GCSE Examiners' Report

Latin

GCSE

Summer 2026

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Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each component.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.[1]

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	Eduqas offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and component level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each component that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results and Grade Boundaries and PRS (eduqas.co.uk)

[1] ***Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.***

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Exam Results Analysis	Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page.
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Executive Summary

The number of candidates for Eduqas GCSE Latin remains broadly stable with a modest growth of candidate numbers over the last two years. Examiners were pleased once again with the quality of responses this session, which remained consistent with Summer 2025. The demand of Component 1 was comparable to previous sessions. In question 1, although many candidates understood the more unusual future verb form *perient* correctly, the Mark Scheme was adjusted so that it was possible to gain full marks without including this verb for question 1(e). Candidates were well able to demonstrate their understanding of Latin language and grammar on this paper. As in Summer 2025, *Love and Marriage* was more popular than *Romans in the Countryside* for Component 2. Candidate performance was consistent with the previous session. Examiners were pleased to read many sophisticated responses as well as responses which demonstrated enjoyment and engagement with the prescribed material. Component 3A featured a change in prescribed texts for this session. Candidates demonstrated strong performance on the 8-mark questions when four clearly defined points were made by the candidate. The 12-mark questions varied a little more in approach this year, with stronger responses tending to provide a more balanced argument. Component 3B saw quite an even balance once again between topics 5 and 6, with the full range of performance represented. Successful candidates made appropriate reference to source material to support their points in the 12-mark extended responses and showed evidence of a clear structure.

Candidates should be reminded to read all questions carefully and ensure that they refer to the correct *lemma*. For Component 1, candidates should be reminded to take note of whether nouns and verbs are singular or plural. For both Component 2 and Component 3A, candidates should bear in mind that fewer, better chosen and explained examples can provide a more successful response to evaluative questions. For Component 3B, candidates need to ensure they are giving sufficient information in order to access the range of marks available. For example, a one-word answer is unlikely to be a successful approach if the question is worth more than one mark. For the 12-mark questions, long introductions and conclusions which simply restate points do not add credit and should therefore be avoided.

Teachers are encouraged to use the free resources available on the Eduqas website and links to relevant resources of the Cambridge School Classics Project to support them in their preparation of candidates.

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COMPONENT 1 – LATIN LANGUAGE

Overview of the Component

This component worked well to assess the vocabulary, accidence and syntax required at this level. The staged nature of the paper enabled candidates of all levels to access the earlier sections of the paper, while the challenge increased in questions 2 and 3. As in recent sessions, in Section B, the vast majority of candidates chose the grammar questions over the prose composition. Centres should be reminded to advise candidates to read all questions carefully and take their answers from the lemmas quoted, take note of whether nouns and verbs are singular or plural, and to avoid leaving gaps in the translation question: marks are awarded for inflected words even if the meaning of the vocabulary is incorrect.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Question 1

It was encouraging to see many candidates achieve high marks in this question. Weaker candidates tended to keep the inflected form of proper nouns in their answers (e.g. Althaea was queen of Calydonis); this was not penalised in comprehension questions.

The most common incorrect answers for the multiple-choice questions were not those that sought to assess the ability to distinguish between subject and object (as tested in questions 1(b) and 1(d)); rather it was the vocabulary that caused difficulty - *habeo/habito, filius/puer, iacio/iaceo, nemini/nihil/memini*. Some candidates did not know what *servare* meant.

Although many candidates understood *perient* correctly, it was possible to gain full marks without including this verb for question 1(e) (ii).

The superlative was recognised by most candidates. However, even quite strong candidates did not always identify *amicis* or *silvis* as plural.

Question 2

Many candidates were able to produce a good translation of each passage, with some sections providing more challenge. In the translation, candidates are required to give the nominative form of proper nouns; many did, but some failed to gain full credit here.

All tenses of verbs were tested in this question. Mostly, candidates recognised the different tenses successfully. However, exceptions were *vidisset* (even very strong candidates translated this as “when he saw”); *audivi* (sometimes translated as present) *clamaverunt* (occasionally translated as imperfect). The historic present or simple past was accepted for *inquit*.

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Pronouns – as ever – also presented challenge for many; *hic/ille* were often confused or omitted. *vos*, which appeared twice, was also either omitted or incorrectly identified as nominative.

The imperative (*abi!*) was generally recognised (perhaps thanks in part to the punctuation) but the vocabulary proved challenging with many translating this as “Stop!”.

It was very encouraging to see the present participles successfully translated by very many candidates. Fewer changed *ferens* into a relative clause (which was accepted) than with *cupientes*.

It is worth pausing over the following sentences, which proved challenging for some candidates:

- *rex, cum villas deletas civisque territos vidisset*: the tense of *vidisset* and the form and agreement of *deletas* provided challenge. Quite a few candidates did not link the houses and the citizens with *-que*.
- *iuvenes ex proximis urbibus convocavit*: many failed to render the *con-* and there was significant confusion with *proximis* with many translating this as a preposition (“near the city” etc.). Some candidates failed to see that *urbibus* was plural.
- *illi viro, qui hanc bestiam superavit, praemium maximum dabo*: aside from the pronouns, the dative of *viro* caused the greatest difficulty. However, several candidates manipulated it with some success – “the man who …. will be given …” etc.
- *tam pulchra erat ut Meleager putaret eam deam esse*: many candidates omitted *tam* and wrote “she was beautiful so…” However, the *oratio obliqua* was generally well done despite a few misrenderings of sequence (“Meleager thought that she is …”).
- *audivi bestiam multos homines in hac terra necare*: candidates generally made the men the subject of the indirect statement. Flexibility was given regarding the tense of *necare*; only a few rendered this as “was killing”.

Question 3

It was pleasing to see most candidates follow the general storyline to its conclusion, although some candidates did not demonstrate a clear understanding of all the details of the story.

Candidates are advised to take their answers from the lemma quoted unless directed otherwise. For example, the occasional candidate answered question 3(a) by reference to the end of the translation “because the uncles had shown Althaea disrespect/said she could not go on the hunt” etc. rather than look at the Latin being tested. Further general advice includes the rubric ‘give full details’. Several lost marks through the omission of words such as *statim, vix, adeo* etc. Once again, marks were also lost due to failure to check whether words are singular or plural.

The derivative question was generally well done, though some candidates continue to misunderstand the question and simply translate the Latin word. Another common incorrect answer was “mate”.

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Question 4 (English into Latin)

This question was chosen by a minority of candidates. Where there was a rubric-infringement through attempting both questions 4 and 5, candidates usually (but not always) fared better in question 5. The quality of response ranged from 0 or 1/10 to full marks.

In this question, candidates are required to demonstrate knowledge of 1st or 2nd declension nouns and 1st conjugation verbs only. However, several very good responses chose alternative vocabulary (e.g. *imperator/dux* – commander; *crudelis* – cruel; *occido/interficio* – kill).

Question 5 (Grammar)

This question was well done with most candidates scoring at least 5/10 and many scoring full or almost full marks.

Q5(b): several responses indicated that the difference was to do with number and a few had the cases the wrong way round. A few decided that *servi* was genitive singular. Centres should be reminded that the candidates must consider which case or number a noun is in *this* passage.

Q5(g): unfortunately, some candidates lost marks owing to not reading the question carefully enough and giving a plural imperfect tense verb.

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COMPONENT 2 – LATIN LITERATURE AND SOURCES (THEMES)

Overview of the Component

The Latin Literature and Sources (Themes) paper is the second compulsory paper in the Eduqas GCSE Latin prescription and accounts for 30% of the final grade. Candidates will have studied one of two themes which are comprised of approximately 132 lines of Latin verse and prose by different authors and six picture sources from the Roman world. The examination is open book, so each candidate is provided with a clean copy of the picture sources and texts in a resource booklet. Questions will test the candidate's knowledge of the sources and texts and there is a 16-mark mini-essay in each of the two sections which is designed to allow the candidates to demonstrate further knowledge and understanding of the theme as a whole.

The questions are set with regard to AO2 (knowledge and understanding of the sources and texts) and AO3 (interpretation and argumentation). The paper does not require the candidates to translate specific passages from the texts although their responses to the questions should demonstrate knowledge and understanding.

The questions aim to allow the candidates to respond critically, and with knowledge of the picture sources and texts they have studied, and while a range of answers is possible for some questions, for others the required answer may be more narrowly focused. There are two themes available for candidates to study, but it is not expected that they enter the examination prepared to respond to either theme. Rather it is expected that the candidates will have been prepared for one or the other by their teacher.

Again, this year there were some very impressive responses in both sections and teachers are to be congratulated on the way that the candidates have been prepared. Conversely the responses that were less sure-footed also showed enjoyment of the texts studied as well as interesting and valid interpretations. It was noticed by examiners again that there were several mentions about emphatic placement of words at the beginning of the line in prose. It needs to be made clear to candidates that only the verse is relevant here. In the prose is it valid to talk about emphatic placement at the beginning or end of sentences but the lines themselves are not relevant. A relatively large number of candidates also referred to all the texts as verse.

Candidates should bear in mind when dealing with the 6-mark or 4-mark questions that ask about the author's 'use of language' that the best way to approach these is to look in the passage for repeated Latin words, specific word choice (such as dramatic or emotional) or for listing with or without *que* and for contrasting words. Then to quote, translate briefly and explain why this answers the question, moving on to the next point. Several candidates lost time by over-explaining. A well-chosen piece of Latin, translation or at least an indication that the meaning is known, and brief link to the terms of the question are the keys to success in these questions.

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Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A: Romans in the Countryside.

As previous years, Section A was chosen by a much smaller number of centres. However those candidates who had studied the Section A texts generally knew them well and the essays, in particular, were often well written and with a clear argument.

Question 1 in Section A focused on Pliny's letter entitled *The burdens of an estate-owner*. The initial short answer questions were generally answered well, though candidates should be careful to ensure that they have taken their answer from the lines indicated in the question. The multiple-choice question seemed to cause no real problems, but it is important for candidates to read the passage carefully as the options can sometimes be quite similar.

Question 2 was on Livy, a section from his *Early History of Rome*, about Cincinnatus. The passage focused on Cincinnatus being summoned to Rome as dictator. Candidates in general answered this question well. The 4-mark question generally had pleasing responses, with candidates picking out relevant words and phrases from the lines indicated, which showed the unglamorous life that Cincinnatus had been living in the countryside.

Question 3 was a 6-mark style question on the Virgil passage. Many candidates scored well on this question as there was plenty to comment on and as this was a verse text, there was the opportunity to display knowledge of such features as enjambement.

Question 4 was the picture source question, and candidates were asked to find four details from the picture which told us about life in a country villa. Some candidates answered well but a significant number of candidates simply listed things they could see without linking them back to the terms of the question.

Question 5 looked at the Ovid passage and opened with a 4-mark style question. Examiners were looking for what Ovid had mentioned which demonstrated the simplicity of the festival. Most candidates easily spotted that the pot carried by the farmer's wife was cracked – *curto ... testo* – although some paired the adjective with different nouns. The fact that the pot was cracked was a good indication that this was not a festival where people showed off their best pottery. Again, a Latin quote, translation and link to the question proved a successful approach to this question.

Question 6 was the essay question and there were some excellent responses here with some candidates making good points about the different kinds of stress and that fact that city-dwellers like Horace were seeing the country in an idyllic but unrealistic way as they were 'on holiday'. The number of strenuous jobs that needed to be done in the country was also noted as having potential for stress.

Section B: Love and Marriage

The vast majority of centres studied the texts and sources in this section and there was a wide range of answers both in the questions and the essays.

Question 1: the paper opened with candidates being asked to pick out qualities that husbands valued about their wives from the evidence in one source and one text. The question asked for evidence from both (the emboldened **and** showed this). Most candidates scored well on this question but those that didn't only gave qualities from **either** the text **or** the picture source.

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Question 2 was on Pliny's letter to Calpurnia. Although there were many excellent responses to this question there was a significant number of responses to 1(a) (i) that showed candidates mixing up Pliny's wife and his wife's aunt. The section of the question about Pliny's wife was (iii), and here there were also many good answers but some which were only partial. As has been already said, the style question is asking the candidate to explain how the language used makes these lines stand out in some way and it was this last part that candidates seemed to find more difficult.

Question 3 was the comparison between Martial, *An enigma* and Catullus, *Poem 85*. Most candidates took the approach that both poets were similar in approach and quoted *odi et amo* and *difficilis facilis* as signs of the confused feelings of both poets. There were some excellent explanations of why leaving *excrucrior* to the end of the couplet was significant. Sadly, a number of candidates used examples from Martial, *The power of love*, and Catullus, *Poem 5 or 8*. It is vitally important that candidates read the questions carefully to ensure that they are answering not only from the correct text but also from the correct lines.

Question 4 was on Catullus, *Poem 5* and the first question should have been straightforward, but examiners noticed that more than a few candidates wrote "value the rumours of old men ..." rather than "not value ...". An easy mistake to make but an unnecessary one. In (b), many candidates ran on into line 5 which was outside the lines indicated and only a few candidates spotted the reference to the eternal nature of the sun in contrast to the *brevis lux* of Catullus and Lesbia's love affair. The multiple-choice question also seemed to be less well done as a reasonable number of candidates chose F, (*We know the number of kisses but no one else does*) over E, (*Neither we, nor anyone else, will know the number of kisses*). The last two questions on the Catullus poems needed some thought, and those who gave some analysis in (e) were the best performing overall.

Question 5, Seneca, Changing Morals, had responses with a range of marks, particularly (b), where some understanding of what was being said was required to gain both marks. A straight translation can be partially successful but there needed to be some analysis too. Again the 4-mark question was one that some candidates found more difficult. In these lines Seneca was making a joke about the morals of the women about whom he is writing and there were sufficient examples in the lines indicated in the question. For both marks to be awarded, it is not enough just to quote the Latin and say that this makes these lines entertaining, there had to be some interpretation as to why. Seneca was exaggerating or using bathos, by saying that it was difficult to find a woman *tam miseram, tam sordidam* (so wretched, so undesirable) that she only has one pair of lovers.

Question 6 was the 16-mark essay and asked candidates to consider the female voice or lack of it in the resource booklet. There were some excellent essays here as candidates spotted early on that the texts were all written by men so that the female voice was provided by the male voice and sometimes a male who was rather angry. Many candidates noticed that Pomponia in the Cicero text was given a direct quote and felt that she had been misrepresented. Many also missed the opportunity to talk about Lesbia being the one who was unfaithful to her husband with Catullus, which might have given them more to say about whether we can know anything about how women viewed love and marriage. It was noted by some candidates that the texts were all written about higher status women which would have been a good comparison with Picture 6 where the status of the semi-clothed women could have been discussed. In general, the candidates wrote well, and a good number were more successful in their essay response than in other parts of the paper.

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Examiners did note that there was sometimes a tendency to take a ’scatter-gun’ approach in the essays and try to include as many texts and sources as possible. This can work, but it is important that there is clear analysis of the texts as well and sometimes fewer, better chosen and explained examples can be better. Candidates should also remember that the essay is not the place for literary analysis so copying out long quotes and analysing style is not really what is required here.

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COMPONENT 3A – LATIN LITERATURE (NARRATIVES)

Overview of the Component

Half (20) of the marks are for AO2 - assessed via 14 of the 15 marks' worth of the shorter questions on the Latin text and 6 of the 12 marks for the "mini-essay" at the end of the paper. The other half are for AO3 - assessed via a 1-mark evaluation question, the 8-mark question on the author's style in a given passage, the 5-mark comprehension question on an English passage and the other 6 marks of the mini-essay.

For the 5-markers, well-prepared candidates make five clearly set out and separate points, quoting from the passage and making a sensible comment about it. Many candidates achieved a good mark for this question. Candidates should be advised to focus on explaining five points well, rather than trying to make more, less developed points.

For the 8-markers, those who make four clearly defined points do better than those who write a single paragraph with a number of points not clearly explained or delineated and/or not quoting suitably or in some cases any Latin. Style points were sometimes confused, with technical terms used with no clear understanding. A good answer quoted a relevant piece of Latin, usually with a translation, and clearly explained the effect. Apart perhaps from alliteration and assonance, technical terms can often prove unhelpful at this level if not clearly understood by the candidate. This year, a significant number of candidates referred to Latin outside the lemma (specified lines).

12-mark essays were a little more varied this year. There were some excellent essays from candidates who may have practised how to tackle this question. Weaker answers sidestepped the need to discuss danger or wrote in generalities with too few references to the text. Other answers tended to be brief and covered only a limited range of the material available. There were some very good answers from those who understood the question, ranged across most of the selection and made some convincing conclusions, however they were perhaps fewer this year. A technique which is generally successful is one clear overall point per paragraph, a demonstrable knowledge of the text (AO2) and the ability to explain it clearly in relation to the title (AO3). A pre-prepared essay which has relevant material but does not quite focus discussion (AO3) around the specific question is likely to be less successful.

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Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A – Livy, *Hannibal Crosses the Alps*

Section A – Question 1(a)

(i) Almost all candidates gained the first mark, but many failed to mention 'young' for the second mark.
(ii) Most candidates scored 3 here unless they seemed unfamiliar with the passage.
(iii) Most candidates produced a basic but acceptable answer. Some elaborated at length.

Section A – Question 1(b)

There were some very good answers from candidates who understood the Latin and appreciated what Livy was driving at. A number of candidates seemed too unfamiliar with the text to produce valid comments. Stronger responses tended to score at least 6 marks, with some being limited by concentrating entirely either on content or style.

Most popular answers referred to:

Content:
- his effect on Hasdrubal and the soldiers (sometimes confusion with the latter from a number who thought *confidebant/audebant* referred to Hannibal himself)
- his ways of dealing with danger
- ability to stay awake to complete any task
- only eating when needing to, not for pleasure
- not being tired physically or mentally by any task

Style:
- repetition of *plurimum*
- contrast of *caloris ac frigoris*
- repetition of *neque*

There were references to Hannibal's appearance from the earlier lines and a number of references to him sleeping on his cloak from later lines.

Section A – Question 2

(a) A significant number of responses were confused here. Only those who knew the text well gained this point. A number simply answered 'the soldiers'.
(b) Only those who knew the text well gained both marks. There were some candidates who gave the answer to (c) here.
(c) Few candidates gained both marks. More candidates made the point about the valleys and neglected the second point.

Section A – Question 3

(a) A significant number of candidates seemed unfamiliar with this passage and scored no marks here. A number referred to working and fighting but failed to mention him being tired.
(b) If they seemed familiar with the passage, most candidates gained the mark here although some lost it by referring to 'onto the rocks'.
(c) Most gained this mark if they knew the passage to some extent. Some responses appeared to be guesses.

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Section A – Question 4

There was enough material to make this a straightforward 5 marks and most candidates gained at least 4. All the points in the Mark Scheme came up at some stage.

It was notable that a significant number of otherwise strong candidates lost marks by referring to points outside the specified lines. There were many references to the earlier part with the landslide and the 1000-foot drop.

Interestingly a very small number made no attempt at this question, despite doing well on the rest of the paper.

Section A – Question 5

Some candidates failed to write very much and concentrated on the rather obvious points- the danger of the crossing in the snow and the descent. Some mentioned the danger of attacks from the inhabitants. Other causes of excitement referred to the elephants (but not always), to the dream and to Hannibal's early life and his character. A few candidates made enough points to achieve full credit.

A number of candidates took the question to refer to the excitement experienced by the soldiers on their journey and found it difficult to find enough valid arguments.

Section B – *Virgil, Hercules and Cacus*

Section B – Question 1

(a) Most candidates gained the mark for 'half human' but many did not gain the second mark for 'hideous'.
(b) Only candidates who appeared very well prepared scored all 4 marks here. Many candidates provided half the information for a point but lacked all the required detail, such as the heads hanging on doors.
(c) Most candidates produced an acceptable response here, some very bald and others more elaborated, focusing on Cacus as the villain necessary to glorify Hercules.

Section B – Question 2(a)

(i) A few candidates gained both marks here. Many did not appear to know the passage well and did not understand the sudden burst of light. Not all candidates knew he was trapped in his cave.
(ii) More candidates scored 2 marks here as there were several points to be made and they could refer to attacking him and missiles/rocks/branches.

Section B – Question 2(b)

Again, some responses were disappointingly brief with insufficient explanation. There were more style points made, as would be expected, perhaps, with verse. Vague references to rhythm without clear reference to the text were not accepted.

Most popular answers referred to:

Content:
- references to the smoke produced by Cacus and its effect on Hercules
- Hercules' anger and his headlong leap

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- graphic description of his death with mention of eyes and throat

Style:
- effect of *mirabile dictu* (sometimes accepted as content)
- references to the sound of *evomit involvitque* and the emphatic position of *evomit*
- alliteration of *caligine caeca* and its effect
- effect of the contrast of *commixtis igne tenebris*
- word order in *nebulaque…astra*
- alliteration of *vana vomentem*
- sibilance of *siccum sanguine*
- emphatic position and sound of *guttur*

Interestingly there were very few references to historic presents though this question and the passage presented some very straightforward possible responses in that regard.

Section B – Question 3

(a) Most candidates gained both marks here for the mention of animal skins and torches
(b) There were some confused answers and only those candidates who showed a sound understanding of the text gained both marks.

Section B – Question 4

Most candidates could reference suitable material for 5 marks.

All the points mentioned in the Mark Scheme came up but there were no others except that a small number of candidates concentrated too much on making elaborate comparisons between Hercules and Aeneas or discussing Augustus and the golden age without actually referring to the text.

A number of candidates lost marks by referring to the passage outside the lines specified, mentioning Aeneas' amazement earlier on and using references to the Tiber from later in the text.

Section B – Question 5

Some candidates had seemingly prepared for an essay on Hercules the hero and found it difficult to adapt their material. Most referred to Hercules's strength in exposing the cave and killing Cacus, his determination to succeed, his bravery in going through the smoke, his earlier feats. Most responses mentioned his freeing Evander's people from danger, though some questioned his motives. Surprisingly few candidates mentioned the celebrations in his honour.

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COMPONENT 3B – ROMAN CIVILISATION

Overview of the Component

As in previous years, there was a similar split between Topics 5 and 6 this year, with perhaps a slight weighting towards Topic 5, *Roman Family Life*. Examiners were pleased to note that the Roman Civilisation paper again differentiated successfully, and all the grades between 9 and 1 were represented. One point to note across both topics, for some questions, whereas it might have been possible to provide a one-word answer for a one mark question, it became noticeable that a number of candidates were providing single word responses for questions that needed some more explanation. This approach did limit access to the full range of marks, particularly for the 3 and 6-mark questions.

Generally, with reference to the 12-mark essay responses in particular, it was noted that candidates ensured their plans were short and succinct, meaning that running out of time was less of an issue. Candidates in both topics made better reference to source material to support their points in the 12-mark extended responses, although there were still large numbers of responses that made no reference to source material at all.

Candidates answering Topic 6 did make better reference to archaeological or physical evidence, but too often this lacked specific detail. Direct reference to source material, either from those used on the paper itself or the candidate's wider knowledge often led to higher banded responses.

It was observed that the majority of responses used both supporting and counter arguments in their answers, leading to stronger AO3 marks. However, examiners also noted that many candidates included lengthy introductions and conclusions that often simply repeated the question or points already made and so did not contribute much more to the overall response. At times, AO3 could be quite simplistic and regularly took the approach of saying a source proves or disproves the statement, but without offering explanation or analysis of why or how the stated source or point achieved this. In Topic 5 especially, there was a tendency to discuss the parent - child relationship from a perspective that was not wholly focused on the ancient Roman point of view and there was much discussion of sending children to boarding school.

It should also be pointed out that there were several scripts that improved their overall scores with good and detailed essay responses. Many Latin terms were used in the essay responses in both topics, such as *"mos maiorum"* or *"pater potestas"*. Stronger responses were able to give definitions or include them in a context that conveyed their meaning and relevance. But there were also a proportion that peppered their responses with terminology that contributed little to the argument or was used incorrectly and without understanding of its meaning. Finally, when citing authors and sources, candidates regularly attributed quotations and references to the wrong author. Examiners were instructed to credit content and relevance, even if the author cited was incorrect. Examiners were pleased that candidates were taking care to read the questions more carefully, ensuring they were answering the specific question, however, there were still occasions of candidates repeating or giving overlapping information in certain responses that could not always be credited.

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As knowledge and evaluation are assessed throughout the paper, those who simply limit themselves to giving factual information may deprive themselves of half the marks for certain questions. Indeed, as already mentioned, single word answers for certain questions were often limiting and did not convey enough information and/or understanding for the mark to be awarded.

Finally, examiners were pleased to read many innovative and perceptive interpretations of visual source material in both topics that reflected not only attention to detail, but a good ability to relate this to learning and wider knowledge.

On a practical note, candidates who had poor handwriting or very small handwriting made marking challenging. Word processed responses have gone a long way to address this, but it still remains an issue. Candidates who used both the answer booklet and a word processor generally did so to good effect and clearly labelled their work.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Topic 5 – Roman family life

Topic 5 - Question 1(a)

This response posed little trouble for candidates with most answering correctly, with either the Latin term or “oldest male”. A common error to note was the misspelling, “*pater familia*” but this was not penalised. A small number of candidates gave “father” as a response, but this could not be credited as the father was not necessarily the head of a household.

Topic 5 - Question 1(b)

This question proved to be something of a differentiator where most candidates identified two clear AO2 points from the image, such as the breast-feeding woman or her modest dress, but then did not explain how these demonstrated that she was a ‘good’ Roman wife beyond simply stating this was valued in wives. Creditable answers went on to explain that, for example, breastfeeding her child demonstrated she was active in rearing her children or did not delegate to enslaved workers, or her modest dress illustrated that she was not focused on luxury.

Topic 5 - Question 1(c)

This question posed no real difficulty, although a small number of candidates did not read the question and stated “to have children/ an heir”.

Topic 5 - Question 1(d)

There were no issues in selecting the correct answer, but some did select “make a will”, which was incorrect.

Topic 5 - Question 2(a)

Most responses quoted or made reference to the “dog of the underworld” or “if she had not lived as many days too few”. However, the one word answer, “underworld” was seen frequently and was not credited without further context.

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Topic 5 - Question 2(b)

Many responses pointed out that girl children were not as wanted as boys, with several candidates pointing out that Erotion may have been the child of an enslaved mother and Martial may not have been the father. Examiners were pleased to note that all responses were sensitive and respectful.

Topic 5 - Question 2(c)

This and the following question posed some difficulty for candidates, mainly due to candidates not focusing on the key words in the question, here, 'rich' Romans. Mentions of building tombs and *stelai* were creditable, but simply mentioning points such as "celebrated the Parentalia" were not, as this was not exclusively done by the rich. There had to be some clear reference to the rich in the response.

Topic 5 - Question 2(d)

As with (c), there had to be some acknowledgement of how the poor differed in their methods of honouring the dead to that of the rich. There were many examples of overlapping information with candidates giving responses such as, "made smaller tombs". This was not credited, although if the candidate mentioned the Parentalia in both (c) and (d) but gave clear indication as to the differences between how the poor celebrated compared to the rich, this was credited.

Other responses noted by examiners were that the poor would shave their beards. This was not credited as this was more of a Greek tradition. The Romans, who were largely clean shaven, were more likely to have let their beards grow during a mourning period (such as Octavian after the death of Caesar). Another common response was that the poor would go to the temple to pray. Again, this is not wholly accurate as Romans were more likely to go to a temple to make offerings, not to pray for the souls of their loved ones.

Topic 5 - Question 2(e)

This question was answered well, but some candidates did give overlapping responses for the two bullet points. The most common response was to prevent the dead becoming vengeful spirits. There was some confusion around *manes* and *lemures*. Some candidates said honouring them was to prevent the dead wasting away. Romans believed the dead were more likely to do the opposite if not honoured properly, so this was not credited.

Topic 5 - Question 3

Examiners were pleased with this response, with candidates giving a range of insightful and learned interpretations of the scene of a Roman school. Many chose to discuss the equipment used in the scene, the status and gender of the students, and the identity of the figure on the right. A few candidates chose to focus on smaller and more subjective AO2 points, such as the facial expressions of the figures or the significance of the pedestal under the teacher's chair. Some candidates attempted to make the scene fit their knowledge (such as schools were taught in open public places) rather than the other way round, which led to less effective responses.

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Topic 5 - Question 4 (a)

This caused no issues and the majority of candidates answered effectively.
Assessing the behaviour of the guests was not credited as this likely required an element of skill.

Topic 5 - Question 4 (b)

This too was answered well, but a common error was to interpret that the enslaved person was requiring an invitation to dinner. Some candidates did not relate their answer to the passage, and examiners noted some inventive responses regarding how an enslaved person might have influenced the free. Unfortunately, as they did not reference the passage, these could not be credited.

Topic 5 - Question 4 (c)

This was also answered well with answers mainly focussing around scribes, tutors or hairdressers.

Topic 5 - Question 5

All candidates were able to gain a range of marks on this essay, with most responses focussing on child rearing and education, discussing how much input was done by the parents and by enslaved people. Stronger responses examined the different experiences in the genders of both the children and parents, with others weighing this up against that of poorer parents. As this is a source paper, it is expected that candidates make clear reference to source material as they would in other components. The range of sources cited was varied and extensive, with many referring to Cato, Julia Procilla and Horace, and several carvings and reliefs. Many candidates discussed the role of the *paterfamilias*, but on occasion, this morphed into an analysis of his role in the family in general, rather than focussing on the rearing of children.

There were still several candidates who stated that the *paedagogus* was a ‘whipping boy’ but there does not appear to be evidence to support this practice by the Romans. Many too stated that dowries were not required in *sine manu* marriages, which is not the case. Furthermore, many weaker responses took a rather modern approach to the essay and talked about mothers teaching their daughters to cook and clean while the fathers were at work, or boys being sent off to boarding school. These responses were difficult to credit, as it is unlikely wealthy Roman mothers taught their daughters to cook and clean, but the idea of their instructing their daughters to be ‘good wives’ is a valid one. As ever, examiners took care to credit clear evidence of Roman family life where possible.

Many candidates wrote too long an introduction which mainly repeated the question. The same applies to the conclusions, which were often too long and repeated what had been said in the main answer.

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Topic 6: The City of Rome

Topic 6 - Question 1(a)

Candidates gave a range of answers, most of which were creditable.

Topic 6 - Question 1(b)

This was answered well and a range of creditable responses were given. There were a significant number of responses that had Rhea Silvia herself placing the twins in a basket and floating them down the Tiber. Responses that said the twins were “thrown into the river” were not credited.

Topic 6 - Question 1(c)

Many candidates gave interesting and perceptive interpretations, most focusing on the resilience and divine backing of Rome’s founders as evidenced by this image. Few chose to discuss the nature of the wolf, which was surprising to examiners.

Topic 6 - Question 1(d)(i)

The majority, if not all, of candidates cited the murder of Remus for this question.

Topic 6 - Question 1(d)(ii)

There were many convincing responses to this question but again, lack of explanation did cause several answers not to be credited. For example, “to make it more believable” was deemed not sufficient.

Topic 6 - Question 2(a)(i)

This question did not cause any issues, but like last year, many candidates gave the answer, “Circus Maxima”. Misspellings were, of course, not penalised.

Topic 6 - Question 2(a)(ii)

Most candidates gave the expected, “chariot racing”, but some opted for the less obvious, gladiator fights, religious processions etc. “ludi” was not credited as the question asked for an activity.

Topic 6 - Question 2(b)

The majority of candidates had no issues selecting two AO2 examples from the passage but not adding a following explanation or simply quoting from the passage again, resulted in a loss of AO3 marks.

Topic 6 - Question 2(c)

This question was also answered well, mainly focusing on Nero building his Domus Aurea. Examiners did not credit responses that said he was trying to eliminate the Christians but did credit those that said he attached blame to the Christians to deflect from his own guilt.

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Topic 6 - Question 3(a)

There were no issues with this question.

Topic 6 - Question 3(b)

This question proved a differentiator and one in which single word answers restricted marks awarded. This is an AO3 question that asked for reasons why *insulae*/apartments were not pleasant living spaces. Large numbers of candidates simply stated, “noisy”, “smelly” or “collapsed”. Examiners determined that more context was required to show knowledge and evaluation of insulae before marks were credited.

Topic 6 - Question 3(c)

Most responses focused on defence or trade. “Agriculture” was not credited and there were several responses that stated the Campus Martius was used for growing crops. Whereas this may have been true in the early years of Rome, flooding and expansion meant that the Campus Martius was not long used for agriculture and more urban uses were sought for the marks to be awarded.

Topic 6 - Question 3(d)(i) and (ii)

There were no issues with these questions.

Topic 6 - Question 4

This question was answered well by candidates who accessed the range of marks through a variety of different points and explanations, with most building their responses around the ships, the lighthouse, and the image of Neptune. The elephants visible in the top right of the image were also a popular response, with most arguing that these represented the range of exotic goods and animals from across the empire which were imported into Ostia. Examiners felt this was a logical analysis and were able to credit, despite the depiction that the elephants are actually pulling a triumphal chariot and are placed upon the top of a triumphal arch. As there are no prescribed sources in this module, there is no expectation that candidates would have studied this particular source and so would not know this fact, thus examiners were able to credit this analysis.

Topic 6 - Question 5

Candidates generally displayed sound knowledge of the different Roman *fora*, citing many examples of buildings, features and uses of these in their responses. Most candidates used specific examples to illustrate their points, making references to the resource and other source materials and discussing specific details of the buildings and structures cited. Some weaker responses, however, struggled to provide much factual information and instead spoke in general terms without giving much detail or analysis. There were many creditable approaches to this question with nearly all responses agreeing that the *fora* were indeed much more than places of business.

However, it was evident that there were candidates who did not understand the word ‘*fora*’ and many more who were not clear on the definition of ‘business’. This resulted in these responses consisting of general discussions of features of the city of Rome. Higher achieving candidates argued that business and non-business uses of the *fora* were often linked or connected, which led to some very sophisticated and enriching arguments centered around politics, propaganda and religion, as well as trade.

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The most common approach was to cite examples of activities held in or features of the *fora* and discussing whether these were business or not, which did lead to some missed opportunities. Some common mistakes included discussing features that were not part of the *fora*, such as the Pantheon, Circus Maximus, Colosseum, and baths. There were candidates who argued that the Palatine and Capitoline hills were part of the Forum Romanum, and a large proportion who placed the Forum Boarium in Ostia. Another common aspect of candidates' responses was not to differentiate between the Forum at Ostia and the Square of Corporations.

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