



**Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit  
State Examinations Commission**

**JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION 2004**

**LATIN**

**ORDINARY LEVEL CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT**

**HIGHER LEVEL CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT**

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## ORDINARY LEVEL

### 1. Introduction

The current syllabus for Latin Junior Certificate was introduced in 1993 and examined for the first time in 1995.

The Junior Certificate Examination Ordinary Level paper comprises six questions. Question 1 (i) requires candidates to translate a passage of poetry from the prescribed list and (ii) to answer subsidiary questions on the passage and on the course in general. Question 1 carries 80 marks. Question 2 requires candidates to translate a passage of 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 carries 80 marks. Question 5 consists of Section A (Roman History, 264 – 44 BC) 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.

A total of 36 candidates sat the Ordinary Level paper in 2004. The following table shows the number of candidates who have taken this paper in the past five years:

<b>Year</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>Candidates</b>	47	58	69	56	36

## 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	47	4.3	17.0	29.8	51.1	25.5	17.0	6.4	0.0	23.4
2001	58	3.4	29.3	29.3	62.0	22.4	3.4	8.6	3.4	15.4
2002	69	4.3	30.4	27.5	62.2	27.5	8.7	0.0	1.4	10.1
2003	56	3.6	33.9	21.4	58.9	21.4	10.7	5.4	3.6	19.6
Mean		3.9	27.7	27.0	58.6	24.2	10.0	5.1	2.1	17.1
Std. Dev.		0.5	7.4	3.8	5.2	2.8	5.6	3.7	1.7	5.7
2004	36	0.0	8.3	25.0	33.3	25.0	19.4	16.7	5.6	41.7

It can be seen from the table above that the results on this paper in 2004 were not within standard deviation and that there were some startling discrepancies. For instance, a B rate of 8.3% compared with a B rate in 2003 of 33.9% is very disappointing; the EFNG rate of 41.7% is almost twice that of 2000. In 2004, examiners noted that the small group of candidates showed a lack of knowledge and skill in all aspects of the paper. Unfortunately, it is quite common for candidates at this level to have no knowledge of the prescribed text; however, it is unusual for these candidates to also have little knowledge of Question 6 (Roman Social Life and Civilisation). Such was the case this year.

### **3. Analysis of Candidate Performance**

#### **Question 1 (Prescribed Text)**

##### **(i) Translation:**

Examiners reported that it was rare to find a sustained accurate translation of the set text. They also noted that almost one third of the candidates did not attempt this section of the question at all.

##### **(ii) Subsidiary questions:**

Questions (a), (b) and (d) were the most popular. In (f) a few candidates recalled the grinning Egnatius.

#### **Question 2 (Unseen Translation)**

The majority of the candidates found this passage very difficult. Examiners noted that the candidates showed a lack of knowledge of some basic rudiments of vocabulary, syntax and grammar. Added to that was the fact that many made no use of the caption and the glossary. Common errors included: *statim, Patroclum, necabo, capiam*.

#### **Question 3 (Comprehension)**

In general, candidates handled this question quite well. Candidates who attempted more than eight options fared best. Questions (i), (iv), (v), (vii) and (viii) were usually done well. In (ii) very few extended the answer to include *et quod idem dies etc*. Question (iii) was not answered correctly by any candidate. Where attempted, (ix) and (x) were done quite well.

#### **Question 4A (Composition)**

A small minority of candidates chose this option. As in the case of Question 2, a lack of some basic rules of grammar was evident. In (c) and (d) there was no knowledge of the Accusative and Infinitive and Purpose Clauses. It is difficult to see how students can cope with the course without some understanding of cases, tenses and some basic constructions.

#### **Question 4B (Unseen Translation)**

The majority of the candidates found this passage very difficult. As in Question 2, examiners noted the tendency of candidates to give up very easily and not persevere in an attempt to 'make sense' of the sentences. Difficulty arose from such words as *silva* and *pericula*, words which would not normally be glossed. It is hoped that the use of the recently published *Defined Vocabulary List* as a basis for learning vocabulary will bring about an improvement in this situation.

#### **Question 5 (Roman History)**

As already noted in this report, candidates did particularly badly on this question in 2004. For instance, of the 36 candidates, five made no attempt at all at this question. This is very unusual, as candidates traditionally tend to do much better in Questions 5 and 6 of this paper than in the language based questions.

**Section A.** A number of candidates did not attempt five questions here. Those who attempted more than five, got higher marks.

**Section B.** The choices here were equally popular. However, as stated above, a number of candidates chose neither.

#### **Question 6 (Roman Social Life and Civilisation)**

A number of candidates chose not to answer this question at all. This is very unusual.

**Section A.** All questions were equally popular and, where attempted, were reasonably well done.

**Section B.** A number of candidates did not know what a *paedagogus* was. The question was generally not well answered.

#### 4. Conclusions

- The results of this paper were very disappointing, especially in relation to the EFNG rate of 41.7%.
- Examiners noted that in the areas of paper traditionally well done there was clear evidence of lack of preparation. This was notable in questions 1, 5 and 6.
- Almost one third of candidates made no attempt at Question 1 (i).
- Examiners noted a lack of knowledge of some basic rudiments of vocabulary, syntax and grammar.
- Examiners noted that in unseen translations, captions and glossaries were generally not used to good effect.
- Examiners noted that in unseen translations candidates tended to give up very easily and not persevere in an attempt to make sense of the sentences.
- In Question 3 (Comprehension) those candidates who attempted more than eight questions fared better than those who did not.
- In Question 5 (Roman History) those candidates who attempted more than five questions fared better than those who did not.
- A number of candidates chose not to answer Question 6, Roman Social Life and Civilisation at all. This is very unusual.

## 5. Recommendations to Teachers and Students

- Students at this level should make every effort to study the prescribed text. This would enhance their enjoyment of Latin and allow them to acquire the foundation for a good result in the examination
- Students should make every effort to acquire the basic rudiments of vocabulary, syntax and grammar during the course of their studies
- Students should not neglect the History and Civilisation aspects of the course
- The use of the *Defined Vocabulary List* should ameliorate the acquisition of Latin vocabulary and will clarify what is expected by examiners
- In the examination, candidates should pay close attention to captions and glossaries
- In the examination, in unseen translations candidates should not give up too easily but should persevere in an attempt to make sense of the sentences.
- In the examination, where time allows it candidates should attempt more than the required number of questions in Questions 3, 5A and 6A.

## HIGHER LEVEL

### 1. Introduction

The current syllabus for Latin Junior Certificate was introduced in 1993 and examined for the first time in 1995.

The Junior Certificate Examination Higher Level paper comprises six questions. Question 1 (i) requires candidates to translate a passage of poetry from the prescribed list and (ii) 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 of 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 composition from the vernacular into Latin and a passage of Latin for translation. Question 4 carries 80 marks. Question 5 consists of Section A (Roman History, 264 – 44 BC) 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.

A total of 433 candidates sat the Higher Level paper in 2004. The following table shows the number of candidates who have taken this paper in the past five years:

<b>Year</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>Candidates</b>	567	560	425	447	433

As can be seen from the above table there was a significant decrease in 2002 and the numbers have remained at that level.

## 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):

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>ABC</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>NG</b>	<b>EFNG</b>
<b>2000</b>	567	18.9	36.9	23.6	79.4	15.7	3.7	1.2	0.0	4.9
<b>2001</b>	560	26.4	35.9	23.9	86.2	9.6	2.5	0.7	0.9	4.1
<b>2002</b>	425	25.6	32.7	23.8	82.1	12.5	4.2	0.9	0.2	5.3
<b>2003</b>	447	25.1	35.1	24.6	84.8	11.0	2.9	0.9	0.4	4.3
<b>2004</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>78.8</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>6.0</b>

It can be seen from the table above that the standard of answering remains very high at the A and B grade levels. However, the C grade in 2004 is lower than expected. Added to that is a higher than average EFNG rate. The following table shows the mean scores of the previous four years:

<b>2000- 03</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>ABC</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>EFNG</b>
<b>Mean</b>	24.0	83.1	12.2	4.6

The reasons for this decrease in the ABC rate and the subsequent increase in the D and EFNG rate in 2004 can be explained by poor performance by some candidates in the linguistically demanding sections of the paper, Questions 2, 4A and 4B. This will be commented upon more fully below.

### 3. Analysis of Candidate Performance

In general, examiners noted that candidates were highly competent in their answers to Questions 1, 3, 5 and 6 but not as confident when dealing with Questions 2 and, particularly, Questions 4A and 4B.

#### Question 1 (Prescribed Text)

##### (i) Translation:

Many candidates achieved full marks on the text. There were some excellent presentations of well rehearsed translations. Some common mistakes were the omission of *mediaque*, *haec precor*, *olim* and *imprecor*.

##### (ii) Subsidiary questions:

Answers in (ii) verified the candidates' comprehension of the text. Questions (a), (b) and (f) were the most popular; candidates did not appear as confident in (c) and (d). Many candidates attempted more than three options. In general, the standard of answering was very high.

Examiners noted, as in previous years, that a candidate who achieves fewer than 60 marks on this question has not prepared the prescribed text sufficiently well.

#### Question 2 (Unseen Translation)

In general, candidates found this question challenging. There was an inability to recognize key constructions in many answers, for example the Ablative Absolute in the first sentence and the Indirect Question in the second sentence. Other words and phrases that proved awkward were: *eodem tempore*, *vellemne*, *faciam*, *a patre*, *dederis* and *ut nemo sit*; *novem* was repeatedly translated as 'new'. Included in that list are fairly commonplace words and phrases which candidates should be able to handle. It is hoped that the use of the recently published *Defined Vocabulary List* as a

basis for learning vocabulary will be of benefit to students and teachers in clarifying what is expected of candidates.

### Question 3 (Comprehension)

In general the candidates did quite well on this question. Good use was made of both the caption and the glossary. It was encouraging to see that many candidates handled questions (xi) and (xii) very well this year. On the other hand, the Ablative Absolute (*signo dato*) and the Purpose Clause (*ut occuparet*) were generally not understood.

- (i) This was usually answered well.
- (ii) Failure to identify *ut occuparet* as a Purpose Clause lost many candidates marks.
- (iii) The candidates used the glossary here and did well.
- (iv) This was well answered.
- (v) This was not a popular question and was not well answered. *Signo dato* was generally not understood.
- (vi) Few candidates gave full answers here.
- (vii) Again, only a small number of candidates gave full answers.
- (viii) The tendency to translate *alii* as 'all' caused problems here.
- (ix) This was popular but occasionally *victi* caused difficulty.
- (x) This, the first of the grammar questions, was not answered well.
- (xi) This was popular and well answered.
- (xii) This was well answered.

### Question 4A (Composition)

This option was not at all popular this year and was not well answered. Some candidates attempted both 4A and 4B and invariably did better on 4B.

- (a) Candidates were generally unable to handle *ubi* and the indicative, and where *cum* was used the subjunctive was incorrect. There was also an inability to form the neuter plural, *dona*.

- (b) Examiners noted that it was rare to find an Accusative and Infinitive used here. *Inquit* was frequently used. The apposition of *filiam* and *Laviniam* was also missed.
- (c) Candidates were often unable to provide the word *dux* and to conjugate *volo*.
- (d) The Result Clause frequently was not formed here and the Accusative plural of *Troianus* proved difficult for many candidates.
- (e) *Ut* and the subjunctive were rarely used here; the word *auxilium* was missed by most.

Candidates are finding this question increasingly difficult. Examiners have noted that it appears to derive from a lack of knowledge of the implementation of constructions and a lack of vocabulary. It is hoped that the *Defined Vocabulary List* will ameliorate the acquisition of Latin vocabulary.

#### **Question 4B (Unseen Translation)**

In general, candidates found this passage quite challenging. The first half was particularly so. For example, many did not give the plural for *Stoici*, and did not recognize words such as *illud*, *nescio*, *in animo*, *ceteri* and the pluperfect *navigaverant*. The dative and genitive cases of *Simonides* were ignored by many.

Examiners noted that some candidates showed a tendency to carelessness in grammar, vocabulary and inflections. It was observed that in a number of cases extra care and attention in the examination itself would have improved their results.

#### **Question 5 (Roman History)**

**Section A.** In contrast to some of the linguistic elements of the course, the majority of candidates answered this question very well. Detailed knowledge was shown in many scripts. All questions except (vi), (viii) and (x) were popular.

**Section B.** The question on Hannibal elicited many good responses which were both factual and imaginative. The question on Caesar was equally

popular and was well done. Examiners noted that, in general, candidates are very well prepared for this section of the examination. In a number of cases candidates answered more than the required five questions.

### **Question 6 (Roman Social Life and Civilisation)**

**Section A.** All questions were equally popular and were answered very well. In a number of cases candidates answered more than the required five questions. Examiners noted that those who attempted more than the required number in Questions 3, 5 and 6 scored high marks.

**Section B. (i)** While there were some excellent responses to this question, a number of candidates did not read the question carefully and missed the reference to a 'classroom'.

(ii) There was occasional confusion between a *grammaticus* and a *paedagogus* in responses. However, the question was well answered.

#### 4. Conclusions

- In general, the standard of answering of this paper was very high. The ABC rate of 78.8% is testament to the work and effort of students and teachers.
- Examiners noted that many candidates were fluent and articulate in Questions 1, 5 and 6.
- In Question 1 (i) many candidates achieved full marks. There were some excellent presentations of translations.
- In general, examiners noted that candidates were highly competent in their answers to Question 1, 3, 5 and 6 but not as confident when dealing with Questions 2 and, particularly, Questions 4A and 4B.
- Examiners noted some difficulties in linguistic based questions. For example, it was noted that some candidates showed a tendency to carelessness in grammar, vocabulary and inflections. It was observed that in a number of cases extra care and attention in the examination itself would have improved their results.
- Examiners noted that in linguistic based questions there was an inability to recognize key constructions in many answers.
- Candidates are finding question 4 A increasingly difficult. Examiners have noted that it appears to derive from a lack of knowledge of the implementation of constructions and a lack of vocabulary.
- In Question 5, Roman History, examiners noted that, in general, candidates are very well prepared for this section of the examination. However in Section A, a number of candidates did not read the question carefully and missed the reference to a 'classroom'.

- Examiners noted that those who attempted more than the required number in Questions 3, 5 and 6 scored high marks.

## 5. Recommendations to Teachers and Students

- It is recommended that students continue to work on the acquisition of knowledge of grammar and vocabulary during the course of their studies.
- The use of the *Defined Vocabulary List* should ameliorate the acquisition of Latin vocabulary and will clarify what is expected by examiners.
- In the examination candidates should be patient and persevere in the face of difficulties in the linguistic based questions. Extra care and attention pays off.
- In the examination candidates should read all questions carefully and develop answers where possible.
- In the examination, candidates should read captions and glossaries carefully.