



JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

2000

LATIN

HIGHER AND ORDINARY LEVELS

CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

HIGHER LEVEL

1. INTRODUCTION

The Junior Certificate Examination Higher Level Latin paper comprises six questions. Question 1 requires candidates to translate a passage of poetry from the prescribed list and to answer subsidiary questions on the passage and the course in general. Question 1 carries 80 marks. Question 2 requires candidates to translate a passage in Latin into the vernacular. Question 2 carries 80 marks. Question 3 requires candidates to answer questions on a comprehension passage. This question also carries 80 marks. Question 4 consists of a choice between sentences for translation from the vernacular into Latin and a passage of Latin for translation. Question 4 is worth 80 marks. Question 5 consists of Section A (Roman History, 264 – 44BC) and Section B (based upon personalities in the history of the period). Each Section carries 20 marks. Question 5 therefore carries 40 marks. Question 6 consists of Section A (Roman Social Life and Civilisation) and Section B (requiring a longer answer on Roman Social Life and Civilisation). Each Section carries 20 marks. Question 6 therefore carries 40 marks. The total number of marks for the paper is 400.

2. PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

A total of 567 students sat the Latin Higher Level Paper in 2000. This is a slight increase on last year as **Appendix 1** shows. The increase is statistically insignificant in the light of the steady decline in the numbers taking Junior Certificate Latin as shown in **Appendix 1**. Those tables also outline the dramatic decline in the number of students taking Latin in the past thirty years.

The percentage results of the 2000 Higher Level examination were as follows:

A	B	C	D	E	F	NG
18.7	36.7	23.8	15.9	3.7	1.2	-

This represents a C+ rate of 79.2% and an E- rate of 4.9%

The percentage results for 1997, 1998 and 1999 are given in **Appendix 2**.

The A rate in the results of the 2000 examination was lower than in the previous three years but the overall C+ rate mirrors that of previous years.

3. ANALYSIS OF PAPER

Question 1

- (i) The translation of the prescribed extract was generally well done, although with slightly less skill than in recent years. Candidates found the line *verum haec tantum alias inter caput extulit urbes* challenging to express well in translation.
- (ii) These questions were well done, in general. (a) and (e) were the least favoured and resulted in lower marks than the other questions.

Question 2

Although reasonably well done, this passage proved challenging to some candidates. In the latter case there was a tendency not to make use of the caption or the vocabulary aid. This was a pity.

Words which caused particular difficulty in this passage included: *oppressisset*, *forte*, *agere*, *celati* and *conatus esset*.

Question 3

Candidates did quite well in this question, but not as well as in previous years. A number of questions were well done but (iii) and (vii) proved problematic. The specific grammar questions (xi) and (xii) were very well done.

Question 4

Section A

Candidates did particularly well on this section of the paper. Examiners noted that those who opted to do both Sections A and B of this question did as well or better in A.

Vocabulary which proved problematic included the Ablative of ‘Icarus’, the Accusative of ‘sun’ and the plural of “wings”. There was also a general ignorance of the gender of *corpus*. Examiners noted that candidates made a good attempt at most constructions.

Section B

The examiners noted a weakness in some candidates’ knowledge of vocabulary and phrases. Examples included, *longe et late*, *suis*, *moenia*, *non modo ... sed etiam* and *proelio*. There was evidence that those candidates were unfamiliar with military vocabulary. Examiners suggest that it is important that students acquire some knowledge of such vocabulary during the course of their Latin studies. On the other hand, a number of candidates translated this passage well and made good use of the vocabulary aid.

Question 5

Section A

This Section was well answered by most candidates. Questions (v) and (vii) were the only ones which were not popular and not well answered.

Section B

In this Section, Marius was the more popular choice, and the question was well answered. Some candidates provided good answers to the question on Caesar as a *laudatio funebris*.

Question 6

Section A

This Section was very well answered. Questions (v) and (x) were the least popular, but all other questions were well done.

Section B

This Section elicited some excellent responses from candidates. Candidates displayed a wide range of knowledge and a real interest in the subject matter.

4. OVERALL GENERAL COMMENT

Candidates of Junior Certificate Latin, Higher Level, continue to display a high level of knowledge and interest in the subject. Students and teachers are to be commended for their work on this subject. Examiners have noted a slight deterioration in breadth of

knowledge, particularly grammatical and vocabulary knowledge, in recent years. This may well be evidence of the constraints under which the subject is being taught in some circumstances. School managers, teachers and students are occasionally struggling against other calls on the timetable and may not have the same allocation of hours as Latin received in the past.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Candidates are encouraged to make full use of captions and vocabulary aid.

The examiners commend the high standard of work on the prescribed texts which is displayed by the candidates each year. It is important the prescribed poetry be presented in such a way that it engages pupils' enthusiasm.

The examiners would encourage the maintaining of a fairly broad vocabulary base for students. It is important that military vocabulary receives due attention.

APPENDIX 1

Table 1 (a)
INTERMEDIATE CERTIFICATE LATIN 1969 – 1983
 Numbers of Candidates - Boys and Girls

Common Level

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1969	8218	3941	12159
1972	8916	5446	14362
1975	7143	4438	11581
1978	4100	1493	5593
1980	3436	1028	4464
1983	2546	562	3108

Table 1 (b)*

INTERMEDIATE CERTIFICATE LATIN 1989 – 1991

Year	Total Number of candidates
1989	1821
1990	1251
1991	1075

* The Department of Education changed the method of recording data in the early eighties.

Table 1 (c)*

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE LATIN 1992-1999

HIGHER AND ORDINARY LEVELS

Year	Higher	Ordinary	Total
1992	793	60	853
1993	809	82	891
1994	762	77	839
1995	745	55	800
1996	643	61	704
1997	661	59	720
1998	536	61	597
1999	554	68	622

* Higher and Ordinary levels were introduced in 1992

APPENDIX 2

PERCENTAGE RESULTS IN LATIN JUNIOR CERTIFICATE, HIGHER LEVEL (1997-1999)

Year	Total	A	B	C	D	E	F	NG
1997	661	35.2	31.3	18.6	11.8	2.3	0.8	0
1998	536	27.8	30.8	21.1	14.7	4.5	1.1	0
1999	555	36.6	31.9	20.4	8.8	1.8	0.5	0

ORDINARY LEVEL

1. INTRODUCTION

The Junior Certificate Examination Ordinary Level Latin paper comprises six questions. Question 1 requires candidates to translate a passage of poetry from the prescribed list and to answer subsidiary questions on the passage and the course in general. Question 1 carries 80 marks. Question 2 requires candidates to translate a passage on Latin into the vernacular. Question 2 carries 80 marks. Question 3 requires candidates to answer questions on a comprehension passage. This question also carries 80 marks. Question 4 consists of a choice between sentences for translation from the vernacular into Latin and a passage of Latin for translation. Question 4 is worth 80 marks. Question 5 consists of Section A (Roman History, 264 – 44BC) and Section B (based upon personalities in the history of the period). Each Section carries 20 marks. Question 5 therefore carries 40 marks. Question 6 consists of Section A (Roman Social Life and Civilisation) and Section B (requiring a longer answer on Roman Social Life and Civilisation). Each Section carries 20 marks. Question 6 therefore carries 40 marks. The total number of marks for the paper is 400.

2. PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

A total of 47 students sat the Latin Ordinary Level Paper in 2000. These small numbers are in keeping with the pattern of recent years and, in fact, represent a further decline, as **Appendix 1** shows. Those tables also outline the dramatic decline in the number of students taking Latin in the past thirty years.

The percentage results of the 2000 Ordinary Level examination were as follows:

A	B	C	D	E	F	NG
2.1	19.1	29.8	23.4	19.1	6.4	-

This represents a C+ rate of 51.0% and an E- rate of 25.5%

The percentage results for 1997, 1998 and 1999 are given in **Appendix 3**.

3. ANALYSIS OF PAPER

Question 1

- (i) Many students did not attempt to translate the text. This is a common feature in Ordinary level scripts and a disappointing one.
- (ii) Most students did well on these questions and so were able to salvage marks on the question in general. Questions (d) and (f) were the least popular.

Question 2

This passage was very poorly translated by most candidates. The Dative case proved most problematic, as did the first word, *maxime*.

Question 3

This question was generally well done. Candidates displayed quite good knowledge in questions (ix) and (x) with *urbs* and *hora* being the best attempts.

Question 4

Section A

In general, candidates made a good effort in this section. A reasonable knowledge of vocabulary was shown, although 'at night', 'in the morning' and 'because' were problems.

Section B

While this was reasonably well done, examiners noted that the caption and vocabulary aid were not used to best effect.

Question 5

Section A

This Section was fairly answered by most candidates.

Section B

In this Section, Marius was the more popular choice, and answers were quite good.

Examiners made the general point that students at this level tend to make vague general points and do not display a firm grasp of the History section of the course.

Question 6

Section A

This Section was very well answered. Questions (v) and (x) were the least popular, but all other questions were well done.

Section B

This Section elicited some excellent responses from candidates.

4. OVERALL GENERAL COMMENT

In general, a reasonable standard was attained by most candidates. As in previous years, examiners noted that, at this level, candidates sometimes simply give up on the paper and do not do themselves justice. Had they remained on and made an effort at every section of the paper they would have got a higher grade.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Candidates are encouraged to make full use of captions and vocabulary aid.

Candidates are encouraged to persist in answering the paper.

Students would benefit from a clearer focus on the History section of the course.

APPENDIX 3

PERCENTAGE RESULTS IN LATIN JUNIOR CERTIFICATE, ORDINARY LEVEL (1997-1999)

Year	Total	A	B	C	D	E	F	NG
1997	59	6.8	35.6	27.1	16.9	8.5	5.1	-
1998	61	-	1.6	18.0	49.2	27.9	3.3	-
1999	68	5.9	23.5	33.8	26.5	7.4	2.9	-