



**General Certificate of Education**

**Classical Civilisation**

**CIV1A Greek Architecture and Sculpture**

**Report on the Examination**

*January examination - 2010 series*

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## **CIV1A Greek Architecture and Sculpture**

Most candidates made a sensible attempt to engage with the issues raised by the questions and generally showed some good insights into Greek architecture and sculpture. The best answers were outstanding for their command of relevant detail, perceptiveness of analysis and structure of argument. Most candidates adopted an evaluative approach with some attempt to organise an argument that led to a formally stated conclusion. The main shortcomings in the middle range of answers were the failures to provide sufficient reference to detail to back up opinions and clear links between paragraphs to join the argument into a coherent whole.

The majority of candidates used their time sensibly in proportion to the marks available for each question. Some, however, wrote at excessive length for the early questions and consequently left one of the essays incomplete. It was evident that candidates who planned could ensure they covered the full range of points and reached a conclusion, even if they were under pressure of time.

A number of centres failed to use the new AQA answer books. As well as enabling AQA to process and mark scripts quickly and accurately, these new answer books allow teachers to access detailed information about their candidates' performance, including a breakdown of their marks, through the Enhanced Results Analysis service.

### **Question 1**

It was very pleasing that, in comparison with both examinations in 2009, a greater percentage of candidates attempted an architectural question, and that they achieved a higher standard in this aspect of the topic than previously in both knowledge and evaluation. However, the performance in Question 1 was overall less good than in Question 2.

In Question 111 the majority of candidates knew the dedication of the temples. In Question 113 most too could identify one of the parts labelled on Plan B, though only just over half correctly named both features. In Question 112, however, chronology was particularly problematic: just over half the candidates gave the correct date for one of the temples, and fewer than a quarter gave the right answer for both.

In Question 120 most candidates made some attempt to put forward an argument, and some were able to support their views with accurate observations of the plan as well as recall of the superstructures. However, many did not make use of the information provided on the question paper and insert. Although it was clearly stated that both temples were at Paestum, some candidates believed that one of the plans was of the Temple of Hera at Olympia and so wrote about wooden columns and sun-dried brick walls. There was also a tendency to ignore the scale provided and to repeat the common misunderstanding that the temple in Plan A, having more columns than the one in Plan B, must therefore be bigger. Answers frequently revealed shortcomings in candidates' ability to read a plan, a skill which is essential for this topic and which, if sensibly applied in this question, would have provided ample material on which to base the required judgements. It was in the ten-mark questions that the difference in candidates' responses to architecture and to sculpture were most marked: in Question 120 just over half the candidates reached Level 3, whereas in Question 220 nearly three-quarters reached the same standard.

In Question 130 there was a wealth of material which candidates could draw on to support an argument – and a pleasing minority did so – but there was much imprecision, if not confusion, particularly with regard to the Bassae temple. It was encouraging that many candidates were

able to demonstrate knowledge of the historical context of the Parthenon, its possible functions and the meaning of its iconography, but fewer drew attention to the architectural significance of such an extraordinary quantity of exterior decoration, and fewer still highlighted the surprising novelty of internal decoration at Bassae – and in the Ionic Order too – in contrast to the bareness of the largely traditional external Doric Order.

## Question 2

As in Question 1, chronology proved to be candidates' Achilles' heel: whereas the subject matter of the metope and *stèle* in Questions 212 and 214 was generally well known, the dates given in Questions 211 and 213 were often inaccurate, particularly in the latter.

The high level of performance in Question 220 was very commendable and was attributable to the ability of a large number of candidates effectively to combine detailed observation of sculptural form and composition, knowledge of the original context of each sculpture, and sensitivity in evaluating the viewer's response. Question 230 elicited many equally perceptive essays. Most successful were candidates who neither simply described nor merely made assertions about the viewer's feelings, but who supported each step of the argument with recall of precisely observed detail.

## Question 3

As Question 2 was more popular than Question 1, so Question 3 attracted more answers than Question 4, and in roughly the same ratio of 3 to 2. In Section Two, however, there was virtually no difference in overall standard. In Question 300 there were some very pleasing answers which demonstrated a good overview of the impact hollow-cast bronze-casting had on the development of the male nude with reference to detailed features of a range of statues, including Praxiteles, who was often credited with favouring a return to marble as a more suitable medium for his softer vision of male skin texture and musculature. However, many essays demonstrated one or more of the following weaknesses:

- carelessness in reading the question: neither the Charioteer from Delphi nor the Knidian Aphrodite were relevant to a discussion of male nudes
- confusion over which marble statues are in fact merely copies of bronze originals
- the belief that bronze was cheaper than marble
- failure to link the material in the bullet points to an argument focused on the question: the advantages and disadvantages referred to in the first bullet point were just one aspect of a possible response to the question, not a substitute for the whole question
- vagueness in chronology: the 4<sup>th</sup> century was not covered by essays which gave no example later than Polykleitos' Doryphoros, and the analysis of development over time was obfuscated by the presentation of examples in random chronological sequence.

## Question 4

In the case of Question 4, most candidates did cover the full time period (possibly because the bullet points suggested examples rather than topics for discussion), and most adopted the standard view of a shift from representation of the gods as awesomely powerful to their portrayal as more human. What varied was the insight with which more subtle nuances were identified within this general pattern and, above all, the ability to support and explain comments

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with reference to observed sculptural features such as material, pose, use of drapery, relationship with other figures and point(s) of view. Credit was given for relevant knowledge and discussion of sculptures other than those in the bullet points such as Athena in the later Aegina pediment, Paionios' Nike, and Kephisodotos' Eirene and Ploutos.