

Assessment Report

Scholarship, 2008

Latin

COMMENTARY

All questions produced a range of responses.

Several candidates, who were careful to take note of every Latin word and of the significance of its ending, were able to write fluent, current English translations of the prose and verse passages, accurately conveying their meaning.

The critical appreciation questions produced a range of responses. Those who scored highly were able to make constructive points and to support them with evidence. Weaker candidates appeared to be approaching the examination armed with a list of literary and rhetorical devices which they were trying to fit to the given Latin passages, whether appropriately or not. There were some lengthy responses which took a long time to make a relevant point, but which came to one in the end.

Some candidates with near perfect results for translation were not able to write effective literary responses. Performance in both these skills is required for the scholarship examination.

The best performing candidates most commonly demonstrated the following skills and/or knowledge:

- appreciation of rhetorical language and how an author uses its powerful devices such as word order, hypothesis, rhetorical question, repetition, emphasis and contrast, in order to persuade
- ability to read the English introductions to the passages perceptively; in particular this ability assisted their understanding of the essence of the prose passage, in which Quintilian discussed the use Romans made of their time
- knowledge of Vergilian language and use of the hexameter
- ability to analyse evidence and to form a considered opinion, supported by evidence
- ability to make good use of the assistance given in the glossary for each passage.

Candidates who did NOT achieve scholarship lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge above, and in addition they:

- were unable to recognise some vocabulary, accidence and syntax. this prevented them from writing an accurate translation of prose and/or verse, and possibly in consequence from expressing a full, critical appreciation; words and phrases not correctly recognized included: *ne ... quidem, longior, velimus, ludendi, impenderentur, ad discendum, venturae, mella, fulmina, auras, breve ... tempus, ad eam, nobis, ea ... quae and quamque suo.*