

Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship Latin 2023

Performance standard 93008

General commentary

The examination provided candidates with a range of opportunities to show an understanding of the complex linguistic features of Latin, as well as a critical appreciation of the skills of Latin authors. This examination is a challenge as it requires a wide array of skills to be exercised in, and sustained across, just three hours. More than ever before, the cohort provided a great many candidates who, even though they did not gain an award, nevertheless showed a very high degree of understanding and perception. It is to be hoped that candidates will take solace in their excellent performances, even though there was seemingly no reward. It is probably worth restating that a score of 5 or 6 meets the criteria for Scholarship and a score of 7 or 8 for Outstanding for individual question.

Candidates handled the prose passage effectively and the most successful brought out some feelings of Cicero for Metellus's death, the glory of his life, and then a significant change of tone when translating the small section about Clodia. Every candidate realised what was going on in the passage, evident through very good translations and effective commentary. The verse passage allowed top candidates to produce translations that reflected the destructive power of the Harpies, and then to contrast this with the response of Aeneas and his companions. In the commentary, most candidates responded to the option about the Harpies, and had a range of very interesting observations – with some links to mythology and other sections of the Aeneid. There were a small number who wrote about the character of Aeneas and his men, and they were well rewarded for some very perceptive observations. If candidates are going to make comments on metre, they must write out the relevant line(s) – simply writing DDSS or writing metrical markers without the actual text is not sufficient. When responding to Question 2 and Question 4, it is preferable to focus on the Latin and its impact, rather than to provide both a summary of the illustrative example (showing understanding) AND the translation (repeated from Question 1 and Question 3 respectively): the translation skill is assessed there.

Report on performance standard

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with **Outstanding Performance** commonly:

- not only translated effectively, but made adjustment to word order and order of phrases to make good sense of the passage
- had a variety of translations of the imperfect tense depending on context, including inceptive and iterative imperfects when the context called for it

- integrated their knowledge of Roman politics and history in an appropriate and relevant way
- crafted a translation that reflected some of the feelings of the author in the prose passage
- recognised that *iussi* in line 10 was a participle, not a 1st person singular perfect active verb
- had a good range of literary and linguistic techniques, but focused on clear and perceptive understanding of the use, rather than providing an exhaustive list
- scanned lines correctly in the verse passage, and frequently illustrated occasions where there was conflict between ictus and accent, made reasoned comments on this
- related comments on this passage to a wider Virgilian context – this was not required, but some candidates did this effectively, without belabouring the point
- showed an impressive understanding of diction and the connotations of those words – this was true in not only the prose, but the verse as well.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- recognised and translated future tenses as part of questions in the final paragraph of the prose passage
- identified grammatical structures that were more complicated than they might have been used to, such as the purpose clause where the verb was delayed
- translated in such a way that the English word order was natural, such as placing adjectives after the nouns in lines 11 and 12 of the verse passage
- recognised that some adjectives in Latin are better translated as adverbs, such as *subitae*
- expressed the idea of obligation in the gerundive in the verse passage
- provided relevant comments that directly addressed the question in both Q2 and Q4
- showed a very good understanding of a wide range of literary techniques, which they applied correctly
- showed a genuine sense of the sound patterns in Cicero's speech
- wrote out lines for scansion and scanned them correctly, then made perceptive comments on the significance.

Candidates who were **not awarded Scholarship** commonly:

- struggled with verbs, mistaking futures for subjunctives and mixing tenses when translating the verse (either sticking to the tenses used by Virgil or adopting an English narrative tense was fine: mixing them was the problem)
- did not use the vocabulary list effectively, for example not identifying *spoliari* as a deponent verb and not recognizing nouns that were plural in Latin, but singular in English
- did not translate questions as questions in the final paragraph of the prose
- translated *subitae* as an adjective, when the context indicated it should clearly be adverbial in English
- did not recognise or accurately render the gerundive in the verse passage
- did not always select an appropriate meaning of a Latin word for the context from the alternatives given
- were incorrect in their identification of literary techniques, or had very few
- had commentaries that became a paraphrase of their translations, rather than commentary on the author's use of language focused by the particular demands of the question
- made frequent errors in scansion, and therefore drew erroneous conclusions
- did not write out the line(s) for scansion.