



GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**LATIN
GCSE**

AUTUMN 2020

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<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?l=en>

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Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

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COMPONENT 1

General Comments

The entry was 16, of whom four attempted Question 4 instead of Question 5.

Comments on individual questions/sections

In Questions 1 and 3, the multiple choice questions proved quite challenging, largely because many of them called for a close analysis of the Latin. There appeared to be no even gradient of difficulty across the first three questions, as performance varied. As in some previous years, for some Question 1 proved more challenging than Question 3.

In Question 5, there were the usual problems with candidates having to guess the cases and numbers defined by noun endings.

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COMPONENT 2

General Comments

As in previous years, *A Day at the Races* was much the more popular choice of theme. Though the number of candidates was very small, the range of performance was very similar to that in any normal year and some strong performances were recorded on both sections.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Within each section there was a tendency for candidates to show lack of familiarity with one or two of the authors tested, while offering good responses to the rest. Greater attention to the precise wording of questions – e.g. in Section A, Q2(a) and Q3(b) – would have improved responses which skirted round the point without quite hitting it on the head. The longer literary questions – e.g. Section A, Q4, and Section B, Q4(b) – were very effectively done by those who knew the kind of things to look for and were able to support their suggestions with precise reference to the text: for those insufficiently familiar with the Latin and/or lacking sufficient practice in how to approach such tasks, however, these questions presented a stumbling-block, occasionally being left completely blank.

The 'essays' concluding each section were often tackled with some verve. Candidates who drew on a wide range of material – not confined to the minimum four specified in the question – often gained a distinct advantage, so long as they restrained the temptation to catalogue details for their own sake instead of picking the most relevant examples and consistently relating them to the original question. Several impressively knowledgeable responses never really took time to consider *different* ways in which chariot-racing might have been taken 'seriously' in Section A, and by whom, while in Section B, Q6 there was a tendency to misinterpret the phrase 'interests and abilities' as signifying simply what young Romans may or may not have found *interesting*.

Summary of key points

The quality of work seen on both sections was encouragingly high and candidates generally are to be applauded for showing a wholehearted commitment to a demanding course in the difficult circumstances of 2020.

LATIN

GCSE

Autumn 2020

COMPONENT 3B

General Comments

After the disruption to examinations in the summer of 2020, the entry for the Autumn series was understandably very small. However, the choice of topic was much more evenly distributed between Roman Entertainment and Leisure and Religion in the Roman world. Both produced a good range of answers.

In spite of the small entry, the Roman Civilisation paper again differentiated successfully, and most of the grades between 9 and 3 were represented. As in previous years, some questions only required a one-word answer, whereas others needed a more detailed response and in these longer answers, candidates did not always pay attention to the evaluative element of individual questions. As always, the 12-mark essay question proved to be a good discriminator in both topics.

It continues to surprise examiners that some candidates were somewhat uncertain about a number of the topics listed in the specification, in particular some aspects of the theatre in Topic 1 and the household gods in Topic 2. Although they are not prescribed materials as such, the examiners would urge teachers to make use of the resource booklets available on the Eduqas website when preparing candidates for the examination and to refer to the relevant stages in the Cambridge Latin Course and/or other similar courses. Full details of what candidates are expected to study are available in the specification, also on the website. There were again candidates who failed to read the questions carefully enough to ensure their answers were focused on what was being asked, rather than reproducing, for example, a general description of activities at the baths or the ways in which Isis was worshipped. Throughout this component, knowledge and evaluation are continually assessed throughout the paper and those who fail to address both can easily deprive themselves of a substantial number of marks.

Comments on individual questions/sections

A reminder that these comments are based on a very small sample of scripts.

Topic 1 - Roman Entertainment & Leisure

- Q.1** The key words in the question were 'explain how effective...' and most candidates failed to address this, preferring to simply describe how a hypocaust worked. As a result, the AO3 marks were sometimes completely lost.
- Q.2** (a) Very few candidates knew that the picture showed a musician. This image appears in the resource booklet for this component.
- (b) Was well done, as was (c), where only one candidate thought a pantomime was a comedy performance.

- Q.3** Generally, (a) and (b) were well done: answers to (c) did not always pick up on the word 'boring' in the question and spoke of uncomfortable couches and unappetising food.
- Q.4** Well answered on the whole.
- Q.5** Most candidates knew what went on in the baths but often answers relied too heavily on description of the activities with little evaluation. A couple of candidates mentioned that there were shops elsewhere in a Roman town and that people could socialise in the forum or at a dinner party.

Topic 2 - Religion in the Roman World

- Q.1 (a)** Was generally well done and in (b), most achieved at least two marks.
- Q.2 (a)** All candidates cited either the grapes, wine cup or the ivy leaves – sometimes all three!
- (b)** Most achieved at least one mark with the theme of celebration being the most popular answer.
- Q.3** Neither part of this question was answered particularly well although in (b), candidates did usually mention offerings of food and wine.
- Q.4 (a)** Always answered correctly.
- (b)** There were some very good answers here, referring to Isis' nurturing nature and determination in face of adversity but others simply described the worship of the goddess, based largely on what they had read in the Cambridge Latin Course. The format of the question asking for four points and an explanation of each one was designed to help candidates but some ignored this completely.
- Q.5** In the past, questions focused on Mithras have proved problematic but most were able to expand on the unpleasant tests an initiate had to endure, the underground places of worship and the religion's exclusivity.
- Q6** As before, some candidates simply wrote down everything they knew about all the gods and their attributes with little reference to the question so for these, it was difficult to achieve any AO3 marks. Most focused on the security the gods were thought to give, sometimes mentioning fear as an afterthought.

Summary of key points

Beginning in Summer 2021, the topics change to Daily Life in a Roman and Roman Britain. Resources for both these topics are available on the EDUQAS website



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