information. When two or more extracts were given, candidates referred to all extracts in their answer. When quoting from a text, candidates demonstrated their understanding of how the Latin is relevant to their argument and avoided using a Latin word in isolation without regard to its place in the structure of the Latin sentence. Candidates used an ellipsis when quoting more than a few words from an extract, in order to avoid copying long sections of text.

Continuers

Section I — Prescribed Text – Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita,* Book 5

Question 1

(a) Most candidates provided a sound translation of the extract, showing a clear overall understanding of the author's intended meaning. In better translations, candidates

correctly accounted for every word of the extract, paying attention to significant adverbs such as *aliquantum* and *unquam*, and demonstrated a perceptive understanding of the relationship between the words and structures. The best translations provided idiomatic renderings of *celebratior*, *Maxime conspectus*, and *parumque … visum*. Students considered the context of the passage they translated so as to avoid mistranslating words of similar appearance, for example *diei* and *dei*.

(b) Most candidates demonstrated a sound understanding of the overall meaning of the extract. In better responses, candidates provided a fluent and coherent translation of the extract into English, demonstrating sensitivity to the author's meaning. In the best responses, candidates understood the complexities of the opening sentence, translating the Latin syntax into clear idiomatic English, while accounting for every word.

Question 3

(a) (i) Most candidates correctly identified a stylistic feature in the first sentence that draws attention to Livy's religious focus. The question required only a single word to name the stylistic feature.

(ii) Most candidates correctly identified washing themselves and wearing white clothing as the ways in which the young men prepare themselves for their task.

(iii) Most candidates correctly outlined the Etruscan custom that only a priest from a certain family was accustomed to handling the statue of Juno.

(b) (i) Most candidates correctly recognised the clothing and the ivory chairs as items that identified the subjects of this extract as holders of high office.

(ii) Most candidates showed familiarity with Livy's approach to the writing of history. In better responses, candidates showed understanding of the question by referring clearly to elements in the last sentence of the extract that reveal aspects of Livy's approach to the writing of history.

Question 4

Candidates offered a variety of valid interpretations of how Livy portrays Camillus' character, with some analysing Livy's statements about political and religious aspects of Camillus' personality or actions, others analysing the literary techniques Livy uses, and still others analysing how Livy uses Camillus as a moral exemplum in political and religious affairs. Some responses incorporated more than one approach. In better responses, candidates cited relevant examples from both extracts, the best responses made full use of both extracts and often quoted relevant material from elsewhere in Book V. In some responses, candidates showed a good understanding of the text as a whole, but did not make good use of the extracts provided.

Section II – Prescribed Text – Virgil, *Aeneid X*

Question 5

In better translations, candidates accounted for every word in the extract and demonstrated a sound knowledge of vocabulary, avoiding the confusion of *quatiens* and *solo* with similar Latin words. These candidates showed a perceptive understanding of the relationships between words and structures, in particular the link between the reflexive *se* and the verb *infert*, and the dative pronoun *Huic* and the verb *obvius ire*, which governs it. In the best responses, candidates gave a spirited and idiomatic rendering of the exclamation *dextra … adsint!*

Question 7

(a) (i) Most candidates correctly identified the location of the *Phrygiae campos*. Candidates should be familiar with any geographical references in a prescribed text in order to clarify in their minds where the action takes place and to have a greater understanding of the overall impact of the setting.

(ii) In better responses, candidates not only gave a clear explanation of Liger's statement, but also established a link between his words and related significant events, such as Aeneas' rescue from Diomedes and Achilles, which involved more than a mere translation of words cited in the question. Consideration of the speaker and his or her purpose was a necessary element in responding fully to this type of question.

(b) Most candidates demonstrated competence in scanning the line, marking six feet with the correct metre, including the typical fifth foot dactyl. In better responses, candidates recognised the consonantal *i* of *iaculum*, which precludes elision. These candidates used the conventions prescribed in the syllabus and indicated clearly whether they were marking a syllable long or short.

(c) In better responses, candidates recognised the complexity of the characterisation of Aeneas in this extract and offered various equally valid effects for the use of the word *pius*. These responses addressed the apparently ironic contrast between the description of Aeneas as *pius* and the immediate context of his battle *furor*. Some candidates went on to explain that Aeneas is raging because of his sense of *pietas* towards Pallas/Evander. The further contrast between *pius* and *amaris*, which forces the reader to (re)consider the very concept of *pietas*, was also fruitfully addressed. A single effect, established in relation to the text and well explained, was sufficient to secure the three marks allocated to this question.

(d) Candidates offered various and equally valid explanations for the significance of the inclusion of so many named Italian heroes in the preceding lines, with many candidates combining a number of approaches. In some responses, candidates linked the naming of the Italian heroes to the Homeric device of the catalogue. Some focused on the relevance of the number of heroes Aeneas encounters and kills, and their heroic stature. These elements were linked to the author's attitude to war and specifically to the effect of personalising the cost of war by introducing individual casualties. In other responses, candidates linked these elements to the immediate context of the *aristeia* of Aeneas, and explained their effect as enhancing Aeneas' heroic status. Others still focused on the Italian heritage of the heroes and the appeal for the Roman/Italian audience in identifying with specifically Italian warriors, perhaps ancestors.

Question 8

In better responses, candidates dealt thoroughly with all three extracts and were mindful of both language and imagery, as well as the need for analysis and not just explanation or description. The extracts afforded a significant amount of material to analyse and most candidates had no difficulty in identifying the main features that characterise Turnus. In the best responses, candidates identified the relevant points within each extract and drew out implications, using knowledge of the text as a whole. These responses showed an appreciation of Turnus as a complex character who not only displays the attributes of a Homeric hero, but also readily responds to the requests of his sister in relieving Lausus from battle. The simile in the second extract provided candidates with the opportunity to explore fully the characteristics shared by the lion and Turnus in relation to the bull and Pallas. In more insightful responses, candidates commented on the imagery of the engraving on the baldric and related it to Turnus' actions in taking Pallas' youthful life. In these responses, candidates then linked the imagery to the authorial intervention and discussed its contribution to the characterisation of Turnus.

If candidates choose to use the technical terminology of literary criticism, it is important that they use it correctly, avoiding confusion, for example, between 'juxtaposition' and 'contrast', and between 'metaphor' and 'simile'.

Section III — Unseen Texts

Question 9

(a) Most candidates identified *laetissimus* as a superlative.

(b) Many candidates understood that the required form was the pluperfect tense. In the best responses, candidates gave *monstraverat* as the alternate spelling of *monstrarat*, with the personal ending attached to the correct stem.

(c) Most candidates correctly identified the object as the head of a horse.

(d) Most candidates correctly identified the construction as an accusative infinitive or indirect statement.

(e) Most candidates correctly identified the adjective in line 447 as *opulentum*. Careful note of line references given in the question was necessary, as some candidates incorrectly cited *ingens* from line 446.

(f) Many candidates showed a good understanding of the overall sense of the extract and produced a clear and fluent translation. In better translations, candidates showed a precise knowledge of Latin vocabulary and an ability to use the listed vocabulary effectively, distinguishing *acer* from *ater* or *ager*, *diva* from *dives*, *fore* from *foris*, and *aereus* from *aureus*. In these translations, candidates also typically showed knowledge of relevant Roman mythology and history, giving appropriate translations for the proper nouns *Poeni*, *Iuno* and *Sidonia Dido*, and discerning that *Lucus* was not a proper noun, despite its initial capital letter. In the best translations, candidates demonstrated a perceptive understanding of the grammar of the passage, giving accurate renderings of the historical infinitive *effodere*, the agreement between *iactati* and *Poeni*, the indirect statement of *fore … gentem*, and the ablatives of respect *donis* and *numine* associated with *opulentum*. The description of the temple architecture in the last two lines of the extract was rendered in a range of idiomatic ways, with the three separate words for bronze accounted for in a manner that reflected Virgil's emphasis.

Question 10

(a) While using different grammatical terminology, most candidates correctly explained the use of the infinitive form of *petere* as being dependent on the verb *volo*.

(b) Most candidates identified *dici* as a passive.

(c) Most candidates realised that *ortus* required a form of *esse* to complete the form. In the best responses, candidates supplied a second-person singular, such as *es* or *eras*, showing understanding of the required agreement with the second-person subject.

(d) Most candidates identified *familia* and *urbs* as the subjects of *habuit*.

(e) Many candidates were able to produce a translation that showed both a clear understanding of the overall content of the extract and a familiarity with the style and language of Livy. In these translations, candidates effectively conveyed the contrast between *non factionibus nec per coitiones* and *sed hac dextra*, and reflected understanding of Valerius' emphatic claim to have earned his high honours. In better translations, candidates showed a discerning knowledge of syntax by recognising *facta* and *dicta* as nouns in this context, rather than passive verbs or participles, and *eodem anno* as the antecedent of *quo*. In the best translations, candidates gave a fluent and idiomatic translation for *Fuit cum hoc dici poterat*.

Extension

Section I — Prescribed Text

Question 1

(a) Most candidates produced a fluent translation that showed their understanding of the content in particular and of Horace's style more broadly. In the better translations, candidates reflected Horace's customary *sermo cotidianus* and his urbane satiric style by using appropriate contemporary English idiom, particularly in line 25, *Invideat … canto*. In these translations, candidates accounted for every word of the extract and showed a sound understanding of vocabulary in context by giving appropriate meanings of *iniquae mentis*, *facies* and *est tibi mater … opus*. In better translations, candidates also conveyed effectively the tone of the rapid exchange between Horace and the Boor.

(b) Most candidates produced a fluent translation that demonstrated their understanding of Juvenal's style and intended meaning. In better translations, candidates displayed a particular sensitivity to the satiric genre by conveying the tone of invective that permeates the extract. In these translations, candidates showed a sound understanding of vocabulary in context by giving appropriate meanings of *chordas obliquas, prostare* and *picta lupa barbara mitra*.

Question 2

(a) (i) In most responses, candidates identified a satiric purpose for Horace's description of the old woman as *Sabella*. Although it was possible to interpret the use of *Sabella* in a number of different and equally valid ways, it was necessary to link the satiric purpose specifically to this term.

(ii) In most responses, candidates easily identified stylistic features of the prophecy, particularly those associated with a mock-epic tone.

(iii) In most responses, candidates explained the implications of the final two lines of the prophecy, linking Horace's current predicament with the Boor to the old woman's words. In better responses, candidates conveyed an appreciation of the humour of the situation.

(b) Many candidates gave a description of the poor man as depicted by Juvenal and explained why Umbricius feels outraged. In the best responses, candidates analysed the imagery and features of style used in this extract and linked them convincingly to the tone of indignation conveyed by Juvenal.

Question 3

While in most responses candidates showed appreciation of the tone and humour of the Horace extract, and the pastoral anticipation in Juvenal, better responses included convincing links to illustrate how these features contribute to an effective ending. In better responses, candidates supported judgements about effectiveness with appropriate references to the extracts that revealed clear understanding of what produces the effect described. In better responses, candidates also went beyond considerations of the effectiveness of the extracts as literature to evaluate them as conclusions to the respective satires.

In some responses, candidates betrayed misunderstanding of the extracts, particularly Juvenal. The speaker is Umbricius, not Juvenal, and he is heading for Cumae, not the *gelidos agros* of Aquinum, where he hopes to visit Juvenal. Nor is the satire framed as a speech to convince Juvenal to leave Rome. It is a farewell speech explaining reasons for departure from Rome.

Section II — Non-prescribed Text

Question 4

(a) Many candidates produced adequate translations that reflected an overall understanding of the extract. In better translations, candidates accounted for every word, including the adverbs *paulatim* and *totidem,* and displayed a perceptive understanding of Latin syntax. These candidates recognised the function of *ex quo* and translated it idiomatically in context; recognised the clause *quidquid agunt homines* as a complement to *nostri farrago libelli est*; recognised the agreement between *quis* and *avus*; and identified the correct case usage of *anima* and *turbae … togatae*. In the best responses, candidates gave a fluent translation for the last sentence of the extract, displaying a sound understanding of the function of the gerundive *rapienda*.

Candidates should check carefully the vocabulary assistance given in order to avoid confusion between words of similar appearance, for example *mas* and *mare*.

(b) Many candidates identified the stylistic features in the extract. They also showed familiarity with the satiric genre in general. In better responses, however, candidates drew examples of relevant features from throughout the extract and clearly pointed out their connection to the satiric genre.

Question 5

(a) Although challenging, this question provided candidates with the opportunity to showcase advanced translation skills. In better responses, candidates showed a clear overall understanding of the extract and gave a more fluent rather than literal translation, particularly for *lux … gratissima*, for *neque quis … alter*, and for the compound *contulerim*. In these translations, candidates identified *postera* as an adjective in agreement with *lux, Sinuessae* as a locative, and *me* as an ablative of comparison.

(b) No candidates attempted this question.