

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

CLASSICAL GREEK

H444

For first teaching in 2016

H444/01 Summer 2023 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers are also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

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.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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Paper 1 series overview

This is the Unseen Translation paper. At this level, an amount of interpretation and even speculation is required. In both passages, candidates who read the English introduction carefully found there was a great deal of information to help them.

Both passages were challenging – the verse passage more than the prose – but candidates were largely resourceful. Centres preparing candidates for exams might consider reinforcing the points that examiners look to reward what has been achieved, that all candidates are in the same boat and that the relative difficulty of passages from year to year is carefully monitored to make the assessment as fair as possible.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read the introductions to the passages thoroughly • paid close attention to case endings, especially on pronouns • noticed the particles τε and και • showed confidence in handling participles • interpreted common prefixes on verbs and showed this in their translation • were comfortable distinguishing between (e.g.) φίλος and φίλιος (AS), or οὐδέν and οὐδένα (GCSE) • wrote English that put across clear meaning, even when the Greek was challenging, leaving no gaps • checked that they had translated all of the Greek. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • did not rigorously apply the basic principles of morphology and syntax as learned at GCSE • did not use the particles to help separate out clauses, or broadly omitted connecting particles • mistook (e.g.) σήν for σέ, or did not recognise common tragic forms such as σέθεν • were unclear on the forms and use of the relative pronoun ὅς • showed confusion over participles, especially agreement and tense • did not always write English that made sense • occasionally missed out entire chunks of Greek, perhaps omitting to check their finished translation.

Following the approach described in previous examiners' reports, on both this paper and Paper 2, examiners referred to the Defined Vocabulary Lists for both GCSE and AS when making choices about what to accept, and what alternative meanings to expect. This is not because either list is prescribed for A Level, but because examiners consider the lists to represent a scope of knowledge that an A Level candidate is expected to surpass, and substantially. In the comments below, '(GCSE)' and '(AS)' indicate that a word appears on those lists. The intention is constructive: to help centres and candidates by drawing attention to Greek words that significant numbers of candidates find difficult to pin down even after some years of study, most especially where more than one distinct meaning may be in use. For example, a considerable number of candidates translated ἐφ' οὗ as if ἐφ' ᾧ, even though ἐπί + acc 'on' is learned at GCSE, and usage with the other cases clearly set out in the AS Defined Vocabulary List.

Take time to maintain the linguistic basics

Several differentiating points, especially in the prose passage, hinged on core GCSE and AS vocabulary and grammar. To take one example, a candidate who knew all the forms of πατήρ (GCSE) would not have translated πατρώαν as simply 'father', and one who recognised this as a form of πατρώος (AS) would have had no problem with the phrase. Similarly τούτους was often missed altogether, although in theory known since GCSE. Both examples are discussed further below.

Most marks are lost not because of esoteric vocabulary, but through errors in applying the 'basics' rigorously.

A better mark will always go to an English translation that makes sense and does not contain obvious errors of English grammar. It is difficult to assess the comprehension of a passage of 'translationese'. Candidates will find that time given to proof-reading is time well spent.

Brackets or slashes should be a tool of last resort only.

The slashes in the translations offered in the mark scheme are to illustrate some possible alternatives that should all be accepted; brackets indicate words that are not necessarily required to express the meaning of the Greek in English. Neither of these have a place in candidate responses, except in the very limited example below.

Candidates should have the confidence to write communicative English; they will only lose marks on this paper if their English does not communicate the meaning of the Greek, which a quick re-read will make obvious. The rubric states that contradictory responses will not receive credit; this clearly applies to 'come/go'. Brackets are recommended only to clarify a heavily metaphorical expression, e.g. 'he told him to get his head out of the gutter (lit. to think better thoughts)'; but of course, if the metaphor is appropriate, the brackets will not be necessary. Examiners see perhaps one candidate response a year where a bracketed explanation was helpful, and – to reiterate the essential point – brackets that offer any kind of alternative meaning are likely to be harmful.

Handwriting was generally good. A small number of candidates at all attainment levels did not write their translations on alternate lines, which made their responses harder to mark. It is completely acceptable to put an asterisk or number and rewrite a tricky sentence in full underneath the main response. Very often where words are squeezed in, an essential word ends up crossed out and not rewritten; such a word cannot be credited. Again, taking the time to proof-read is good practice.

Section A overview

This passage seemed accessible to most candidates, not least because the lengthy introduction outlined the whole plot.

Question 1

- 1 Translate the following passage into English.

Please write your translation on alternate lines.

[50]

At a dinner party the guests give lavish presents to their host, Seuthes. Xenophon, finding himself ill-equipped to match them, offers himself and his men as a 'gift', declaring that with their help Seuthes will win many possessions.

ἐπειδὴ δὲ προυχώρει ὁ πότος, εἰσηλθεν ἀνὴρ Θοῤῥᾶξ ἵππον ἔχων λευκόν, καὶ λαβὼν κέρας μεστὸν εἶπε, 'προπίνω σοι, ὦ Σεύθη, καὶ τὸν ἵππον τοῦτον δωροῦμαι, ἐφ' οὗ καὶ διώκων ὃν ἂν ἐθέλης αἰρήσεις καὶ ἀποχωρῶν οὐ μὴ δείσης τὸν πολέμιον.' ἄλλος παῖδα εἰσαγαγὼν οὕτως ἐδωρήσατο προπίνων, καὶ ἄλλος ἱμάτια τῇ γυναικί. ὁ δὲ Ξενοφῶν ἠπορεῖτο τί ποιήσει· καὶ γὰρ 5 ἐτύγχανεν ὡς τιμώμενος ἐν τῷ πλησιαιτάτῳ δίφρω Σεύθη καθήμενος. ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλείδης ἐκέλευεν αὐτῷ τὸ κέρας δοῦναι τὸν οἰνοχόον. ὁ δὲ Ξενοφῶν, ἤδη γὰρ ὑποπεπωκώς ἐτύγχανεν, ἀνέστη θρασέως δεξάμενος τὸ κέρας καὶ εἶπεν· 'ἐγὼ δέ σοι, ὦ Σεύθη, δίδωμι ἑμαυτὸν καὶ τοὺς ἐμούς τούτους ἑταίρους φίλους εἶναι πιστούς, καὶ οὐδένα ἄκοντα, ἀλλὰ πάντας μᾶλλον ἔτι ἐμοῦ σοι 10 βουλομένους φίλους εἶναι. καὶ νῦν πάρεισιν οὐδέν σε προσαιτοῦντες, ἀλλὰ καὶ πονεῖν ὑπὲρ σοῦ καὶ προκινδυνεύειν ἐθέλοντες· μεθ' ὧν, ἐὰν οἱ θεοὶ θέλωσι, πολλὴν χώραν τὴν μὲν ἀπολήψει πατρῶαν οὔσαν, τὴν δὲ κτήσει, πολλοὺς δὲ ἵππους, πολλοὺς δὲ ἄνδρας καὶ γυναῖκας καλὰς κτήσει.'

Xenophon *Anabasis* 7.iii.26–27; 29–31 (adapted)

Section i) προυχώρει clearly required some attention to the prefix; various paraphrases were accepted, but simply 'when the drinking began' was deemed too vague. 'Taking *the* full horn' was quite a frequent slight error; the omission of the article is always significant other than at the very start of a passage. In general, this section was translated well, and marks below 4 were rare.

Section ii) Candidates generally made sensible conjectures for δωροῦμαι, often in the future tense. ἐφ' οὗ was frequently translated wrongly as 'against which' or 'from which', and the second relative ὃν was more challenging. However, the great differentiating feature was the structure καὶ διώκων... καὶ ἀποχωρῶν. Candidates using the particles as something of a road map were able to see the structural balance and did not have difficulty with the meaning of the second participle.

Section iii) δείσις proved confusing, with 'necessity' and occasionally 'binding' often being used. '...lest you fear the enemy' was also commonly used. The difference between πόλεμος and πολέμιος (AS) was not clear to several candidates. Singular ἄλλος... καὶ ἄλλος proved challenging, with 'some... others' offered frequently despite the singular number. Examiners noted that this construction had also appeared in 2018.

Section iv) The principal difficulty here was to understand how the two participles functioned differently with only one directly following τυγγχάνω (AS – the word was generally well recognised). Examiners required an appreciation of ὤς, but allowed the roles to be in essence reversed ('he happened to be being honoured so was sitting...'). πλήσιος was recognised by about half of candidates; various conjectures were put forward, many of them with a possessive-dative translation (e.g. 'Seuthes' favourite seat').

Section v) The cases of αὐτῶ and τὸν οἰνοχόον were occasionally confused, as if κέλευω were taking a dative object. γάρ was quite often omitted. Otherwise, this section was generally done well.

Section vi) The first part was in most translations dealt with effectively. In the second part it was common to miss out τούτους, which led to a maximum mark of 4.

Section vii) Most candidates recognised how the infinitive was used here, but many wrote 'to be trustworthy and friendly' or 'my dear companions to be trustworthy'. φίλος and φίλιος (AS) was a distinction that would have helped about a third of candidates. ἄκοντα (AS) was often taken as part of ἀκούω, and candidates who could see that οὐδένα (GCSE) was not neuter were at an advantage: 'and nothing unwilling' was seen quite frequently. Effort to respect the cases of ἐμοῦ and σοι was repaid. The genitive of comparison following μᾶλλον (GCSE) was frequently missed, even with the intensifying ἔτι.

Section viii) Once again, the repeated use of καί proved very helpful to the many candidates who paid attention to it; the balance of προσαιτοῦντες with ἐθέλοντες was key to this section. The prefix of the former was considered quite transparent and required, as was noticing the double καί. Either 'both... and' or 'even' (as ἀλλὰ καί) were accepted, but candidates who ignored both instances of καί altogether had made a slight error. In contrast to last year, most candidates translated ὑπέρ + genitive successfully. πονέω (AS) was frequently confused with πίνω (GCSE), perhaps under the influence of the symposium setting. Very few candidates grasped the nuance of προκινδυνεύειν, where simply 'go into danger' was accepted but 'go first/ahead of you into danger' would have been ideal. '...wanting to go into danger before' was treated as a slight error, making so little sense in English.

Section ix) The principal difficulty here was with πολλήν χώραν τὴν μὲν ἀπολήψει / τὴν δὲ κτήσει. Singular πολλήν χώραν was frequently rendered as 'many lands', which was not accepted. As so often, accounting thoroughly for μὲν and δέ made everything clearer; there was a need to contrast in some way ἀπο-λήψει and κτήσει (GCSE). Examiners were careful to be flexible with sensible attempts to construe this knotty corner of the passage – it is possible that Xenophon's words are mangled because he is drunk! – but could not accept versions that went against the relatively straightforward morphology. πατρῶος 'of a father' (AS) needed to be understood not as 'of your father', as offered by a minority of candidates, but rather 'your fathers' or 'ancestral': the land in question had historically belonged to the family of Seuthes, and now stood to be taken back.

Section x) Many candidates who had lost fluency in the previous sections recovered for a confident finish here. A sizeable minority of candidates did not recognise the second person ending of κτήσει. πολλούς δὲ ἵππους, πολλούς δὲ ἄνδρας was occasionally combined into 'many horsemen', but the emphatic repetition of both πολλούς and δέ seemed to work against this.

Exemplar 1

on your behalf. With these men, if the gods will it, much
 land which you have lost despite being your homeland, you will
 obtain, and you will obtain many horses and many men and
 beautiful women.

This candidate has made good sense in English, but by taking ἀπολήψει as 'you have lost' inside a relative clause they have missed the balance of μέν with δέ. The omission of any connection at the start of section x was marked as an error, leading to a total mark of 3 + 4.

Section B overview

Here again, the introduction gave a lot of very useful information, and candidates who had, for example, noticed that Xuthus 'invites [his son] home to Athens' would have been ready for the imperative *στείχε* in line 9. More widely, *ἐξέφυς* ought to be familiar to those who had read a range of tragic passages and noted the common vocabulary; the one-word question *σιγαῖς* is of a relatively common type as well. There were considerable challenges in this passage, but in the main candidates responded with initiative and care.

Question 2 (a)

2 (a) Translate the following passage into English.

Please write your translation on alternate lines.

[45]

Creusa had abandoned her baby by Apollo to die, but the boy was saved and became an attendant in Apollo's temple. Creusa and her husband Xuthus, unable to have a child together, have visited the temple to ask about their childlessness. There Xuthus has been told that the first person he meets will be his son. Xuthus meets the boy, calls him his son and invites him home to Athens.

Εοὔθος	ὦ τέκνον, ἐς μὲν σὴν ἀνεύρεσιν θεὸς ὀρθῶς <u>ἔκρανε</u> , καὶ συνῆψ' ἐμοί τε σέ, σύ τ' αὖ τὰ φίλταθ' ἠὔρες οὐκ εἰδὼς πάρος.	
	ὁ δ' <u>ἤξας</u> ὀρθῶς, τοῦτο καμ' ἔχει πόθος, ὅπως σύ τ', ὦ παῖ, μητέρ' εὐρήσεις σέθεν,	5
	ἐγὼ θ' ὁποίας μοι γυναικὸς ἐξέφυς. χρόνω δὲ δόντες ταῦτ' ἴσως εὔροίμεν ἄν.	
	ἀλλ' ἐκλιπὼν θεοῦ <u>δάπεδ' ἀλητείας</u> τε σὴν ἐς τὰς Ἀθήνας <u>στείχε κοινόφρων</u> πατρί,	
	οὐ σ' ὄλβιον μὲν σκῆπτρον ἀναμένει πατρός,	10
	πολὺς δὲ πλοῦτος· οὐδὲ θάτερον <u>γοσῶν</u> δυοῖν κεκλήση δυσγενῆς πένης θ' ἅμα,	
	ἀλλ' εὐγενῆς τε καὶ πολυκτῆμων βίου. σιγαῖς; τί πρὸς γῆν <u>ᾄμμα</u> σὸν βαλὼν ἔχεις;	
	ἐς φροντίδας δ' ἀπῆλθες, ἐκ δὲ <u>χαρομονῆς</u> πάλιν μεταστὰς δεῖμα προσβάλλεις πατρί.	15

Euripides, *Ion* 569–584

Section i) Candidates should remember to translate the entire passage, including character designations: a sizeable number omitted the name of Xuthus, which, as in previous years, was treated as a major error. The opening words could have been translated in several ways, but 'Oh boy' felt unnecessarily awkward. ἀνεύρεσις posed a vocabulary challenge, with several candidates resourcefully but incorrectly aiming to make some sense as if formed from ἀνεύ, but the verb εὐρίσκω appeared repeatedly through the passage.

All the same, considering the detailed help given in the passage summary above, examiners decided to accept any conjecture that fitted with the story, so, for example, 'salvation' was accepted as if correct, but 'destruction' was not. The cases of the personal pronouns were important; translations that went firmly against these such as 'joined me to you' were not accepted, although for example 'joined us together, you and me' would be accepted.

Section ii) After careful consideration examiners decided – along with most candidates – that 'again' was not an appropriate translation of ἀὖ in the context of a child who had never met their parents (information given clearly in the introduction). 'In turn' is listed in the AS DVL. A range of thoughtful translations were seen for τὰ φίλτατα, most successfully, but while εἰδώς was widely known, πάρος was not. ἤξας was interpreted frequently as an aorist participle ('he having been eager...' appeared in many guises), and relatively few candidates recognised the gender of ὄ or connected it with what followed.

Section iii) The crasis of κάμε was interpreted by a significant minority of candidates as if containing ἄμα – the breathing gave this away. As shown in the mark scheme, examiners were ready to accept a range of the possible construals of this unusual phrase; candidates who recognised πόθος tended to make good sense of the rest (especially ὅπως). Again, the connecting particles were very helpful.

Section iv) Although τε was slightly obscured by aspiration, it was helpful for the syntax of ἐγώ. 'From what sort of woman' caused a lot of difficulty here. However, many good English phrases were found to translate the phrase about time, and the AS meaning 'perhaps' was in the majority for ἴσως ahead of the less useful 'equally'.

Section v) Many candidates who had trouble with the previous sections (in some cases leaving a gap for iv) were able to make a convincing fresh start at this point, and 5 was a common mark. 'Leave from the sacred precincts... and from your wandering' was correctly understood by about half of all candidates. The imperative στείχε was to be expected given the introduction; candidates who wrote 'he went to Athens' might have benefitted from reflecting on this, and on the typical features of the genre. Characters in tragedy use their speeches to reflect but also to instruct, and to ask. Almost every candidate dealt well with the glossed vocabulary + dative.

Section vi) The connecting οὗ took some by surprise; the third person ἀναμενει was quite often rendered as if second person. Otherwise, this was a straightforward section with frequent marks of 5.

Section vii) This was a very challenging section. The most important task was to identify the second person future verb in κεκλήση, which was variously connected with κελεύω and κλαίω. θάτερον and δυοῖν were potentially confusing, and interestingly very many candidates omitted one of these altogether. Examiners opted to ignore ἄμα altogether given the evidence that candidates were hesitant to reconcile the concepts behind 'not suffering from *either*' and 'you will not be called *both at the same time*'. In practice candidates were only helped, not disadvantaged, by this. Although the lower marks were more common here, very few candidates gave up altogether and in general there was plenty of evidence of serious effort.

Section viii) An excellent range of solutions was offered for πολυκτήματων βίου, and most candidates scored at least 3 on this section. In general, the second line was done well also. 'Why are you silent?' was not accepted, however.

Section ix) Again, identifying the participle μεταστάς made everything clearer here, and most candidates had at least the clear gist of what Xuthus was saying; marks tended to be 3 or higher in this section. δειμα, although a common tragic word, was known to only about half of candidates, and 'necessity' and 'bonds' were offered quite often.

Assessment for learning



Make time to read examples of tragic speeches and stichomythia (including interactions with the Chorus), in Greek but also out loud in English, to learn to recognise the common features of passages from tragedy.

Later in the course, once students are familiar with these features, candidates may appreciate [A E Housman's spoof tragic episode](#), which can be found, together with introduction and with D S Raven's translation into tragic Greek.

Exemplar 2

~~Θ~~ Xuthus: O child, a god has
correctly brought about your survival
and has ^{both} ~~justly~~ joined together both
you with me and you have found

This candidate initially translated ὀρθῶς for a second time with συνήψε, and then replaced the erroneous 'justly' with 'both', which they had already written later. Presumably the candidate did not then check the resulting sentence, leaving the doubled 'both'. This was marked as a slight error; as there were no further errors they achieved 5 marks - any other error would have reduced the overall mark to 4.

Question 2 (b)**(b)** Write out and scan lines 14 and 15.**[5]**

σιγᾶς; τί πρὸς γῆν ὄμμα σὸν βαλὼν ἔχεις;
ἔς φροντίδας δ' ἀπῆλθες, ἐκ δὲ χαρμονῆς

Most candidates scanned both lines correctly and were given full marks.

σιγᾶς presented a challenge as the length of the first vowel is short, as many candidates wrote; examiners agreed to accept the syllable scanned as light or heavy. A common error was to mark the first syllable of line 15 as light. A small number of candidates did not follow instructions and wrote only a scansion without writing out the Greek; in this case full marks could not be given.

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