

# **Classical Civilisation**

General Certificate of Secondary Education **GCSE 1940**

## **Report on the Components**

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**June 2007**

**1940/MS/R/07**

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## 1940/05 Classical Civilisation – Coursework

Once again centres produced some excellent coursework reflecting some very fine research by their candidates and revealing solid levels of engagement with the ancient world. At the highest levels there were some very sophisticated pieces where arguments were well thought out, delivered in language that used technical vocabulary with comfortable ease and made convincing reading. While the largest number of candidates still chose the more traditional areas to research, there was once again a sturdy crop of inventive souls who chose intriguingly unusual titles.

The more successful pieces of work made use of a wide variety of source material, frequently (inevitably perhaps) using much from the internet where the visual evidence is plentiful and easily incorporated into the word-processed piece. An unfortunate number had used this ease of downloading information to avoid the time-consuming process of reading and selecting information carefully, which at best led to badly organised pieces with too much irrelevant or repetitive material, and at worst ran the risk of disqualification for plagiarism.

The choice of title still formed a significant cause for poorer performance, a factual title almost always encourages the kind of factual delivery that will not score highly for evaluation. It should be remembered that framing the title as a question will assist the candidate in developing a more analytical stance throughout, though as last year it should be noted that the question itself needs to be carefully considered too: 'How did Greek women spend their day?' is still only really asking for a list of facts so care should be taken to frame the question so that it encourages more consideration of, for example, the role and importance of the aspect chosen for discussion 'To what extent does Greek Architecture reflect Greek Civilisation' or 'What were Augustus' legal reforms intended to achieve and how successful were they for this?' were successful examples from this year's offerings, though perhaps my favourite was the well-argued 'What evidence is there in literature and artwork to suggest that men had a fear of women in Ancient Greece?'. Titles of this sort will always encourage the kind of regular evaluative thread that makes a coherent and effective final piece. Far fewer (though not gone altogether) were the hugely broad titles like 'The Olympic Games' or 'Pompeii'. Candidates using these can never hope to produce enough factual content to deliver what would be necessary to cover this vast topic area. Centres are urged to remind their candidates of the criteria for assessment and to explain how the FC criterion specifically deals with how far the *anticipated* factual content for the title is achieved.

As last year it was pleasing to see that very many centres have impressed upon their candidates the necessity of *including* the source material *within* the work itself and making productive reference to it as part of the progressing argumentation. The film makers are happily continuing to keep the classical world high on their list of production plans and many were able not only to use the information they had gleaned from both documentary and dramatic programmes but were also impressively aware, for the most part, of the potential for dramatic licence and revealed a sound critical process when evaluating the evidence from these sources. Indeed this understanding of the limitations of our source material was more often apparent generally this year among the better pieces, which were able to articulate such points as that none of the literary sources are by women, that even the maleness of it is slanted to the rich and literate and that some authors, by the nature of their genre, inevitably exaggerate (Plautus' desire for comic effect, for example). An increasing number were using their own photographs to inform their work and this can be a most effective way of enhancing the piece. However, as with all source material, it must be remembered that this is only effective if the pictures are *used*, through captions and close connection with the statements in the body of the work, to support the rest of the information and argument. Literary coursework remains the more consistently successful pieces where sources are concerned since the use of the text itself is readily perceived as fundamental, but it should be remembered that while this is naturally all that is required in an examination question, coursework should be using a wider range of material and work will be much enhanced by the consideration of other works by the same author, for example, or other

## *Report on the Components taken in June 2007*

works within the same genre, or modern works that have used the ancient pattern to explore similar eternal truths etc.

It is also expected that commentaries will have been explored for insights into the author and his themes. In the literary area too titles are of paramount importance and again questions should be carefully framed to encourage the evaluation criterion: 'How does Virgil bring out the horror of the sack of Troy?', for example, or 'To what extent do we feel sorry for Dido?' will prove far more effective than 'What difficulties does Odysseus face in his return to Ithaca?'

Once again there were few empathy pieces and the usual shortcomings were observed over the proper inclusion of the source material which must be included in the work itself for any credit to be given. The most successful work, however, made good use of footnotes or appendices to quote the sources and some of the pieces showed considerable skill in evoking a strong atmosphere of the ancient world in which they were set. Once again television, films and the historical whodunnits have played their part in this and a very good one it has been too!

On an administrative note, centres are reminded once again of the importance of keeping each candidate's work together (treasury tags are generally the best for ease of reading), with centre number and candidate number clearly displayed on the cover sheet and the word count indicated. Please remember also that excessive wordage should not gain all the marks available for Organisation – it is the equivalent of giving an exam candidate an extra 15 minutes or so just because he would like the time to say a little more, although in cases of exceptional length (one piece was a staggering 4,300 words) consideration should be taken within the UE criterion also, since it is arguably the case that the material has not sufficiently been understood to select appropriately, to sift for relevance and to précis the original information for its inclusion as an answer to the question posed. The opposite problem of too few words will not gain all the marks within the FC criterion, since the facts will fall short of the anticipated content.

In conclusion, this year, as always, has given the moderators a wonderful range of very finely produced coursework which reflects the enthusiasm and explores the potential of so many candidates. It is a great credit to the passion and commitment of so many teachers that their students achieve so much and we remain grateful that their inspiration continues to inspire so many with such enthusiasm to explore all aspects of the Classical World.

## **1940/11/12 Classical Civilisation - Foundation Tier**

### **General Comments**

The performance of candidates at both levels this year was again most encouraging. Most gratifying was the fact that centres had clearly explained the format of the paper to their candidates and thus there were relatively few rubric infringements, allowing candidates to focus on quality of answer rather than pressure of time. Having said that, it was evident that many candidates have a number of prepared essays which are produced despite the focus of the actual essay questions. The following report is compiled on the basis of a reasonable number of centres attempting a topic. Therefore where topics are omitted from the report it is due to insufficient candidate or centre entry on which to make valid comment.

As in all years it was clear that candidates benefited from the guidance given in the bullet points although it is worth reminding candidates that they are supposed to give more information and not just include the guidance in a long sentence. Again there were a few candidates who secured their "C" grade by a good margin and could have certainly achieved better on the higher paper.

### **Comments on Individual Questions**

#### **Topic 1: Greek Religion**

##### **Section One**

###### **Q.1**

Question One proved popular. Most had no problem with (a) and (b). A few were unable to recognise that it was a burnt offering and did not identify the altar. Many concentrated on the gory aspects of a sacrifice in (e) without giving much detailed explanation of what actually took place at one.

###### **Q.2**

In Question Two virtually all candidates performed well on this topic area. They were able to identify the gods and their responsibilities in (b) and how Poseidon was portrayed in (d) and most found something worthwhile to say in (e).

###### **Q.3**

Question Three proved to be very straightforward for candidates. Needless to say, most candidates did score well and this indicates a marked improvement on this topic area compared to two years ago when a similar question was not so well done.

##### **Section Two**

Both essays proved equally popular. Although the Eleusis essay was probably done better in that answers padded out the bullet points whereas many did little more than repeat the bullet points in the second essay and said little about the impression the festival made in terms of Athens herself.

## **Topic 2: Home and Family in Athens**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Question One was attempted by fewer candidates. Most scored well, although there was a tendency to be very vague in (d).

#### **Q.2**

Virtually all candidates attempted Question Two and with a good deal of success. There were some particularly interesting and varied responses to (e) although few looked at the positive aspects. Knowledge of this area of the topic was, almost without exception, very thorough.

#### **Q.3**

The same can be said of Question Three; again candidates were inventive in their answers to (e).

### **Section Two**

Essay 1 proved the least popular. Information was very full on the whole. Performance on essay 2 was disappointing.

There are a number of essays at Foundation Level that take an empathetic approach. Candidates need to be aware that these are intended as a vehicle to allow them to demonstrate their knowledge of a particular subject area; they are not a piece of English creative writing. Thus many in this essay summed up the role of a slave in a couple of sentences and spent most of the essay telling heart-rending stories of how they were captured or abused.

## **Topic 3: Greek Athletic and Theatrical Festivals**

### **Section One**

The standard of responses overall in this topic was very good. All three Section One questions were attempted, although one and two proved to be the most popular.

#### **Q.1**

In Question One, although the source material was a little different to simple pictures of one event, candidates were not phased and performed well almost without exception; a clear indication that the use of sources is being stressed rather than the concept that if you have not seen the picture before you cannot answer the question.

#### **Q.2**

Question Two was done well. A few could not identify the altar. Differentiation in terms of knowledge of the topic was only clear in (d) often guessing according to what they thought the type of play might involve rather than giving specific details.

#### **Q.3**

Question Three produced mixed responses. A number were unsure about the table in (b) and the significance of the phrase 'allowed to compete' in (e) was often overlooked, thus giving fairly bland answers which did not reflect the rules of the games.



## Section Two

Essay 1 proved the most popular, the bullet points gave some structure to responses and there was some good discussion as to what was impressive. Answers to essay 2 were also generally well done. Weaker responses tended to do little more than copy the bullet points rather than putting any meat on the bones.

### Topic 4: Greek Art and Architecture

At Foundation tier there were too few entries in topic 4 on which to base a valid report.

There was a general improvement in candidates' understanding of the more technical terminology and processes relevant for the study of this topic.

### Topic 5: Sparta and the Spartan System

#### Section One

##### Q.1

Question One was attempted by most candidates and those who did attempt it tended to know their stuff. Again candidates should try to avoid repetition of information without further elaboration or discussion. This occurred in parts (c) and (e). The outsider's view of Spartan women, as required in (d) now seems better understood by candidates.

##### Q.2

Question Two was done by virtually all candidates and with a great deal of success. Candidates finally got their chance to catalogue the horrid ways in which the Helots were treated and most, in (c), understood the type of life that the Spartan man lived although a few diverted the question onto his pasta and talked about the *Agoge*, which was not valid.

##### Q.3

In Question Three candidates scored well and knowledge on this area of the topic is noticeably more thorough than in previous years. In fact this topic, which used to be a minority topic, is now being attempted by a large percentage of the candidate entry and the standard of answers is generally very good.

#### Section Two

Not surprisingly Essay One proved the most popular and candidates tended to score well because they were comfortable in elaborating on the bullet points.

Essay Two was less well done largely due to the fact that there were significant gaps in knowledge and understanding of exactly what each section of the government was responsible for. Answers to this question tended to be very good or very poor.

### Topic 6: Roman Religion

#### Section One

##### Q.1

Performance in Question One was generally good. In (b) many saw the word 'how' as when and so gave vague answers about worship in general. It was surprising that the shaved heads of the priests was not more widely known in (c). Candidates were comfortable with the myth in (d) and the appeal of the cult in (e).

### **Q.2**

Question Two was less popular. Most knew when the festival took place for (a) but were not so sure as to why in (b). Some answers to (c) were very general and could have applied to any social gathering but in (d) more specific knowledge was evident.

### **Q.3**

Question Three was popular and was done very well. Particularly pleasing was the way candidates studied and responded to the source in (a) and (b) and came up with worthwhile suggestions in (c), although there is still a tendency for some to talk about the worry of gods amongst humans 'in disguise'.

## **Section Two**

The quality of the essays in this topic was generally very encouraging. Candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of fact in both areas and were able to score well. Essay 2 was by far the most popular with candidates responding in all kinds of ways to the need to explain the importance, an aspect which is often overlooked at this level.

## **Topic 7: Roman Home and Family Life**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Question One was done by fewer candidates than the other two questions. Generally, knowledge of parts of the house was good, although there is still a misunderstanding of the differences between wall paintings, frescoes and mosaics.

#### **Q.2**

Question Two was attempted by most candidates and examiners were pleased with the standard of answers and the way candidates responded to the source material. It is worth pointing out to centres that where questions focus on the interpretation of sources the mark scheme is never so rigid as to exclude perfectly valid suggestions outside what might have been expected. Such was the case for (d). Having said that, answers to (f) lacked the clarity required to identify Roman dining habits, in many cases.

#### **Q.3**

Question Three was less popular though the topic area was fairly straightforward. Given the numerous mainstream responsibilities of the paterfamilias, it was disappointing that so many answers identified the fact that he decided whether to reject or kill his own children as his most important duty. There were some particularly interesting and varied responses to (e) although few looked at the positive aspects.

### **Section Two**

Essay 2 was considerably more popular than essay 1. But answers did not score as well as might be expected for the same reason given in comments concerning the essay in topic two and now repeated. There are a number of essays at Foundation Level that take an empathetic approach. Candidates need to be aware that these are intended as a vehicle to allow them to demonstrate their knowledge of a particular subject area; they are not a piece of English creative writing. Thus many in this essay summed up the role of a slave in a couple of sentences and spent most of the essay telling emotive stories of how they were captured or treated badly.

The relatively small number who attempted essay 1 were reasonably successful and, although answers talked about the general education of a boy, there was a lack of clear knowledge about the role of Cato and thus overall performance was not quite up to scratch.

## **Topic 8: Roman Sport and Leisure**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Question One was very popular and most answers scored reasonably well. The only problems came again in identifying the uses of parts of the theatre. Confusion with Greek practice was common and the orchestra was rarely identified as anything but where the musicians were placed or even where the chorus performed.

#### **Q.2**

Question Two was popular and candidates scored well. The bathing routine and how it fitted into a Roman's day were known better than in previous years. In question (e): the hypocaust, there was a common misunderstanding that it was water that flowed underneath floors and up walls rather than hot air.

#### **Q.3**

Question Three was popular and candidates generally scored well. Without doubt the greatest problems were encountered in e) as many made their decisions without adequate explanation or thought for the significance of the shows. Most stopped at how offended they were by the treatment of animals.

### **Section Two**

Essay 1 was the most popular and those who attempted it tended to know their stuff. As often happens at this level, the excitement of the shows replaced any evaluation of the different aspects of their appeal. A number did not go beyond what was witnessed in the amphitheatre.

Most who attempted essay 2 did little more than pad out into fuller sentences the bullet points given. Again the enjoyment of every aspect became the main reason for going to the races and the idea of some aspects not appealing was rarely explored. Some kind of basic balance is required to score well as are concrete facts about the bullet points.

## **Topic 9: Pompeii**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Question One was popular. Most had no problem with (a), (b) and (c) but it was disappointing to have the constant suggestion in (d) that Fiorelli discovered Pompeii. Answers were better for (e) and (f).

#### **Q.2**

Question Two was done by far fewer candidates. It seems that knowledge of which house is which is better than in previous years. Many had problems in (d) since the lack of knowledge of the house as a whole was evident here. This extended to (e). The layout and possible appeal of the villa or house was.

#### **Q.3**

Question Three was very popular and very well done on the whole. There were no noticeable areas where candidates struggled to come up with worthwhile information or analysis.

## **Section Two**

Essay 1 was the most popular but often not done as well as expected. Generalisations abounded. It is worth noting that knowing just a few accurate details about each building and its significance brings more reward than generalisations about the forum, details of which are already half present in the bullet points.

Essay 2 was the least popular. Having said that a number of answers dealt with this question particularly well and scored highly. Those who did not score well failed to differentiate between the stages by which water was supplied to the people.

## **Topic 10: Roman Britain**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Question One produced mixed responses. Answers to (a) often focused on how neat the plan looked rather than the practical advantages of the design. Equally in (e) many did not go beyond revisiting information that they had already given. In (d) for example many gave Baths and then talked about Baths again in (e).

#### **Q.2**

Question Two produced some very mixed responses. Particularly disappointing was the lack of specific knowledge relating to the different officers in a legion. Many used modern terms to identify them. The significance of the standard in (b) was often not understood.

#### **Q.3**

Question Three produced some very good answers. Answers demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the rebellion, its causes and the events, although specific detail of the reference in (d) was hard to come by other than Boudicca poisoning herself - supposedly.

### **Section Two**

Almost all candidates attempted essay 2 and the performance was generally very good. The best essays covered a wide range of topics and analysed the benefits and difficulties of life on the wall. Others dwelt on a few areas with fairly vague discussion and very few references to specific aspects of the wall.

Almost all who attempted essay 1 did little to convince examiners that they knew specific details of either of the villas or the design of a stereotypical villa in Roman Britain. There were, of course, a few exceptions.

## **1940/21/22 Classical Civilisation - Higher Tier**

### **General Comments**

Generally performance was in keeping with previous years. The idea that the four mark 'Explain' questions require evaluation of the topic within the context of that society, not simply an elaboration of detail on the original point is still not grasped by all. The essay questions must be read carefully and not just answered with a pre-prepared essay.

### **Comments on Individual Questions**

#### **Topic 1: Greek Religion**

##### **Section One**

###### **Q.1**

The majority of candidates answered Question One. Most found no difficulty with (a), (b), (d) and (e) and most went into a fair amount of detail on these sub questions. A surprising number were confused about the significance of what **B** was doing.

###### **Q.2**

Question Two was popular and virtually all answers were good on this topic area, although a few did identify the god as Poseidon and lost marks on (a)(i) and (a)(ii) only; consequential errors were credited in (a)(iii). Candidates were able to identify specific gods and their portrayal in (b) and Poseidon was allowed to make a second appearance here. Most found something worthwhile to say in (e).

###### **Q.3**

Question Three was the most popular and was done well. This section of the syllabus has been thoroughly tested and candidates are now comfortable in relating the significance of the Oracle to both the state and the individual.

##### **Section Two**

Essay 1 caused problems as the focus of the question was not acknowledged and as a result discussions of the appeal of being a member of the Cult of Eleusis appeared (pre-prepared essay?).

Essay 2 was the most popular and candidates were generally comfortable assessing the role of the festival as a religious event but the political aspect was often undervalued. Some answers also fell into the trap of not backing up opinions with basic facts about the festival – a danger that higher tier candidates must always guard against.

#### **Topic 2: Home and Family in Athens**

##### **Section One**

###### **Q.1**

Question One was attempted by most candidates and there were few problems. As with other topics there were some interesting interpretations of the source and, although what it portrays is fairly indisputable, answers were given some acceptable and equally some bizarre interpretations. In (e) there was a noticeable improvement in the discussion and explanation compared to what has often been seen in previous years in this topic.

**Q.2**

Question Two was the most popular and was done well. This section of the syllabus has been thoroughly tested and candidates are now comfortable in relating the significance of marriage to both the man and the woman in ancient Athens.

**Q.3**

Fewer candidates attempted Question Three but with a good deal of success, although **A** was occasionally identified as a music teacher; this answer was accepted so there were no consequential errors in (a)(ii) or (b). Again answers to (e) were well thought out.

**Section Two**

Essay 2 proved to be the most popular and most produced impressive answers which covered both factual detail and understanding of importance of slaves to a family. There were, however a number who could not see beyond 'the wife would have to do everything' mentality.

Essay 1 was answered less well, factual knowledge tended to be patchy or answers dwelt too long on one particular aspect and thus did not cover the topic fully. There was some confusion as to what was religious and what was traditional for honouring a family member.

**Topic 3: Greek Athletic and Theatrical Festivals**

**Section One**

The standard of responses overall in this topic was very good. All three Section One questions were attempted.

**Q.1**

In Question One there were no specific difficulties although answers to (e) once more highlighted the need to read the question carefully; the question asked for details of the role or purpose of the games not just two differences.

**Q.2**

In Question Two most identified area **A** as the place where the chorus performed then gave details of what they did rather than why they were important to the play. The other sub questions caused few problems.

**Q.3**

Question Three produced mixed responses. By far the most challenging question was (c)(ii) which asked for details which associated Zeus with the games. There were too many general references to Zeus's power and associations between Olympus and Olympia. Otherwise answers to the remaining questions were generally good.

**Section Two**

Examiners generally felt that these essays were not handled well by the majority of candidates. Essay 1 proved to be the most popular but very few strayed outside simply reinforcing how religious the festival was rather than looking at other elements.

In essay 2 despite some very detailed answers many saw this as a question purely about staging a play, so the concept of organisation before the actual performance was ignored by many.

#### **Topic 4: Greek Art and Architecture**

There were too few candidates who attempted this topic for anything more than a general comment to be made.

##### **Section One**

All Section One questions were attempted with a varying degree of success. As usually happens with this topic, better answers can cope with the technicalities of categorising and processing and are conversant with the technical terms but others struggle for coherent explanation.

##### **Section Two**

Essay 1 proved to be the most popular and was chosen by candidates who knew the topic well and so produced some very thorough answers. Some answers showed little knowledge about the work of Praxiteles. In such cases detail was confused and rarely got down to the real discussion of the setting of the Parthenon on the Acropolis.

Whilst there were far fewer who attempted Essay 2, the quality of response tended to be very good and showed that the candidates in question had an excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.

#### **Topic 5: Sparta and the Spartan System**

Answers to this topic once more reflected the increased number now studying Sparta and it is clear that candidates are more thoroughly prepared for this topic

##### **Section One**

###### **Q.1**

Question One produced some good responses from the candidates who chose to answer it. Most appreciated the significance of the source, which is encouraging.

###### **Q.2**

Question Two was answered by virtually all candidates and their performances showed a thorough knowledge of this area of the topic.

###### **Q.3**

A similar thorough knowledge was also shown in Question Three, which is encouraging as Spartan warfare has, in the past, been passed over in favour of the more controversial aspects of Spartan society.

##### **Section Two**

Both essays produced some excellent answers and knowledge of Spartan education was particularly thorough. The answers to essay 2 were less impressive overall. Many simply reproduced an account of the Spartan government and, whilst this is valid, it is not exclusive. In many cases, the idea of the Ephors being dominant was mentioned in an introductory sentence but was then left as the responsibilities of the various bodies were discussed.

## **Topic 6: Roman Religion**

Examiners were pleased with the way candidates dealt with this topic as a whole there very few areas to highlight in terms of our concerns and whilst the number attempting this topic was relatively small the performance was generally very good.

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Answers to Question One were good.

#### **Q.2**

In Question Two answers to (b) were sometimes vague.

#### **Q.3**

In Question Three candidates were comfortable identifying the Gods. As is the normal practice Greek names were acceptable.

### **Section Two**

Both essays were done relatively well. Weaker answers were seen in essay 1 where some simply described a marriage ceremony without evaluating the dominance of religion as opposed to tradition.

## **Topic 7: Roman Home and Family Life**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Question One was attempted by fewer candidates than the other two questions, but to good effect. Generally, knowledge of parts of the house was good and candidates were careful in associating the arrows with the areas they were intended to highlight.

#### **Q.2**

Question Two was popular and generally well answered. As with the foundation tier it is worth repeating to centres that, where questions focus on the interpretation of sources the mark scheme is never so rigid as to exclude perfectly valid suggestions outside what might have been expected. Such was the case for a number of sub questions here.

#### **Q.3**

Question Three was less popular and again comments here reflect those already made on the same topic at Foundation level Question. Given the numerous mainstream responsibilities of the paterfamilias, it was disappointing that so many answers identified the fact that he decided whether to reject or kill his own children as a main duty. There were some particularly interesting and varied responses to (d).

### **Section Two**

Examiners were pleased with the overall quality of answers to both essay questions and particularly essay 2 which produced some very carefully thought out discussion of the lives Roman families would have without slaves.

In essay 1 general education of a boy was well known, but there was a lack of clear knowledge about the role of Cato and thus overall performance was not quite as good in this question.



## **Topic 8: Roman Sport and Leisure**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Question One proved popular with candidates and knowledge was generally sound. It was clear that a number of answers to (b) were inspired by Greek Comedy. It is worth stressing that Plautine plots are the key to what is required in this topic.

#### **Q.2**

Question Two was popular and generally answered well. Without doubt the greatest problems were encountered in thinking through the stages of bathing. A few made the room the Caldarium because of the domed ceiling, thus ignoring the 'lockers' which would have negated that as an answer. Consequential errors were credited in such cases. There were some excellent answers to (e), to the delight of markers, as the same old attractions of the baths were replaced with the 'heads of wealthy households' element and consequently explanation was far more convincing – Well done!

#### **Q.3**

Question Three was generally answered well. Weaker answers employed some guesswork in (b) but tended to recover in later questions.

### **Section Two**

Both essays produced a wide range of marks.

Whilst the analysis of the importance of gladiator shows and the appeal of chariot racing is well discussed answers often fail to give concrete details of either. The marking criteria demand factual content as well as evaluation. Opinions have to be anchored to solid fact.

## **Topic 9: Pompeii**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Question One was popular and knowledge was very sound, although many were lured into a false sense of security by what they saw as the very straightforward questions. Thus, when it came to (f), many did not talk about discoveries that were significant for our understanding of life in Pompeii. Many of course chose Fiorelli but, despite his many contributions, stayed focused on explaining how important it was that we know from him how the Pompeians died rather than how they lived. – Read the question!

#### **Q.2**

Question Two was done by fewer candidates. However, it seems that candidates are much clearer which house is which than has been the case in previous years. Consequently answers were generally very good, which is the exact opposite of what was said about a similar question on the House of the Vettii in 2005.

#### **Q.3**

As was the case at Foundation level, Question Three was very popular and very well done on the whole. There were no noticeable areas where candidates struggled to come up with worthwhile information or analysis.

## **Section Two**

Essay 1 was the most popular and usually done well. There was a very full knowledge of the Forum. Any weaknesses lay in the extent to which these areas were discussed in terms of what we could learn about Pompeii and the restrictions that information supplied only by the Forum had. The best essays went on to talk about a wealth of areas outside the Forum area which were equally important; bakeries and leisure facilities being just two.

Essay 2 was the least popular. Having said that a number of answers dealt with this question particularly well and scored highly. Those who did not score well failed to differentiate between the stages by which water was supplied to the people. The best essays talked of the disadvantages of the system, particularly health issues.

## **Topic 10: Roman Britain**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Question One was done well on the whole. Most could identify key features of Roman towns in (a) and (c) and talk about the importance of **A**. There was a fairly thorough knowledge demonstrated concerning the Romanisation and development of towns in (d).

#### **Q.2**

Question Two produced some very mixed responses. Particularly disappointing was the lack of specific knowledge relating to the evidence. Many could not differentiate between the different characters identified by the arrows and often those who could gave them a title but did not assess their 'roles in the Roman army' as required by (a). Understanding of how the army was organised and the benefit of such organisation was patchy too.

#### **Q.3**

Question Three produced some very good answers. Answers demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the rebellion, its causes and the events, although specific detail of the reference in (c) was hard to come by. Most were well versed in any consequences, though some guessed that Britain was placed under some very rigorous system of supervision. Others went on to describe Romanisation as a consequence.

### **Section Two**

Almost all who attempted essay 1 did so because of a good knowledge of a particular villa and thus they scored well.

Most candidates attempted essay 2 and the performance was generally very good. The best essays covered a wide range of topics and analysed the potential roles of the wall. Others dwelt on a few areas with fairly thorough explanation. As with a number of other topics opinions and observations should always be anchored to solid facts; in this case details of the wall or the fortress towns attached.

Finally, whilst this report often highlights the negative aspects of answers, it is worth noting, and not for the first time, that examiners are forever impressed by the enthusiasm and knowledge which teachers of Classics are imparting to their students and which emanate from the pages of the scripts which are read and marked by those examiners.

## **1940/13/14 Classical Civilisation - Foundation Tier**

### **General Comments**

As last year there was a feeling that the level of answers at this level was very weak. There were those who had clearly enjoyed their studies and who achieved a solid success in the supportive environment of the Foundation Tier. But most commonly there was evidence of little real factual knowledge either for the specific details required in Section 1 or for use as support for arguments in Section 2. It was again the case that many completed only one topic with confidence, while very many did not even attempt the second topic, or gave intermittent answers from a broadly remembered aspect of the subject.

A further problem was to be found in the four-mark questions, outside the passage was used to answer the question despite the clear instruction to use the passage itself for evidence. Conversely, there were times where weaker answers made good use of these questions to deliver successful answers when they clearly had very poor recall of everything else they were being asked about in the question. While this is clearly not the intention of these questions, it is worth remarking that here is a good opportunity for those who are struggling at this level to manage to make up some marks and it is all the more frustrating, therefore, that so many do not take advantage of this potential. Finally, it was pleasing to see fewer attempts to make punctuation the focus of their answers here, though there was still the odd eulogy for the comma as an important aspect of Haemon's persuasive power.

In Section 2 there were some good essays where candidates had used the prompts from the bullet points to weave a coherent argument and accumulated marks successfully by adding details from the books in support of their views. All too often, however, the bullet points were simply listed, sometimes with some broad generalisations attached but often enough without, and naturally these could barely score at all.

### **Comments on Individual Questions**

#### **Topic 11: Homer *Odyssey* Books 9,10 21-23**

This was easily the most popular topic, as at Higher Tier. Common areas of weakness were in the delivery of the specifics of the stories and many resorted to imagination in response to the detailed questions in Section 1. The best answers showed solid levels of knowledge and effective use of the passages to support interesting ideas in the four-mark questions.

#### **Section One**

##### **Q.1**

For those who knew the stories well, these questions held no difficulties. In (c) Antiphates' wife variously had sharp teeth, was a man, a cyclops, but elsewhere the answers were substantially closer to Homer's version of events.

##### **Q.2**

Here most knew the detail of the transformation into pigs (c) and were comfortable in the assistance that Hermes gave Odysseus (e)(i) & (ii). Opinions were divided on the leadership qualities of Eurylochus (f) and used the same pieces of evidence surprisingly effectively to argue both sides. This four-mark questions was the best managed.

### Q.3

Here answers were much more sketchy with few recalling that Athene had made her sleep (d) and some very hazy ideas of how long Odysseus had been away, the shortest being a surprising few months, while the longest was a staggering 30 years. There were some solid impressions of Penelope and Euykleia, however, - some answers merely pointed to the epithet 'sensible' and concluded from this that she was sensible. This was not enough.

## Section Two

### Q.1

The majority of answers seemed unaware of the fact that Book 22 is not in fact the end of the story, despite the clue in the phrasing 'would make' a good ending. Thus high marks were hard to accumulate since some discussion of which themes in the *Odyssey* are not addressed until later was required for the full response.

### Q.2

Here there were plenty of things to say, but many became bogged down in a rather repetitive run of remarks about how things would have been different in this or that situation if a god/goddess hadn't helped/interfered. Again the details of individual interventions were lacking here too, but there was evidence that some candidates had given this topic some thought over their studies and for them this was a good essay choice and they had much of value to say.

## Topic 12: Homer *Iliad* Books 1,9,22 and 24

This proved more popular than last year and quite a few centres had chosen to study the two Homeric epics as their literature option. In many ways this enhanced the experience for this level of candidate, though for some it seemed to be rather more of a confusion than a help.

## Section One

### Q.1

A popular choice with varying degrees of success. There was some confusion about Thetis' connection with Achilleus (f), with suggestions that she might have been his slave girl being surprisingly common. Most managed sensible comments about Achilleus for (h).

### Q.2

The least popular context and the least successfully completed on the whole. Few managed (d) offering vague thoughts on how Hephaistos was a 'nice bloke'. As at Higher Tier some talked of the gods in general terms in (e) rather than with a focus on this passage.

### Q.3

Most had no idea what advice Peleus had given Achilleus (b) but were fully versed on the Patroklos storyline (d). Some creditable attempts were made to explore Odysseus' persuasive techniques (e), the best realising that he was using a range of different approaches (carrot and stick, as some phrased it) to get what he wanted from Achilleus.

## Section Two

### Q.1

Few had really got a good range of information to deliver about the two men. Many had little memory of Hektor's agonising before he faces Achilleus, though there was some useful discussion of him as a family man by some. Priam was not really very clear as a character and there were many generalisations about how troublesome it was being a king. A few recalled how he rolled about in the dung and were able to look at him with a slightly different eye.

**Q.2**

Again this was not answered with much confidence by many. Most followed the bullet points and managed some sensible thoughts about the anger of Achilles but fewer went on to discuss the resolution of this theme through his dealings with Priam.

**Topic 13: Sophocles *Oedipus the King* and *Antigone***

As every year there was some tendency to put down what are arguably the most obvious factual details in the plays (Oedipus kills his father, he marries his mother, Antigone wants to bury her brother, Creon never listens to anyone, Teiresias upsets everyone, most of the characters die) in response to as many questions as possibly but perhaps there was a touch less of it this year.

**Section One**

**Q.1**

Most knew of the sphinx (c) but almost none knew the Cadmus connection (d). It is worth reminding candidates that there are good and helpful notes in the McAuslan and Franklin editions of the plays, which could assist in this kind of question.

**Q.2**

Better answers on the whole, with (c) being the only question least well done. The question was not about *what* choruses are in the context of Greek Tragedies, but *who* this particular group in this particular play are.

**Q.3**

Few realised that the rumour was in support of Antigone's view about the burial of Polyneices (a) and not many recalled in (b) that Creon had changed his original punishment of stoning to enclosing her in a sealed cave, so there was much talk of her killing herself here. There were some fair attempts to consider Haemon's skills at persuasion with opinion divided as to how successful he was (e).

**Section Two**

**Q.1**

There was a tendency to express a naive view of a flawless Antigone here. Few saw the excesses in her return to the body or understood the chorus' critical views of her chosen heroines from mythology.

**Q.2**

Few answers had much of substance to offer here. There were confusions over when Teiresias appeared, how and why he had come in each play, what he said to each of the kings and how far he was irritating or useful to anybody.

**Topic 14: Euripides *Hippolytus* and *Alcestis***

There were insufficient scripts at this level to make valid comments about this topic.

**Topic 15: Aristophanes *Acharnians* and *Lysistrata***

There were insufficient scripts at this level to make valid comments about this topic.

**Topic 16: Herodotus *The Persian War***

There were insufficient scripts at this level to make valid comments about this topic.

### **Topic 17: Virgil *Aeneid* Books 1,2 and 4**

As last year and as mentioned on other topics, there was a poor level of knowledge of the storyline and confusion.

#### **Section One**

##### **Q.1**

There was much confusion over which goddess did what. Some seemed to find nothing in the passage to suggest that there was going to be anything but roses in the future for Aeneas and Dido, ignoring the rather pointed references to ruinous love with a cavalier disregard for the evidence.

##### **Q.2**

Again answers either showed knowledge of this part of the storyline or didn't and there was much guesswork. Many fared better on (d) and could use the passage effectively to support the exciting elements that they saw there.

##### **Q.3**

As with question 1 there was a surprising number who thought that the passage was not very dramatic (e) and that this was merely a necessary moment to get rid of the wife who would be in the way in the coming excitement of Dido. The other details were generally not well known.

#### **Section Two**

##### **Q.1**

There was quite a lot of passion in the answer to this question but rather too little of it was backed up by solid detail from the text, with many answers using broad references to the story such as 'when Dido talks to Anna' or 'Aeneas just says a few words and is off' instead of pinpointing the events that pertain to their argument.

##### **Q.2**

Here there were some more successful answers and opinions tended to come down heavily in one camp or the other. The bullets were of assistance to some, who used them to trigger recall of the relevant details, but again there were many who simply made generalised statements that only repeated the information they had already been given.

### **Topic 18: Ovid *Metamorphoses* Books 7 and 8**

This was more popular than last year.

#### **Section One**

##### **Q.1**

In (e)(i) many thought that Jason wanted his father rejuvenated when in fact his request was to take some years of his own life to extend his father's a little. Some had the facts of Jason's tasks fairly well to hand, but many were vague and had a more Hollywood slant on the events. Despite calling it griping many had some good things to offer in appreciation of the passage (f).

##### **Q.2**

This was the least popular and was not well done on the whole, with uncertain knowledge about Cerberus and where he spent his time and a poor notion of Theseus' arrival at Athens.

**Q.3**

This story was well known in essence but many fell short of the requirements for (c) saying only that the feathers were attached to the wax, which hardly constituted detail. Some spoke effectively about their feelings for the two characters in the story but an unfortunate number took information from outside the passage and thus could not gain credit.

**Section Two**

While many had some knowledge of the stories here there was often a lack of precision in references to the text. 'Baucis and Philemon is a happy story', 'Erysichthon is a horrible story because of Hunger', 'Scylla was a nasty person so you don't feel sorry for her' were all too common and offered no argument for assessment.

**Topic 19: Pliny A selection of his letters**

Quite popular but with very varied levels of success.

**Section One**

**Q.1**

There was much variety in (a) for the name of Pliny's wife (Mrs. Pliny, Margaret...) and some vague answers on the nature of her illness (b). Most remembered that he was worried about how she might be tempted by young men (d) but many could find no details to suggest for his occupations while she is away. Some sensible (and some naïve) views were given for (f) on Pliny's attitude to his wife.

**Q.2**

In this question the commonest error was to suppose that questions (a) - (d) were all referring to the issue of education in Comum too.

**Q.3**

In Q.3 there was some uncertainty about the particulars of Pliny's queries concerning the Christians and again there were a lot of generalisations. Some knew Trajan's reply on the points Pliny raises here, but many spoke in more general terms about the kind of replies he makes in response to Pliny's rather endless questions.

**Section Two**

In the essays some found Pliny's uncle to be a magnificent fellow (Q.1) and had clearly been completely convinced by the spin. The more discerning found cause for more scepticism and argued their case quite well, using the evidence nicely. Those who knew the Trajan correspondence well offered some sensible thoughts for Q.2 but again there were many who were floundering after making a few general remarks around the bullet points.

**Topic 20: Tacitus *Empire and Emperors* chapters 1-6**

There were insufficient scripts at this level to make valid comments about this topic.

## 1940/23/24 Classical Civilisation - Higher Tier

### General Comments

This year offered a wide range of achievement. At the highest end of the spectrum answers to Section 1 were full of accurate details, with some intelligent discussion of the individual passages in the four-mark questions, while essays offered well-balanced discussions supported effectively by solid reference to particular incidents and stylistic features (as appropriate) in the texts. The largest number of answers fell into the middle range of scores, with some low scoring scripts, where the students would, it was felt, have been far better served by entering the Foundation Tier paper, which would have given them greater support to deliver what they did know more effectively.

A number of common causes for weaker performances were identified and some have featured in the Examiner's report before. The most apparent of these is a lack of knowledge of the texts themselves: in Section 1 candidates need to have the details of the storylines readily available to give sufficiently full answers and in Section 2 even the finest evaluative discussion will be left incomplete if the supportive evidence from the text is not forthcoming. It really cannot be overstressed that familiarity with the bones of the material is fundamental to achieving success in this paper. Another frequent area of weakness is the four-mark answer in the context questions: firstly it must be remembered that these require the information to be derived *from the passage* (unlike all the other questions in Section A which must be derived from material *outside the passage*) such that even very interesting points will not be able to accrue marks if they cannot be supported from the text on the paper; secondly, quite a high number of candidates appeared to be spending a disproportionate amount of time on these four-mark questions, writing almost as much as they were presenting for their essays. However, it was generally good to see that many centres had clearly impressed upon their students the effectiveness of the tidy delivery of point, evidence and explanation in an orderly fashion.

This year found a number ill-prepared for some of the less predictable essay questions (the minor characters in Aristophanes, the focus on Teiresias in Sophocles) or who missed the vital restriction in the title (most notably the Book 4 requirement in Virgil). Conversely, the widening of the possible range of material at other times (using either one or the other or both of the plays studied, for example) allowed candidates to make the most effective use of the material that they felt most comfortable with. As every year, the weakest answers were those that knew the storyline well but couldn't *select* information to support the particular title or had much of interest to say about the question posed but lacked sufficient evidence to make their points convincing.

Rubric errors were thankfully very much in the minority this year, allowing candidates to focus their time appropriately on the proper requirements. Some still found time was clearly pressing on them by their final essay, particularly on the three-topic paper, but there was equally a significant number who were producing their best work at this late hour!

The *Odyssey* proved by far the most popular of the topics once again, followed closely by the *Aeneid* and the two Sophocles plays. Ovid's tales were strongly supported and the *Iliad* moved up again in the popularity stakes. Although Tacitus was still far from a frequent choice, those answering questions here were often very well versed on his material and had clearly found their study most engaging. Aristophanes had a slightly stronger than usual following and factual information here was at times agreeably solid. Herodotus had few takers and Euripides seemed to have fallen by the wayside a little. Pliny retained his solid, if not huge, fan base.



## Comments on Individual Questions

### Topic 11: Homer *Odyssey* Books 9,10 21-23

#### Section One

Popularity was spread across the three context questions.

##### Q.1

The details of this question were not well grasped by many. Few recalled the way nightfall and dawn were right next to each other in the land of the Laestrygonians (a)(ii) and a significant number, while finding it easy to recall that Odysseus moored outside the harbour (b) neglected to show how this was cleverer than the captains, in that they were too easily tempted by the apparent security of the nice harbour. There were some very nice assessments of the way Homer draws out the pathos of the men's demise at the hands of the Laestrygonians in (e).

##### Q.2

This familiar story drew a good number of high scores, though the weaker answers mistakenly focused on Circe's friendly welcome in (a)(i) and (ii) and there was some surprising uncertainty about what kind of animals the men were turned into. Some floundered a little in (b)(ii) missing the contrast Homer draws in his description of the men retaining their human understanding while imprisoned in the bodies of pigs. Views of Eurylochus (c) were strongly felt and candidates were divided in their support for his leadership skills but almost all supported their points effectively whichever side they came down on.

##### Q.3

Many found it hard to articulate the way in which the requirements of *xenia* in the Greek world made the Suitors' crimes so heinous (b) and also how this impacted on Penelope's supposition that they had been punished by a god in consequence (c). In (d) the commonest cause of poor scoring was in offering emotions of the moment (so 'excited' or 'angry') rather than the required elements of character (e.g. Eurycleia's motherly approach to Penelope).

#### Section Two

There was an even spread of interest in the two questions.

##### Q.1

There were some sound answers here from candidates who knew the detail of the battle with the Suitors and who used material effectively from the other books to consider how Book 22 offers a satisfactory climax to the various threads of Odysseus' return from Troy. The majority, however, forgot that Book 22 is not in fact the final book, either mistakenly discussing the reunion of Odysseus and Penelope as if it were included here or neglecting to consider at all that this was an important part of the resolution of the themes of the *Odyssey* as a whole. Very few indeed mentioned Laertes or how Odysseus still had to deal with the settlement of Ithaca as a whole.

##### Q.2

A predictable essay title that most managed to complete comfortably, though few scored the highest marks. Opinions were divided on whether the gods improved things or not, the weaker answers went little beyond listing the individuals who interfered and what would or would not have happened had they not been there. The best gave some more perceptive thoughts on the gods as representative of aspects of Odysseus himself, considered the way in which they detracted from or enhanced Odysseus' heroic status and discussed how the gods in many ways reflected elements of natural laws.

## Topic 12: Homer *Iliad* Books 1,9,22 and 24

### Section One

#### Q.1

Generally done with confidence by candidates who had a good idea of the significant details, though in (c)(ii) many missed the significance of the Heroic code in this answer. It should be remembered that the specification contains an expectation that candidates will have some understanding of the historical and social context within which the literature was composed and delivered. In (d) most pointed out Achilles' anger and enjoyed attaching the insults as evidence of this and of his bitterness. Less were interested in his more reasonable arguments!

#### Q.2

In (b) there was a rather limited knowledge of Thetis' request and in (e), while many mentioned the quarrel, few achieved the extra mark for further explanation. Some answered (f) with general characterisations of the gods rather than considering the individuals in the passage as required by the question.

#### Q.3

A varied level of success in this question, where sound knowledge of the text allowed some to give intelligent answers, particularly to (a) where some perceptive remarks were made about the different strengths of the embassy members and (d) where the death of Patroklos was readily noted by many as Achilles' future pain and the best answers reflected on his attempt to cure his grief by killing Hektor. Question (e) was well done by many, who used the passage well to support their points on Odysseus' skilful techniques of persuasion.

### Section Two

#### Q.1

Most answers had more to say on one of the characters than the other, with a slight preference for Hektor, though quite a number explored Priam's role effectively too. The best essays here considered the anxieties Hektor expresses when he agonises over facing Achilles and gave more rounded pictures of the heroic figures of Prince and King balanced with the very human qualities of the two men.

#### Q.2

The best answers here knew that Homer's expressed theme, in the very first lines of the poem, was the anger of Achilles and thus were able to consider effectively how satisfactory Book 24 was in bringing this to a conclusion. Rather too many thought that it was no good as an ending because we don't get to see Troy fall and some became rather fixed on how delightful it would have been if the whole thing had ended with the kind of bloodbath climax that a good Bruce Willis film delivers.

## Topic 13: Sophocles *Oedipus the King* and *Antigone*

On balance the feeling of the examiners was that this topic had been more carefully answered this year, with fewer candidates delivering stock answers to questions without looking to see what was actually required and confusing the overlapping material.

### Section One

#### Q.1

Very few understood the priest's reference to seeking the gods' will through divination in (b) but the remaining questions were generally well handled. Weaker answers found it hard to analyse the ship simile, though most managed to gain one mark at least. Most found something striking

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in the priest's speech (e) and produced the evidence effectively, some perhaps dwelling a little ghoulishly on the details of the plague's effects.

### **Q.2**

Most knew the material comfortably and common pitfalls were in missing the point about Polyneices and Eteocles agreeing to *share* the kingdom (a)(ii) and Polyneices' marital connection with Argos as a reason for that city's involvement (c). Question (d) proved challenging and many produced broad answers about the general function of choruses ('they tell us what has happened') rather than considering the poetic language or the dramatic exclamations (as a striking opening) or the menacing atmosphere that they conjure up.

### **Q.3**

Many mistakenly supposed the rumour in (a) to be the secret burial of Polyneices and quite a few missed the significant detail of the change in Antigone's punishment from stoning to burial alive (b) but otherwise the answers were solid with many providing good points on the effectiveness of Haemon's persuasive techniques, backed up by evidence well chosen from the text to support their views whichever side they were arguing on.

## **Section Two**

### **Q.1**

Most found it easy to enumerate the "righteous" reasons (as some chose to call them) for Antigone's actions, such as the laws of the gods and the nature of duty to one's family but there were far fewer successful arguments on the self-indulgent qualities that she exhibits through her return to the body and her refusal to compromise in the face of Creon's attempts to give her a way out, and the subtleties that emerge from her song with the chorus as she is led to her imprisonment were missed.

### **Q.2**

This was not well done on the whole, mainly because there was little attempt to interpret what the question was asking. Few tried to look at *why* Teiresias could be considered irritating but just talked about his use in terms of the play's plot or in vague terms of helping to sort out the city. Some also tended to wander from the question and talk about how he was a character full of dramatic irony because he was blind. Many were unclear about when and why he appeared in the two plays, often confusing the details of what he said and to whom.

## **Topic 14: Euripides *Hippolytus* and *Alcestis***

There was broadly a good level of engagement with the plays and overall the examiners felt that the questions were tackled confidently and with success. As elsewhere, however, there was a lack of recall of the details of the storyline that would give appropriate and telling evidence for arguments.

## **Section One**

### **Q.1**

Across the questions here answers tended to gain one mark for the fact but did not manage the explanatory point for the remaining mark. In (e) opinions on the nurse and Hippolytus were vigorously expressed and the evidence was often well presented.

### **Q.2**

This was perhaps the most successful of the context questions, with most having a good idea of the factual details. A surprising number omitted the fact that Poseidon was Theseus' father in (b)(ii) and that he had promised to fulfil curses for his son.

**Q.3**

This was often the least well handled of the contexts. In (a) many did not recall Admetus' hospitality to Apollo as the source of his opportunity to evade death. Most fared quite well in (c) though some found it easy to be rather vague in their assessment of how Alcestis is preparing for death (e).

**Section Two**

The essays in this topic were often done quite well, with some steady argumentation and a comfortable range of evidence from the text.

**Q.1**

Weaker answers produced a narration of the plays rather than a consideration of what Euripides hoped his audience would learn from experiencing them. Most managed to give two or three convincing "messages", but few looked beyond the most obvious (usually 'honouring the gods').

**Q.2**

Although this title gave scope for a lot of discussion it was not generally as popular as might have been expected. The weakest answers here were really only catalogues of the thematic points that attract the reader's attention although some attained more respectable marks by enhancing their views with solid reference to particular incidents in the play. Many managed to handle satisfactorily the 'timeless themes' or 'appealing characters' arguments while the best managed to move into more subtle possibilities such as the differing tones of the two plays. Counter-arguments were less common, though some argued persuasively that the ending of *Hippolytus* was rather drawn out while *Alcestis*' set-piece central debate tended to slow the pace oddly.

**Topic 15: Aristophanes *Acharnians* and *Lysistrata***

Rather agreeably there seemed to be more of an emphasis this year on recalling and understanding the plays as opposed to just revelling in their rudeness. Many candidates revealed a solid knowledge of the factual details of the plays and could produce sound answers because of this.

**Section One**

**Q.1**

Well known material here apart from (c) where very few knew the significance of the Basileus Archon.

**Q.2**

Again the factual information was well known here, although few knew about the oracle (d). Most found it easy to get the full four marks for the humour (e) since they used the passage effectively to support their points.

**Q.3**

Here the wool analogy proved difficult to explain in (b) and the different focus in (d) threw quite a large number. Some answers were answering the question they would rather have had anyway...

## Section Two

### Q.1

This question (*the entertainment value of the chorus*) was not popular nor well answered on the whole yet despite this, it was nice to see, in those answers that had a fair crack at it, more account of the visual and musical aspects of the plays than the usual stock essays manage.

### Q.2

This was clearly not an anticipated question, but some candidates put up a solid showing, using the many varied folk that people Aristophanes' plays to good effect and delivering a convincing argument as to their entertainment value. The weakest answers tended to be a catalogue of a few scenes involving minor characters, with some sturdy factual information but minimal consideration of what they contributed to the fun of the theatrical experience.

## Topic 16: Herodotus *The Persian War*

Very few centres chose this topic but those who did produced some fair answers.

## Section One

The four mark questions were answered generally with confidence and candidates used the passages well for their evidence.

### Q.1

Common difficulties were: (c) where, although most knew about the change in government, few managed to explain why this made the Athenians great.

### Q.2

Common difficulties were: (b) where many omitted mention of the punishment of the engineers and how this was designed to give a spur to the new engineers.

### Q.3

Common difficulties were: (c)(i) where few seemed to be able to access the details available here (though there are plenty to choose from) for why the Greeks felt they had an advantage at this point.

## Section Two

### Q.1

Some found it difficult to confine their essays to battles but generally there were good references to anecdotes, speeches, colourful characters like Artemisia and the enormous odds. The very best answers talked of the variety of narrative techniques used and the length of the battle.

### Q.2

Most here were able to recall the mistakes Xerxes made and considered his character flaws effectively. Equally confidently many rehearsed the quality of the Greek commanders and their tactics (Leonidas' heroism, Themistocles' cunning etc.) as well as the skills of the Spartan hoplites and Athenian navy.

## **Topic 17: Virgil *Aeneid* Books 1, 2 and 4**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Many candidates managed the basic information well but found it hard to deliver the fuller picture. In (b)(ii) there was confusion about who was helping Aeneas when. In (e) there seemed to be difficulty in understanding the word 'ominous'.

#### **Q.2**

This was the most successfully handled question, with (c) being the only difficulty. Many spoke of the murder of Polites, though this is not unheroic (Pyrrhus has wounded the young man in proper combat who after a chase happens to expire in front of his father – there is great pathos in this but not any criticism of Pyrrhus). Quite a number knew that the altar had some significance in the tale but could not identify the notion of sanctuary/sacrilege. In (d) there were some very nice discussions of literary features though the simile tended to be merely mentioned rather than explored for its effectiveness.

#### **Q.3**

Q.3 proved troublesome for many, whose knowledge of the detail of the text proved to be less precise than was needed here, particularly in (b) and (c)(i) where information about the state of Troy was taken randomly from the whole tale. The well managed answers were particularly finely argued, using the passage to explore the pathos of Creusa's words and Aeneas' desperate attempts to embrace her.

### **Section Two**

#### **Q.1**

The least popular essay but often effectively handled. Many talked about exciting themes and characters in the books, the gods and literary techniques such as similes and pathos. Most concentrated almost exclusively on Aeneas' departure, missing the wealth of potential in Dido's obsession, the hunt and the storm etc.

#### **Q.2**

Very many answers launched into a practised essay on the character of Aeneas and used all three books for their evidence despite the constraint in the title. Although some managed to gain some marks through a good analysis of Book 4 when they got there, it was hard for them to fit in enough for the best marks given the time restrictions after discussing the other books first.

## **Topic 18: Ovid *Metamorphoses* Books 7 and 8**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

Despite the regrettable misprint in (d) many candidates managed to deliver the information necessary. In (e) there was a lot of quotation of the fire-breathing bulls and brazen hooves but weaker answers found it hard to explain what was so effective about them, resorting to broad generalisations about vividness and excitement. For marks to be attained here there is a need to analyse why the evidence being presented makes the passage vivid (or whatever) for the reader.

#### **Q.2**

The least popular of the contexts, this was not particularly successfully handled, with few details of Theseus' exploits across the Isthmus (c) appearing. For (e) there were some very solid answers reflecting a fine understanding of Ovid's idiosyncratic tale-telling and it was clear that

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teachers had given time to discussions which had engaged their classes well. Unfortunately, for those who had not spent time on this, the question proved challenging.

### **Q.3**

The most popular question of the three and generally the most successfully handled. There were some intriguing suggestions in (b) for Daedalus' other inventions (the pencil, the helicopter) but most were very familiar with the details of this story. The best answers in (e) gave heart-felt analyses of the pathos here and almost all made a creditable effort at delivering some effective points though a few brought in information from elsewhere in the story forgetting that in these four mark questions the evidence must be taken from the passage itself.

## **Section Two**

### **Q.1**

The myths were known very well (although some just gave vague hints such as that there is humour in the Baucis/Philemon story). Many had lots of ideas (the *Metamorphoses*, the themes, characters, humour, violence etc.) and there was often a good range of examples from all the myths. Many found themselves talking about stories from Book 7, though it did not always have too deleterious an effect since there was often a rich variety of information still contained within the whole essay package. With the weaker answers evaluation could have been stronger and more varied, instead of relying on broad statements like 'this makes us feel happy, feel sad, feel excited'.

### **Q.2**

Again the story was known fairly well. Most mentioned Scylla's initial uncertainty, her betrayal, Minos' refusal, and the final changing forms. The best could provide more specific details such as her throwing pebbles against a wall to suggest her youthful innocence, or quoted specific lines from the soliloquy.

## **Topic 19: Pliny A selection of his letters**

### **Section One**

#### **Q.1**

This was by far the most popular choice and most knew the facts well. Quite a large number of candidates were generous to Pliny in (f) and thought him more concerned about his wife than himself.

#### **Q.2**

Rather a lot of the answers to (a) - (c) revolved around the education issue as being something Pliny was exercised about in relation to townfolk, not recognising that this was not that letter.

#### **Q.3**

This was also not particularly well answered, since answers tended to be vague about the details of Pliny's interrogations in (a) - (c) and for (d) there was a tendency to say why Pliny would appreciate replies in general from Trajan rather than considering the details of this particular reply.

### **Section Two**

The usual confusion over Pliny's motives and whether one swallows all he says appeared most dramatically here, with some who thought Pliny's uncle the most wonderful man imaginable and that Pliny himself the Emperor's ideal subject. The best responses gave a balanced overview, arguing both sides of the case to come to some sort of reasonable middle view. While some remembered a good variety of facts from his letters, evaluation was often quite confused.

**Topic 20: Tacitus *Empire and Emperors* chapters 1-6**

**Section One**

Though not a popular topic, the centres who chose to tackle it had generally prepared their candidates well and many of the answers were informed and detailed.

**Q.1**

This attracted the minority of candidates. There were difficulties in understanding how Caesar's dictatorship sealed the fate of the Republic (a)(ii) and in analysing the way such phrases as 'political murder' constituted a biased account (e).

**Q.2**

In Q.2 the machinations of Sejanus were generally well known though in (b)(ii) many were unsure how he used the senate to make himself powerful and again, while the evidence was easily produced in (e), many could not say enough to gain the full marks, since they were not clear in the statement they were making nor did they explain how the evidence corroborated that statement.

**Q.3**

Here (b)(ii) and (c) proved the more vague, with many talking of why people in general are suspicious when they are in power rather than considering the specific details of Germanicus and Agrippina (for (b)) and being unable to produce particular information about Sabinus (for (c)) The final question was effectively done here.

**Section Two**

**Q.1**

Many had prepared well for this essay. There was a good balanced approach in examining his character, with common points covering his ambiguous speech, his weakness in sorting out the mutinies personally and his generosity in times of crisis. A full range of examples was generally given to support the proffered views.

**Q.2**

Here too there was a wide range of information tellingly delivered to create a rounded argument and again the material was well supported by specific and well chosen evidence from the text.



**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
Classical Civilisation (1940)  
June 2007 Assessment Series**

**Component Threshold Marks**

| Component | Max Mark | A  | B  | C  | D  | E  | F  | G  |
|-----------|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Paper 11  | 80       |    |    | 50 | 42 | 35 | 28 | 21 |
| Paper 12  | 120      |    |    | 75 | 64 | 53 | 42 | 31 |
| Paper 13  | 80       |    |    | 35 | 28 | 22 | 16 | 10 |
| Paper 14  | 120      |    |    | 52 | 42 | 33 | 24 | 15 |
| Paper 21  | 80       | 55 | 48 | 41 | 33 |    |    |    |
| Paper 22  | 120      | 82 | 71 | 61 | 49 |    |    |    |
| Paper 23  | 80       | 47 | 38 | 29 | 18 |    |    |    |
| Paper 24  | 120      | 70 | 56 | 43 | 27 |    |    |    |
| Paper 05  | 40       | 32 | 28 | 24 | 19 | 15 | 11 | 7  |

**Specification Options**

**Foundation Tier**

**Option FA**

|                                | Max Mark | A* | A | B | C    | D    | E    | F    | G    |
|--------------------------------|----------|----|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| Overall Threshold Marks        | 200      |    |   |   | 96   | 81   | 66   | 52   | 38   |
| Percentage in Grade            |          |    |   |   | 36.6 | 24.4 | 14.6 | 14.6 | 4.9  |
| Cumulative Percentage in Grade |          |    |   |   | 36.6 | 61.0 | 75.6 | 90.2 | 95.1 |

The total entry for the examination was 41.

**Option FB**

|                                | Max Mark | A* | A | B | C    | D    | E    | F    | G    |
|--------------------------------|----------|----|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| Overall Threshold Marks        | 200      |    |   |   | 109  | 92   | 75   | 58   | 41   |
| Percentage in Grade            |          |    |   |   | 26.7 | 18.2 | 17.6 | 13.1 | 9.1  |
| Cumulative Percentage in Grade |          |    |   |   | 26.7 | 44.9 | 62.5 | 75.6 | 84.7 |

The total entry for the examination was 181.

**Option FC**

|                                | Max Mark | A* | A | B | C    | D    | E    | F    | G    |
|--------------------------------|----------|----|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| Overall Threshold Marks        | 200      |    |   |   | 106  | 89   | 72   | 55   | 38   |
| Percentage in Grade            |          |    |   |   | 38.9 | 25.1 | 16.7 | 8.8  | 6.7  |
| Cumulative Percentage in Grade |          |    |   |   | 38.9 | 64.0 | 80.8 | 89.5 | 96.2 |

The total entry for the examination was 239.

**Higher Tier**

**Option HA**

|                                | <b>Max Mark</b> | <b>A*</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>F</b> | <b>G</b> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Overall Threshold Marks        | 200             | 146       | 125      | 104      | 84       | 60       | 48       |          |          |
| Percentage in Grade            |                 | 13.8      | 23.4     | 20.1     | 15.0     | 13.2     | 9.9      |          |          |
| Cumulative Percentage in Grade |                 | 13.8      | 37.1     | 57.2     | 72.2     | 85.3     | 95.2     |          |          |

The total entry for the examination was 334.

**Option HB**

|                                | <b>Max Mark</b> | <b>A*</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>F</b> | <b>G</b> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Overall Threshold Marks        | 200             | 149       | 129      | 109      | 90       | 67       | 55       |          |          |
| Percentage in Grade            |                 | 13.5      | 25.9     | 26.2     | 17.9     | 11.4     | 2.3      |          |          |
| Cumulative Percentage in Grade |                 | 13.5      | 39.4     | 65.6     | 83.5     | 94.9     | 97.2     |          |          |

The total entry for the examination was 851.

**Option HC**

|                                | <b>Max Mark</b> | <b>A*</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>F</b> | <b>G</b> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Overall Threshold Marks        | 200             | 151       | 132      | 113      | 94       | 70       | 58       |          |          |
| Percentage in Grade            |                 | 18.2      | 27.2     | 27.3     | 16.6     | 8.0      | 1.5      |          |          |
| Cumulative Percentage in Grade |                 | 18.2      | 45.3     | 72.6     | 89.2     | 97.2     | 98.7     |          |          |

The total entry for the examination was 1824

**Overall**

|                                | <b>A*</b> | <b>A</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>F</b> | <b>G</b> |
|--------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Percentage in Grade            | 14.2      | 22.9     | 22.7     | 19.1     | 11.2     | 4.5      | 1.5      | 1.0      |
| Cumulative Percentage in Grade | 14.2      | 37.1     | 59.8     | 78.9     | 90.1     | 94.6     | 96.1     | 97.1     |

The total entry for the examination was 3470.

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.



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