Key messages

- Most candidates knew their texts very well
- Candidates who paid careful attention to the wording of each question gave themselves the best opportunity of success

General comments

This paper was generally well done. Not only did the candidates know their set text well – hence the very accurate translations – they were also able to write sophisticated interpretive essays. What was slightly different this year was that, at times, an excessive interest in sound effects began to surface more in the commentary questions.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This translation question was done to a very high standard: candidates clearly knew their set text well.

Question 2

Numbers of candidates were fairly evenly split between this question and Question 3.

(a) There were some good answers here, especially in relation to Turnus (e.g. the use of direct speech, the repetitions of tot, tot, totiens, and Turnus’ violence). Opportunities to comment on many interesting things were, however, sometimes missed because of attention being given to sound effects instead. For instance, few candidates remarked on the powerful adjectives or the colourful verbs.

(b) The comments on this question are very similar to those on 2(a) above. There were good remarks on how Turnus’ behaviour can be seen as ambiguous (violent but allowing Pallas to be buried), and on his ignorance of his own fate.

Question 3

(a) The remarks above on Question 2 also apply here. There were, however, some very good answers dealing with Mezentius’ response to the news of his son’s death, and his self-recrimination.

(b) There were some similar issues as in Questions 2 and 3a), but good points were made about how Mezentius could be said to be characterised in a positive manner in these lines, i.e. as injured but determined, as both heroic and dignified. Candidates were especially good on his relationship with his horse, and how this is used to stress his dignity and heroism further. There were good remarks as well on Mezentius’ turbulent emotional state.

Question 4

This was extremely well translated by most candidates. The only difficulties were the translation in huius opem in lines 10 and 11 and famulus in the last line.
Question 5

Most candidates attempted this question rather than Question 6.

(a) This was, as a rule, well answered. Candidates observed the extreme vocabulary that explained the need for the maze; they also noted both the cleverness of the maze and of its inventor. There were some ingenious attempts to show that this was mirrored in the word order. Some productive time was also spent on the comparison of the maze to the river Maeander.

(b) This was generally less well answered. Candidates well observed that the treatment of Theseus and Ariadne is extremely brief. Ariadne’s despair was also carefully interpreted. It was not clear, however, that the final lines, dealing with her metamorphosis, were well understood in tonal terms.

Question 6

(a) This was well answered, with candidates observing the detail of both the foods and the dishes, the homeliness, the attentiveness of Baucis, and so on.

(b) Candidates were rightly keen to concentrate on the various strange and miraculous happenings caused by the gods, Baucis and Philemon’s response to those strange events. Finally, there were some good comments about the goose.

Question 7

This question was answered well. Most candidates displayed a good understanding of the nature of heroism and how that related to Aeneas, Mezentius, Pallas and Turnus. Candidates were also adept at understanding how the suffering of Lausus, Mezentius and Pallas received considerable and interesting attention from Virgil.

Question 8

This was mainly well answered. Candidates were able to write about the use of direct speech, the use of epic similes, but also about the way Virgil changes perspective – from humans to gods, and between the various protagonists.

Question 9

This was very well answered, with candidates generally showing an excellent knowledge of the text, going through most if not all of the different episodes (the Theseus episode perhaps received less treatment than it deserves). Particularly good comments were made about the unstable tone of the hunt (including its comedy of heroes behaving badly or stupidly), and about the transgressive behaviour of Erysichthon.

Question 10

Again, this was well answered. Candidates were able to discuss the various pairings of men and women in the text, e.g. Theseus and Ariadne, Ariadne and Dionysus, and so on. There were some good comments on Meleager and Atalanta, on Atalanta’s relation to all the other male heroes, and on Erysichthon and his daughter.

Question 11

Candidates found many interesting things to say about this passage. There was no agreement on the tone of the poem: some found it poignant and full of pathos; others found it comic or self-absorbed. Linguistic details were well picked up, e.g. the repetitions of the adjective ingratus and of the phrase difficile est. Also well observed were the rhetorical questions, the appeal to the gods, and the misery and negativity of the last five lines.

Question 12

Answers gave reasonable responses to the question’s demand to compare the representation of war in Virgil and Lucan. Relevant points were made about a mythical as against a historical war, and about the various differences between Aeneas and Julius Caesar. There was some attempt to put both poems into the historical context in which they were written.
Question 13

There were no answers to this question.

Question 14

Candidates wrote with some sophistication about the nature of epic, and the extent to which Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* conform to any (standard) definition of epic. There was even the suggestion that Ovid might be changing how we define epic. The main focus, though, was on the various, unstable or inconsistent tone of the poem, partly as a result of its necessarily episodic nature, but also because of Ovid’s interest in the comic.
Key messages

In both Sections A and B in order to do well candidates need to support their ideas with detailed reference to the text.

In Section B candidates need to develop their ideas through discussion, rather than merely elaborate on a simple point.

General comments

The quality of translations was very high, and many candidates showed impressive knowledge and understanding of the Latin in their responses to questions in both Sections A and B. The best responses contained quotes in Latin and were wide-ranging in their reference.

Candidates in general did attempt to focus on the questions asked in Section A, picking out key words to structure their responses around. Very few candidates merely listed linguistic devices used.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Translation was in general excellent, with most errors being minor ones. Candidates should however be careful not to miss out words. *hominem ut notet* proved difficult, but the rather challenging final sentence was dealt with very well.

Question 2

(a) There was a general tendency for candidates to describe the presentation of Catiline rather than discuss it in answer to this question, with some merely translating the passage or listing antitheses. To gain higher marks candidates needed to make the point that Catiline did not in fact possess virtue, just the semblance of or potential for it. The best responses considered the way in which the carefully drawn antitheses in the language, and the real contrast between the types of men he drew to him, in fact belied a consistently negative presentation of a duplicitous and dangerously charismatic man

(b) To do well candidates needed to show understanding of the way that syntax and content work together to build to a climax. There were many excellent answers, showing in detail how Cicero creates pace and momentum through a series of repeated contrasts. The best responses included discussion of the events alluded to in *de leur huic imperii*. Some candidates however did not consistently keep their answers focussed on the idea of a climax, instead answering the question ‘what makes these lines powerful?’

Question 3

Too few candidates attempted this question to make comment appropriate.
Question 4
Translation was in general excellent, with most errors being minor ones. Candidates should however be careful not to miss out words. opposurunt abeunti arma proved particularly challenging, as did the subject extrema et conglobata inter se pars contionis, but candidates dealt very well with the densely structured ferrum a latere diripuit elatumque deferebat.

Question 5
Too few candidates attempted this question to make comment appropriate.

Question 6
(a) Candidates in general wrote well about the way in which Germanicus situates himself within the imperial dynasty, and his attempts to invoke shame in the soldiery. The best responses wrote about the Latin in detail, citing examples of the way in which the language used increases the emotional impact of what he says.

(b) There were some excellent answers here, with candidates correctly identifying a tone of mingled self pity, reproach and finally hope. The best answers included discussion of the importance and emotional impact of the references to Varus, Augustus and Drusus.

Question 7
Candidates need to approach the springboard question as an essay, providing structured and developed argumentation. Some answers tended to ignore the given passage: to do well, candidates do need to both make use of the passage given in their answers and to refer to the wider text.

Question 8
This was the most popular essay question. Candidates in general need to include many more references to the text, and from a wider range of passages. There was a general tendency to limit discussion to the various ways in which Cicero uses humour to attack Clodia: many essays did little more than make the point that Clodia is cast as the meretrix from New Comedy and go on to describe the prosopopoeia of Claudius and Clodius. Better answers included discussion of Caelius’ role as the adulsecens who will come good in the end and Cicero’s own discussion of the various father figures available as well as his consistently mocking tone towards the prosecution. The best responses made apt and detailed reference to secondary literature.

Question 9
Few candidates showed understanding of the fact that although he twice expands on it at length, Cicero ultimately chooses not to use the traditional line of defence that ‘boys will be boys’ as in fact Caelius’ success as an orator precludes a debauched lifestyle. There were however very many excellent answers, showing knowledge of a range of passages and a good understanding of the roles of Catiline and Clodia in the text.

Question 10
Too few candidates attempted this question to make comment appropriate.

Question 11
There were some excellent answers to this question, with candidates writing well about Tiberius’ relationship with the senate, the contrast drawn between him and Germanicus, and the importance of dynastic succession in Tacitus’ Annals. Candidates in general did discuss rather than describe the characterisation of Tiberius, and used the text very well in support of their ideas.

Question 12
Too few candidates attempted this question to make comment appropriate.
Key messages

Candidates should be reminded to follow the rubric on the paper and write their translations on alternate lines. This enables them to make amendments whilst still being relatively clear.

General comments

On both questions, candidates should remember the basic principles of translation, looking for, e.g. tense, case, agreement and so on. Style marks in Question 1 (5 marks) are awarded for felicitous rendering into English, capturing idioms if possible, while still demonstrating knowledge of the Latin. Most candidates scored highly on the scansion question in Question 2 (5 marks), generally achieving 4 or 5 marks. If they do not know an item of vocabulary, candidates should try to produce something that makes sense in the context (this was particularly true in the Ovid).

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Words or phrases which caused particular difficulties are indicated below:

servandaeque patriae:
Many candidates did not take these words together.

dictus/dixit:
This word was glossed. A simple verb of saying, therefore, was not credited.

effecitque « esset:
This caused difficulty for a number of candidates. Some rearranged the phrase to convey the same sense in natural English – an ideal opportunity for a style mark.

nullo detractante:
Many candidates took nullo simply as non.

venere:
A few candidates recognised this as an alternative form of venerunt.

ludos … dedicaturum:
The future indirect statement proved challenging to most candidates. The inclusion of se in the phrase was found difficult.

signa confert:
Few candidates knew this specialist usage.

ut fit:
The majority provided the incorrect tense here.
Question 2

Words or phrases which caused particular difficulties are indicated below:

non ... reos:
Only stronger candidates recognised that tantum is adverbial here.

vires:
This was very commonly translated as ‘men’.

effugiant ... tuae:
Only the stronger candidates showed understanding of the correct agreements and subject/object here.

praesens loqui:
Very few understood who praesens referred to.

tempore ... equi:
The agreement between difficiles...and iuvenci caused this sentence to be misunderstood. The most common translation of difficiles was ‘difficulties’, which threw the rest of the two lines out.

persta ... modo:
This was challenging in terms of vocabulary.

vinces:
The tense was frequently missed here.
LATIN

Key messages

• Accurate and thorough answers are required in order to achieve full marks on comprehension questions.
• Clear and accurate explanations need to be given as to the mood of verbs and cases of nouns in answer to the grammar questions.

General comments

Most candidates attempted the prose composition. The passages offered by the candidates were very impressive. Not only was the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary very good; the understanding of Latin idiom was often excellent.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

First sentence
This was well translated. The most common problems were not using the present tense with dum, the omission of the preposition a before ‘husband’, and inaccurate translation of ‘poisoned’.

Second sentence
Again, this was well translated. However, ‘lying’ was often omitted. The syntax of the indirect command was well understood, as was the use of the dative after persuadeo. The conditional clause caused some problems. Strictly speaking, ‘mixed’ and ‘gave’ should have been in the pluperfect subjunctive, and a future infinitive is needed for ‘would be’.

Third sentence
The opportunity to translate ‘a few years later’ with paucis post annis was often missed. The syntax of Verbs of Fearing was well understood.

Fourth sentence
Many candidates did well in using qui to introduce the purpose clause. There were some ingenious recastings of ‘penetrated his skin’.

Fifth sentence
There was also ingenuity for the translation of ‘tormented by extreme pain’. Excruciatus was nice, as was the use of dolor for ‘pain’.

Sixth sentence
How to use miseret caused some difficulty, but there were some good uses of the ablative absolute for ‘after the pyre ... etc.’

Seventh sentence
‘to Olympus’ needs a preposition. There was some good use of the gerund or gerundive of purpose. ‘For ever’ was not always translated accurately.
Question 2

A very small number of candidates attempted the comprehension and it would be difficult to draw many general observations.

However, it can be said that, in order to achieve full marks on each question, accurate and thorough answers need to be given. This was especially true of those questions with relatively large numbers of marks such as (a), (d) and (h).

(a) Answers were generally accurate.

(b) Candidates had difficulties with the second part of this question (please see the mark scheme).

(c) This was well understood.

(d) In answering this question, ‘honesty’ was often missed and there was some confusion about the ability to conquer lust, and the desire for wealth.

(e) This was well understood.

(f) The answers here were sometimes more impressionistic rather than precise.

(g) As with (f).

(h) This was generally well understood.

(i) This was well understood.

(j) Candidates understood that the nobility passed the consulship among themselves. They can improve on the first part of the question.

(k) This first grammatical question was mainly answered correctly.

(l) The understanding of cases and case usage was challenging for most candidates (please see the mark scheme).

(m) The infinitive in indirect statement was well understood. Candidates had some difficulties with the subjunctives of indirect command and result.

(n) This was well done.

(o) Candidates can improve on identifying these verbs, especially *pario*. 