



**General Certificate of Education
June 2012**

Classical Civilisation 2020

**CIV3D: Augustus and the Foundation of
the Principate**

Report on the Examination

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CIV3D Augustus and the Foundation of the Principate

General Comments

The examiners were pleased, once again, to see a substantial number of students for this unit. The standard of the best work was again high and there were some scripts of excellent quality. Many students had well-developed analytical skills which they demonstrated in their answers to the 10 and 20-mark questions. There was encouraging evidence of sophisticated judgement, sensitivity and perception in responses to both textual and visual material and of some excellent and committed teaching, though it is clear that the visual material is either less popular or perceived as less crucial to our understanding of Augustus as a political animal, and some scripts demonstrated correspondingly less attention to the detail of the prescribed monuments.

Section One

Option A

Most students could give the date of the Ara Pacis as 13-9 BC and identify the scene in the photograph as the Tellus panel, showing a mother and babies, with two framing figures, all variously identified, with animal and plant life, making references to peace, prosperity and fertility. Good answers to Question 03 then contextualised the panel by relating it to three others showing Aeneas sacrificing, Romulus and Remus, and Roma in armour; together they represent foundation myths, military success and therefore peace, and continuation of the ancient city and its life and customs. Rather fewer discussed the continuous frieze, which portrays the role of Augustus as a formal religious leader and the centre of a large and successful family with ongoing life and children, and a quasi-divine background, validated by its connection with the foundation myths of the city, its peacemaking role, and its part in formal religious practice. Good answers to Question 04 were able to relate these references to Augustus' own account of his policies and successes in the *Res Gestae*, and to cite some significant differences of emphasis.

Option B

Option B allowed roughly the same number of students to reflect on the major factors in Augustus' attempts to secure his power in the first few years after Actium, including: the recognition of peace by the closing of the Temple of Janus and his triumph in 29 BC, large donations to urban plebs and veterans, gladiatorial shows, the building programme, the support and demobilisation of armies. He held the consulship every year from 31-27 BC; he possibly kept the powers of triumvir; he held a census of the Senate in 28 BC; he remitted Italian towns' freewill offerings; he held *imperium* by virtue of his consular powers. Most answers to Question 06 were able to comment on his new title as conveying the sense of a new start and potential divinity; rather fewer demonstrated detailed knowledge of the significance of the other awards: the bay leaves are a sign of victory, and the civic crown, a wreath of oak leaves, was traditionally awarded for conspicuous bravery, especially in saving the life of a fellow-citizen. The golden shield was dedicated near to the altar of victory, and celebrated Augustus' *virtus*, clemency, *pietas*. The reader is expected to see that these notable signs of recognition underwrite Augustus' worthiness of the exceptional authority which he continued to enjoy. In general, most students were more confident in answering Question 07, where they could argue for or against the truth of Augustus' statement by deploying the evidence provided by the offices and rights he retained as an aggregated source of power.

Section Two

Option C

A number of good answers to Question 08 were able to argue for Augustus' priorities for Rome, or alternatively for the stability of his own position, by thinking not only in terms of the official building programme, but also by showing familiarity with more mundane concerns. They were able to discuss the prodigy buildings, with their insistence on the enhancement of tradition, and religious and personal propriety, and thus the enhancement of the city's formal structures. They also demonstrated familiarity with Augustus' programmes of local administration in his Roman arrondissements, his policies for the enhancement of the water supply, sewage disposal, maintenance of the river fronts, fire service, policing, and public entertainment even when delegated to, or dedicated in the name of other members of his family and circle. Better answers also discussed his moral legislation, and his aims for military stability as powerful influences on the life of the city and its citizens.

Option D

Question 09 attracted slightly fewer answers. The good ones were able to relate the details of the structure and decoration of the Forum Augusti, and the circumstances of its construction and use to Augustus' propaganda and political ethos. They were able to discuss the temple of Mars Ultor and its triad, the statuary in the exedrae of the colonnades, Augustus' chariot statue, the form of the enclosure and its links with the Forum Julii and the temple of Venus Genetrix, the architecture of the temple of Mars Ultor and its significance as a building to both Augustus and the Roman citizen. This allowed them to show evidence of some sense of Augustus' use of visual propaganda as underwritten by the *Res Gestae* and other monuments. Some less successful answers attempted extended description of the Ara Pacis and / or the Prima Porta Augustus, without evidence of the detailed knowledge of the Forum Augusti needed to argue an alternative case.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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