



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission**

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION 2004

ANCIENT GREEK

ORDINARY LEVEL CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

HIGHER LEVEL CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

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ORDINARY LEVEL

1. Introduction

The current syllabus for Ancient Greek Junior Certificate was introduced in 1993 and examined for the first time in 1995. The Ordinary Level follows the same syllabus as that prescribed for Higher Level except for a reduction in the number of prescribed passages. On the Ordinary Level paper the passages for unseen translation, for comprehension questions, and the sentences for translation into Ancient Greek are simpler than those given on the Higher Level paper. The questions on history and civilisation are frequently the same as those on the Higher Level paper but the marking scheme requires less detail from the Ordinary Level candidates.

The Junior Certificate Examination Ordinary Level Ancient Greek paper comprises seven questions. Question 1 requires candidates to translate a passage from the prescribed text, *Ancient Greek Through Reading*, and to answer one background question on the passage. Question 1 carries 50 marks. Question 2 also requires candidates to translate a passage from the prescribed text and to answer one background question. Question 2 also carries 50 marks. Question 3 requires candidates to translate a passage of unprescribed Ancient Greek. This question carries 80 marks. Question 4 requires the comprehension of a passage of unprescribed Ancient Greek and carries 80 marks. Question 5 requires the composition of sentences from the vernacular into Ancient Greek. Question 5 carries 80 marks. Question 6 offers two questions on Ancient Greek History, one of which must be answered. This question carries 30 marks. Question 7 offers two questions on Ancient Greek Civilisation, Myth and Legend, one of which must be answered for 30 marks. The total number of marks for the paper is 400.

The numbers taking this paper have been very low in recent years. The following table shows the numbers taking the paper for the past five years.

| Year | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Candidates | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 |

2. Performance of Candidates

The following table shows the number and percentage of candidates achieving each grade in the current year (2004) and in the previous three years (2000 – 2003):

| Year | Total | A | B | C | ABC | D | E | F | NG | EFNG |
|-------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| 2000 | - | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 2001 | 2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 2002 | 2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 50.0 |
| 2003 | 3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 2004 | 1 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

In 2004 there was only one candidate. It is inappropriate to analyse candidate performance, to reach conclusions and to offer recommendations based on the work of one candidate. Teachers and students may refer to the Higher Level report for general recommendations.

HIGHER LEVEL

1. Introduction

The current syllabus for Ancient Greek Junior Certificate was introduced in 1993 and examined for the first time in 1995. The Higher Level follows the same syllabus as that prescribed for Ordinary Level except for a larger number of prescribed passages. On the Higher Level paper the passages for unseen translation, for comprehension questions, and the sentences for translation into Ancient Greek are more challenging than those given on the Ordinary Level paper. The questions on history and civilisation are frequently the same on both papers but the marking scheme requires more detail from the Higher Level candidates.

The Junior Certificate Examination Higher Level Ancient Greek paper comprises seven questions. Question 1 requires candidates to translate a passage from the prescribed text, *Ancient Greek Through Reading*, and to answer one background question on the passage. Question 1 carries 50 marks. Question 2 also requires candidates to translate a passage from the prescribed text and to answer one background question. Question 2 also carries 50 marks. Question 3 requires candidates to translate a passage of unprescribed Ancient Greek. This question carries 80 marks. Question 4 requires the comprehension of a passage of unprescribed Ancient Greek and carries 80 marks. Question 5 requires the composition of sentences from the vernacular into Ancient Greek. Question 5 carries 80 marks. Question 6 offers two questions on Ancient Greek History, one of which must be answered. This question carries 30 marks. Question 7 offers two questions on Ancient Greek Civilisation, Myth and Legend, one of which must be answered for 30 marks. The total number of marks for the paper is 400.

In 2004 the total number of candidates for this paper was 27. The following table shows the numbers taking the paper for the past five years.

| Year | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Candidates | 53 | 39 | 30 | 36 | 27 |

2. Performance of Candidates

The following table shows the number and percentage of candidates achieving each grade in the current year (2004) and in the previous three years (2000 – 2003):

| Year | Total | A | B | C | ABC | D | E | F | NG | EFNG |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| 2000 | 53 | 28.3 | 32.1 | 18.9 | 79.3 | 17.0 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 0.0 | 3.8 |
| 2001 | 39 | 15.4 | 25.6 | 28.2 | 69.2 | 12.8 | 12.8 | 5.1 | 0.0 | 17.9 |
| 2002 | 30 | 16.6 | 23.3 | 16.6 | 56.5 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 3.3 | 0.0 | 23.3 |
| 2003 | 36 | 11.1 | 16.7 | 19.4 | 47.2 | 27.8 | 13.9 | 8.3 | 2.8 | 25.0 |
| 2004 | 27 | 44.4 | 44.4 | 0.0 | 88.9 | 7.4 | 3.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.7 |

In 2004 the standard of answering was markedly higher than in recent years with over 88% of candidates gaining an A or B grade. The EFNG grade of 3.7% was also very low. This high standard was seen in all sections of the paper, and indicated a good knowledge of the Ancient Greek language coupled with sound preparation of prescribed material. This high level applied to almost all candidates.

3. Analysis of Candidate Performance

Questions 1 and 2

The majority of candidates did very well on Question 1 (a) and (b). Examiners also noted that many candidates scored equally well on the second prescribed passage (Question 2). Maintaining an equally high standard on both questions, and therefore

across the spectrum of the prescribed material, is noteworthy. Candidates are to be commended for this.

Question 3

Candidates showed skill in translating this unseen passage. Examiners noted that they made very good use of the caption and vocabulary aid. This is commendable.

Question 4

This comprehension question was handled very well in general. It is indicative of the high standard of these candidates that 33% got full marks on this question.

Question 5

This question which requires composition from English to Ancient Greek is traditionally the most challenging question on the paper. In general, it was answered very well by candidates this year. This is commendable.

Question 6

In this question most candidates opted for (a) and wrote about the battle of Thermopylae. They wrote well and included in their answers the suggested details. It is commendable to see candidates reading questions carefully and making use of the suggested stimuli. The small number who wrote about Themistocles (b) did not confine their answers to his involvement in the battle of Salamis but wrote well on his career in general.

Question 7

The majority opted for (a) and wrote on Odysseus and the Cyclops - the most popular choice of tale. They wrote very well on tale. The small number who opted for (b) wrote competently about an ancient Greek festival. However, in those answers there

was little sense that the writer had been present at the event. The candidates did not really engage with the question which asked them to 'imagine' being present.

4. Conclusions

- In 2004 the standard of answering was very high with an A/B rate of 88.9% and an E grade of 3.7%
- This high standard was seen in all sections of the paper, and indicated a good knowledge of the Ancient Greek language coupled with sound preparation of prescribed material
- Candidates maintained a consistently high standard across the spectrum of the prescribed material
- Candidates made very good use of captions and vocabulary aid
- Composition from English to Ancient Greek is traditionally the most challenging question on the paper. It was answered very well by candidates this year
- In the History and Civilisation section of the paper, candidates generally read questions carefully and made use of the suggested stimuli
- A minority of candidates did not really engage with the question which asked them to use their imagination

5. Recommendations to Teachers and Students.

- Teachers are commended for the high standard of preparation of their students for this examination. It is recommended that this standard be maintained.
- Students are commended for their consistently high standard of answering. It is recommended that this standard be maintained.
- Students should endeavour to maintain a consistent level of knowledge across the different elements of the course – composition, translation, comprehension and history/civilization
- Students should continue to make full use of captions, glossaries and stimuli in their answers
- Students should make every effort to engage with questions which ask them to ‘imagine’ a particular scenario