

WJEC Level 1 Certificate
in
Latin Language and Roman Civilisation

Prescribed source material
for
Topic 3: The Roman Army
Summer 2024, Summer 2025, Summer 2026

This is the official prescribed source material booklet for the
WJEC Level 1 Certificate in Latin Language and Roman Civilisation

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Introduction

This booklet is designed to support teaching and learning for Unit 9512 (Roman Civilisation Topics) of the WJEC Level 1 Certificate in Latin Language and Roman Civilisation.

Two topics are prescribed in each examination and candidates are required to answer the questions on one topic. The topic The Roman Army is set for examination in the summers of 2024, 2025 and 2026.

In the examination, each topic contains two sections. Section A contains several short questions based on one or more sources (stimulus pictures, inscriptions or short passages from Roman authors in translation). Section B will contain four questions, of which candidates should answer two, requiring empathetic responses.

This booklet contains all the sources which may be used in Section A of the Level 1 examination for the topic The Roman Army. Following each source is a short list of bullet points. These bullet points fulfil two functions:

- 1) They give further information about the source which candidates are expected to know;
- 2) They give a flavour of the level of deduction that a candidate may be expected to make from the source.

In each case, candidates need not restrict themselves to the information about, or deductions from, the source given in this booklet. All valid responses will be rewarded.

Should you have any queries regarding the use or status of this booklet, please contact the Subject Officer for Latin at WJEC via latin@wjec.co.uk.

Recruitment and training of legionaries and auxiliaries

Source 1: Training recruits to march at regulation pace

At the beginning of their training recruits must be taught the marching step. They will only learn to march quickly and in time if they practise continuously. And so they must complete a march of 20 (Roman) miles in 5 hours at normal marching speed. When they march at a faster speed they must complete a distance of 24 miles in the same time.

Vegetius, 1.9

About this source:

- After being sworn in a new recruit began training.
- This training was physically tough.
- Learning to march at regulation pace was a key part of this training.
- Physical fitness was further developed by running, jumping and swimming.

Source 2: Soldiers marching with kit slung from a stake



About this source:

- This shows soldiers setting out on the march.
- They carry pots and pans, and wineskins on a stake.
- A helmet is slung from a legionary's right shoulder.
- Each tent party had a mule to carry tents and other bulky items.

Source 3: Training recruits to march with rations and equipment

The young soldier must be given frequent practice in carrying loads of up to 60 pounds, while marching at the normal speed. This is because on difficult campaigns they will have to carry their rations as well as their weapons.

Vegetius, 1.19

About this source:

- The normal marching speed was 20 miles in 5 hours.
- The legionary carried 3 days' supply of corn, the staple diet.
- His weapons were a sword, a javelin (**pilum**) and a shield.
- He also carried equipment for making a temporary camp at the end of the day.

Source 4: Recruits involved in mock fights

The recruit practises with his wicker shield and wooden stick against stakes, just as if he was fighting against a real enemy. Sometimes he aims at the head or face, sometimes at the thighs, and sometimes he tries to strike the knees and legs.

Vegetius, 1.11

About this source:

- New recruits were given a heavy wooden sword to practise with.
- And a wicker shield which they had to learn to handle correctly.
- They were taught to thrust with the sword to kill or at least to disable their opponents.
- They learned to attack dummy targets as part of their weapon training.

Weapons and equipment

Source 5: A Roman soldier's dagger



About this source:

- The dagger is shown with its sheath.
- Both were made of iron.
- It was worn on the soldier's belt on the opposite side to his sword.
- It was used for stabbing the enemy at close quarters.

Source 6: Military parade (from the Column of Antoninus Pius)



About this source:

- The legionaries wear helmets, breastplates with overlapping plates, military boots and carry spears.
- The officer (on the left) wears a breastplate and military cloak.
- The standard-bearer (on the right) with the bearskin, carries the standard.
- The standard's metal discs encircled by wreaths may show the campaigns he fought.

Source 7: A cavalryman



About this source:

- The cavalryman rides without stirrups or saddle.
- He is jabbing downwards with his spear.
- He wears a crested helmet, cloak, breastplate and dagger.
- He is shown triumphing over the enemy.

Daily duties

Source 8: Building camps and bridges (from Trajan's Column)



About this source:

- Legionaries are building a bridge across a river.
- There are camp walls (top right) made of turf blocks with a wooden walkway behind the turf ramparts.
- One legionary hands up a turf, one is hammering and another brings materials in a basket.
- Auxiliaries stand guard on the left.

Source 9: The duties of a legionary

A legion has builders, carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, painters and all the rest of the craftsmen who are needed to build the winter quarters, to make equipment, towers, fences, and siege machinery and who build and repair weapons, waggons and all kinds of artillery ... They are very concerned that whatever the army needs should always be available in the camp.

Vegetius, 2.11

About this source:

- Legionaries did not spend all their time on active service.
- The legions had engineers to supervise building forts and roads when they were not fighting.
- Other duties of the legionaries included quarrying stone for building.
- They also helped in the baths, stoking the furnaces.

Source 10: The duties of the camp prefect (*praefectus castrorum*)

The camp prefect has many important responsibilities. He must choose a site for a camp and mark out a wall and ditch. He must organise the tents or soldiers' barracks along with their baggage. He is also responsible for seeing that medical treatment is available for sick soldiers ... As the most knowledgeable man, he is chosen for the job after many years of outstanding service. He can then teach others what he has done well himself.

Vegetius, 2.10

About this source:

- The camp prefect would have worked his way up through the ranks through the various grades of centurion.
- Finally he would have held the post of senior centurion of the legion (**primus pilus**).
- He was responsible for the management of the fortress, and building and engineering works.
- He took over the command if the commander (**legatus**) and senior tribune were away.

Source 11: Fetching water and felling trees



About this source:

- In the centre a legionary is cutting down a tree.
- The soldiers on the right are carrying away a log.
- Wood was used in the construction of forts and bridges.
- On the left soldiers are fetching water from a river.

Source 12: Tombstone of an **optio**

OPTIONIS AD SPEM
ORDINIS C LUCILI
INGENUI QUI
NAUFRAGIO PERIT
S E

(Tombstone) of an **optio**, waiting for promotion to the rank of centurion [C], serving in the century of Lucius Ingenuus, who died in a shipwreck. He is buried ...

About this source:

- The **optio** was a deputy centurion.
- He helped the centurion with the discipline of the men in his century.
- The body of the **optio** had not been found when this tombstone was put up.
- There is a space for the letter H (**hic**) in case the body lost in the shipwreck was found for burial here.

Source 13: A description of a centurion by the historian Tacitus

The centurion Lucilius lost his life. The soldiers called him 'gimme another', because every time he broke his stick on a soldier's back he shouted for another, and another.

Tacitus, *Annals*, 1.23

About this source:

- A centurion was an officer who had risen from the ranks because of his courage and ability.
- He commanded a century (a unit of about 80 men) assisted by an **optio**.
- He was responsible for the training and discipline of his century.
- His stick was a vine stick, his badge of office, used also to punish his men.

Source 14: Legionaries' pay

Indeed military service was relentless and unprofitable; body and spirit were valued at two and a half sesterces a day, and out of this they had to pay for their clothing, weapons and tents, and bribe vicious centurions to escape routine drudgery.

Tacitus, *Annals*, 1.17

About this source:

- A legionary earned 225 **denarii** a year.
- The emperor Domitian increased this to 300 **denarii** a year.
- Deductions were made for food, clothing and equipment.
- Soldiers also put money into a military savings bank.

Source 15: Legionaries' rewards on retirement

I transferred 170,000,000 sesterces from my own property to the Military Treasury, which had been set up on my advice in order to pay retirement benefits to soldiers who had served twenty years or more.

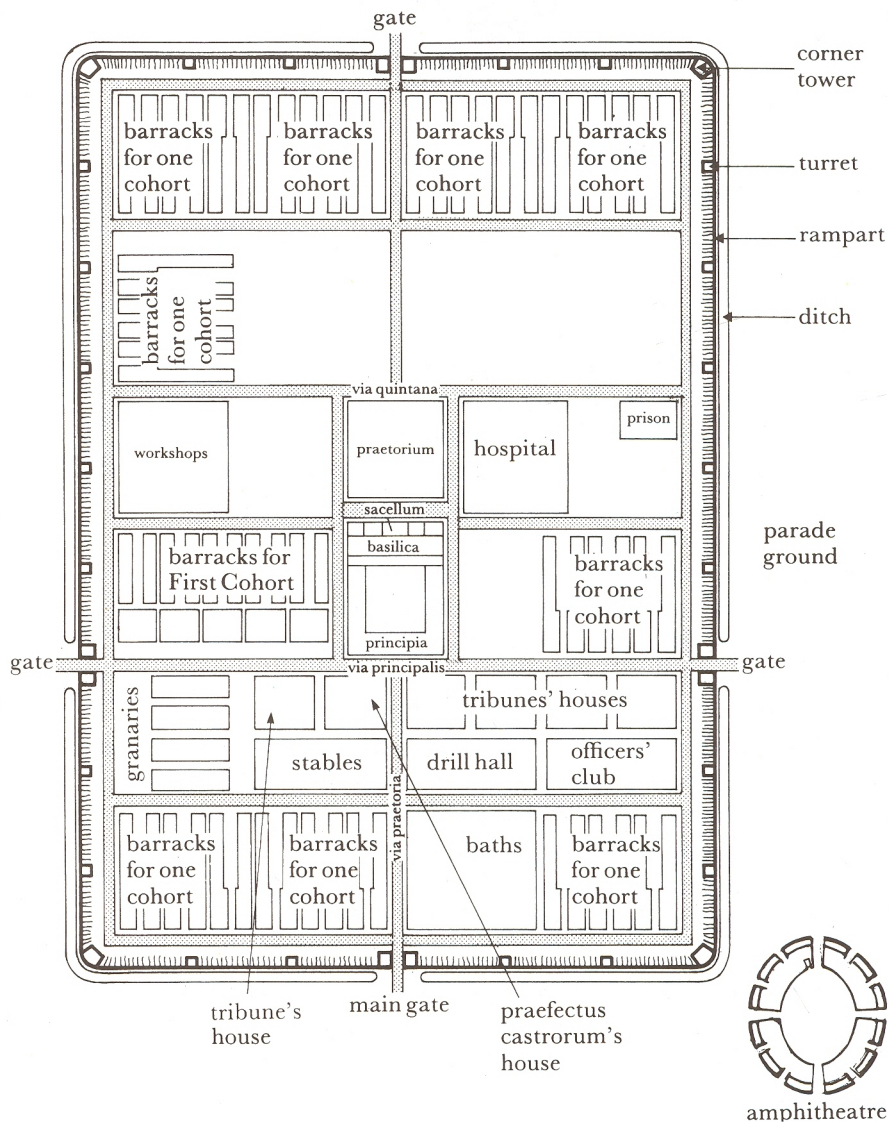
Emperor Augustus, *Res Gestae* 17

About this source:

- A legionary served for 20 years on active service.
- He served a further 5 years in a cohort of veterans before retiring.
- On retirement he was given 3000 denarii or an allocation of land.
- When auxiliaries retired, also after 25 years, they were given Roman citizenship.

The legionary fortress

Source 16: Plan of the legionary fortress



About this source:

- The legionary fortress had a headquarters building (**principia**) where the standard of the legion and soldiers' pay were kept.
- The commander (**legatus**) worked here and administered justice.
- Also in the fort was the **praetorium**, a villa in Italian style for the **legatus** and his family, with central heating, a garden and a private suite of baths.
- The legionary fortress contained all the facilities needed to house and feed the soldiers.

Source 17: An aerial view of Housesteads Fort on Hadrian's Wall



About this source:

- The fortress was strongly fortified against enemy attack.
- It was surrounded by a ditch, rampart and battlements for defence.
- It had towers at the corners and at intervals along the sides.
- It had a fortified gateway on each side.

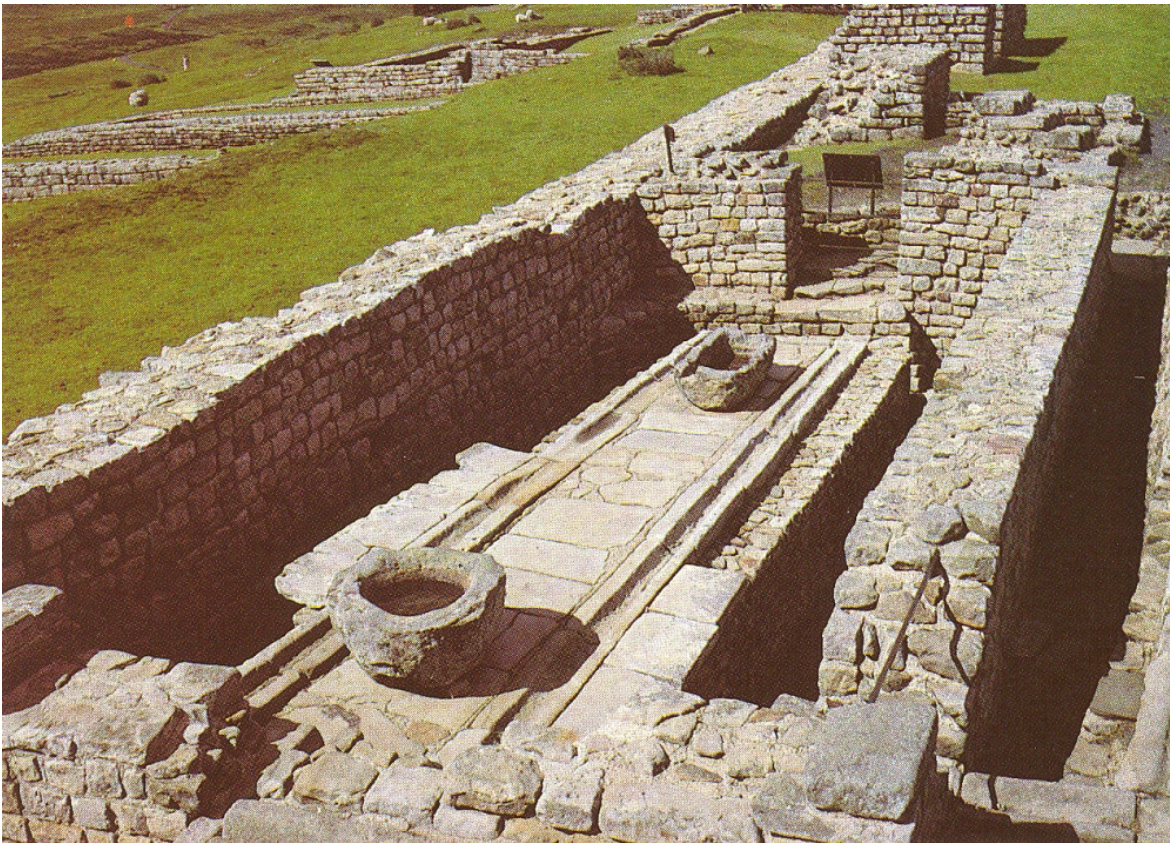
Source 18: The granary at Housesteads Fort on Hadrian's Wall



About this source:

- Each fort had several granaries, designed to keep the grain cool and dry.
- The roof had overhanging eaves to carry the rainwater away from the walls.
- The floor was supported by small stone pillars which allowed air to circulate underneath.
- Granaries held enough grain for the legion for one or even two years.

Source 19: The lavatories at Housesteads Fort on Hadrian's Wall



About this source:

- Roman lavatories were communal.
- Stone seats originally covered the deep channels.
- They were flushed with water from the baths flowing beneath the seats.
- The small channels were full of water for soldiers to wash the sponges they used to clean themselves.

Source 20: Barrack blocks at Caerleon Fortress



About this source:

- The fortress held a legion of 5,000 - 6,000 men in barrack blocks.
- Each block accommodated a century (about 80 men).
- They were divided into pairs of rooms, the smaller front room for cooking and the back room for sleeping.
- At one end of the block was more spacious accommodation for the centurion and his deputy (**optio**).

Military tombstones

Source 21: The tombstone of Rufus Sita, a cavalryman



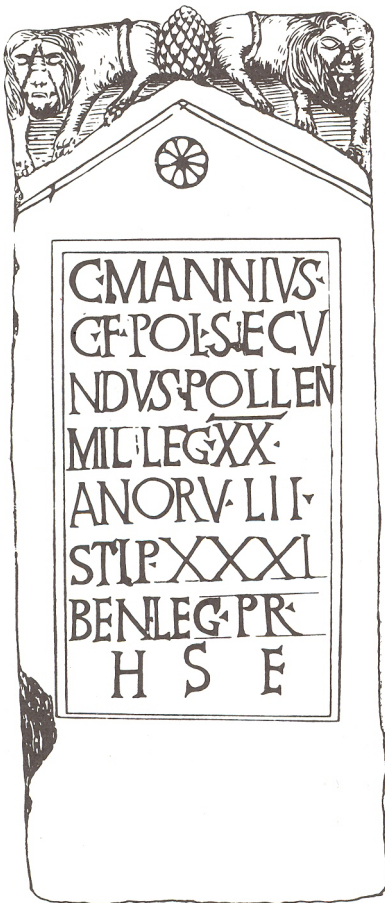
RUFUS SITA EQUES CHO VI
TRACUM ANN XL STIP XXII
HEREDES EKS TEST CURAVE[RUNT]
H[IC] S[ITUS] E[ST]

Rufus Sita cavalryman of the 6th cohort
of Thracians (died) aged 40, after 22 years' service.
His heirs set this up in accordance with his will.
He is buried here.

About this source:

- Rufus Sita was an auxiliary cavalryman (**EQUES**).
- He came from Thrace in northern Greece.
- He wears a sword and carries a spear.
- He is shown as victorious over the enemy.

Source 22: The tombstone of Gaius Mannius



C MANNIUS
CF POL SECU
NDUS POLLEN
MIL LEGXX
ANORU[M] LII
STIP XXXI
BEN LEG PR
H S E

Caius Mannius Secundus, son of Caius, of the Pollian tribe [**POL**] born at Pollentia [**POLLEN**], soldier of the Twentieth Legion, 52 years old, 31 years' service, orderly [**BEN = beneficiarius**] of the governor of the province [**LEG PR**]. He lies here.

About this source:

- Caius Mannius came from Pollentia in north-west Italy and died in Britain.
- He had either been seconded to the staff of the governor or was on the staff of the legionary commander (**LEG PR**).
- A **beneficiarius** did routine jobs such as act as messenger.
- He may have been used to collect information about the Britons in the area.

Source 23: The tombstone of Caecilius Avitus



D M
CAECILIUS AVITUS
EMER. AUG
OPTIO LEG XXV
STP XV VIX
AN XXXIII
H F C

(This stone is dedicated) to the spirits of the departed. Caecilius Avitus, from Emerita Augusta, **optio** from the Twentieth Legion **VALERIA VICTRIX**, served 15 years, lived 34 years. His heir had this stone set up.

About this source:

- Caecilius Avitus was an **optio** or deputy centurion.
- He came from Emerita Augusta in Spain and died in Chester.
- He carries a vine stick which indicates his rank.
- He also carries writing tablets on which he may have the soldiers' duty rota.