



LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

2000

GREEK

HIGHER AND ORDINARY LEVELS

CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

HIGHER LEVEL

1. INTRODUCTION

The Leaving Certificate Greek examination paper at Higher Level comprises four questions. Question 1 consists of a choice between a passage for composition and a comprehension passage, each worth fifty marks. Question 2 offers four Greek passages, two prose and two poetry, for translation into the vernacular: candidates must choose three of those four passages. Question 2 carries 180 marks. Question 3 requires candidates to translate a passage and to answer subsidiary questions from either of the two prescribed texts. (The prescribed texts in 2000 were *The Intellectual Revolution*, extracts from Plato's *Apology* and *Phaedo*, and *A World of Heroes*, extracts from Homer's *Iliad*) Question 3 carries eighty marks. Question 4 consists of Section A (History) and B (Art and Literature), each of which offers four questions. Candidates must choose to answer one question from each section, and a third from either section. Question 4 carries ninety marks. The total number of marks for the paper is 400.

2. PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

A total of 10 students sat the Greek Higher Level paper in 2000. This small number is in keeping with the trend in the past decade or so.

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

| Total | A1 | A2 | B1 | B2 | B3 | C1 | C2 | C3 | D1 | D2 | D3 | E | F | NG |
|-------|----|------|------|------|------|------|----|------|----|----|------|---|---|----|
| 10 | - | 20.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 20.0 | 10.0 | - | 10.0 | - | - | 20.0 | - | - | - |

This represents a C+ rate of 80.0% and an E- rate of 0%.

The results by subgrade for 1997, 1998 and 1999 are given in **Appendix 1**.

The results of the 2000 Higher Level Greek paper were in keeping with recent years. The standard of answering was very high with evidence of strong commitment on the part of this small cohort of students and their teachers.

3. ANALYSIS OF PAPER

QUESTION 1

Sections A and B were equally popular. Section A was handled quite well but some students lost marks because of weakness in vocabulary. Areas where the examiners felt the students could have done better, included cases following prepositions and knowledge of gender. In Section B students are encouraged to look more carefully at the actual text, where the answers to the comprehension questions lie. As noted in previous years, there was weakness in translating Greek numerals in question (g).

QUESTION 2

Each of the four passages was translated well by many of the candidates, with Passage C (Euripides) proving the most challenging.

Passage A was attempted by almost every one of the candidates. Most understood the general sense, but idioms like *πραξων* and *ως βελτιστους* proved difficult.

The general sense of Passage B was also understood by most candidates. However, a common mistake was to ignore the proliferation of negatives that Plato uses to emphasise his point, and to reduce them to one simple negative (line 2). Not all candidates realised that *τον τεθνεωτα* was the dead *person*, nor did they spot the genitive of comparison, *μειζον τουτου*.

Passage C was the least popular of the extracts. Section A was handled quite well but some students lost marks because of weakness in vocabulary. Areas where the examiners felt the students could have done better, included cases following prepositions and knowledge of gender. In Section B students are encouraged to look more carefully at the actual text, where the answers to the Comprehension questions lie. As noted in previous years, there was weakness in translating Greek numerals in question (g).

Passage D was the choice of those candidates who had studied Homer as prescribed text. It was generally translated well.

QUESTION 3

The two prescribed texts were equally popular.

Section A (i). The candidates presented very good translations with only a few minor errors.

Section A (ii). Question (e) was the least popular choice here.

Section B (i). The examiners were surprised to note that some candidates were unfamiliar with this extract from the prescribed text.

Section B (ii). All questions in this section were very well answered.

QUESTION 4

As in previous years, this question was very well answered by candidates.

Section A

- (i) This question was the least popular but when answered was particularly well done.
- (ii) This question was very well answered. Some candidates went beyond the period of the question and gave details as far as the Peace of Callias (371BC). This did not gain any marks and would have been counter-productive had the candidates been caught for time.
- (iii) This question was very well answered.
- (iv) This was also very well done.

Section B

- (i) This question was quite well answered but in some cases not enough emphasis was given to the last part of the question which sought to link the life and works of Xenophon.
- (ii), (iii) and (iv) These were all answered very well.

4. OVERALL GENERAL COMMENT

The examiners noted that while the candidates' performance was generally good there were areas where some could have been done better. For instance, as already mentioned, there were lapses in accuracy in Question 1. The results of Question 3, the prescribed text, were not as high as in previous years. However, good unseen translations (Question 2) and particularly good answers to Question 4 allowed a number of candidates to achieve a high mark. It is notable that in Question 4 all eight questions were attempted. This is a tribute to the breadth of approach by teachers and their commitment to the subject.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Examiners noted some weakness in vocabulary (including Greek numerals), in the knowledge of cases following prepositions and of gender.

In the Comprehension question students are encouraged to look more carefully at the actual text, where the answers to the Comprehension questions lie.

Students are also encouraged to pay equal attention to all sections of the prescribed texts.

APPENDIX 1

Percentage breakdown of candidates by grade Leaving Certificate, Higher Level **GREEK**

| Year | Total | A1 | A2 | B1 | B2 | B3 | C1 | C2 | C3 | D1 | D2 | D3 | E | F | NG |
|-------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1997 | 7 | - | 14.3 | 28.5 | 14.3 | - | 42.9 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1998 | 9 | 11.1 | 11.1 | 11.1 | 22.2 | - | 3.3 | 11.1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1999 | 9 | - | 22.2 | - | 33.3 | 11.1 | 11.1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

ORDINARY LEVEL

1. INTRODUCTION

The Leaving Certificate Greek examination paper at Ordinary level comprises three questions. Question 1 offers four Greek passages, two prose and two poetry, for translation into the vernacular: candidates must choose three of those four passages. Question 1 carries 210 marks. Question 2 requires candidates to translate a passage and to answer subsidiary questions from a prescribed text. Question 2 carries one hundred marks. Question 3 consists of Section A (History) and B (Art and Literature), each of which offers four questions. Candidates must choose to answer one question from each section, and a third from either section. Question 3 carries ninety marks. The total number of marks for the paper is 400.

2. PERFORMANCE OF CANDIDATES

Only one candidate sat this paper in 2000. It has not been unusual in recent years for no candidates at all to have taken the paper.

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

| A | B | C | D | E | F | NG |
|---|---|---|-------|---|---|----|
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 100.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

3. ANALYSIS OF PAPER

Some general comments may be usefully made about this paper as it is inappropriate to comment on the performance of one individual.

An unusual situation obtains at Ordinary Level Greek in the Leaving Certificate: the prescribed text at this level is completely different from that at Higher Level. It would therefore be very unlikely for a candidate whose class had been following Higher Level to have any knowledge of the text or subsidiary questions examined at Ordinary level. Added to that is the fact that the body of prescribed material at both levels is extensive. This discourages a student from changing levels during the two year course, and makes it most inadvisable during the final year. This issue, which may be a factor in the lack of candidates, is due to be addressed by the NCCA course committee.