# GCSE

# Classical Greek

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J291**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) **J091**

# OCR Report to Centres June 2015

# CONTENTS

**General Certificate of Secondary Education**

**Classical Greek (J291)**

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**Classical Greek (J091)**

**OCR REPORT TO CENTRES**

# B401 Classical Greek Language 1 (Mythology and domestic life)

**General Comments:**

One thousand four hundred and seventy candidates entered for the examination this year, slightly lower than last year. There was no evidence that any candidate struggled to finish the examination within the allotted time; indeed, many candidates had time to write out a neater version of their translation. The examination was appropriate for the range of candidates for whom it was intended.

Most candidates tackled this paper very well; it was pleasing to see some very good translations and good comprehension of the story. However, for some candidates, previous knowledge of the story of Tantalus led them to disregard the actual Greek text and answer from their own knowledge which led to some loss of marks, particularly in the comprehension section.

Some candidates made excessive use of bracketed alternatives, frequently resulting in a loss of marks. This approach should be actively discouraged, as alternative responses often cause harmful additions to responses and result in the candidate not being awarded a mark that they might otherwise have received. Alternative versions do not gain a candidate extra marks, but do take up valuable time which candidates may need for answering other questions
On occasion, some candidates lost marks because they omitted words and even whole phrases from the translation. Candidates should be reminded to check through their work.

Common problems were: tense of and co-ordination of participles, compound verbs, indirect questions, indirect statement, recognition and appropriate translation of the definite and indefinite article, and, occasionally, translation of past tenses – particularly aorists.

**Comments on Individual Questions:**

Q1      This was answered well by the majority of candidates, with most achieving 2/2. Common mistakes were thinking χρήματα meant "gold" or "property/properties" but as candidates were only required to give two out of three possible correct answers, this usually did not adversely affect the mark.

Q2
(a)      This question was answered well by almost all candidates.

(b)      Answered well by the majority of candidates. A small number offered "noble" for ἀγαθὸν, which was acceptable, but some suggested "kind" for σοφὸν, which was not. A small minority of candidates also mistakenly translated both adjectives as superlatives.

Q3      This question was a good differentiator with most candidates managing to give two correct answers. Common errors were to translate υἱὸς ἦν τοῦ Διός as 'the son of a god', φίλος ὢν τῶν θεῶν as 'loved by the gods' and πολλάκις μετ᾽ αὐτῶν ἤσθιεν as 'he often met with/talked with them'.

Q4      This question produced a big variety in marks. Some candidates did not notice the plural on βουλὰς but the most common error was incorrectly making πάσας agree with τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.

Q5    This was generally well answered with candidates spotting the comparative (and the accompanying genitive of comparison) and superlative forms well.

Q6    A considerable number incorrectly chose 3 words based around μέγαν κίνδυνον. Candidates who did chose the correct Greek phrase often had difficulties with the correct translation of εἰδέναι.

Q7    This question was generally comprehensively answered with candidates showing a full understanding of the whole sentence, not just the final two adjectives (which would have been sufficient for the marks).

Q8    The translation passage:

(i)    Most scored well on this short section. The most common errors included failing to recognise that ἀδικώτατον was superlative, mistranslating it as 'most evil/terrible' or putting in a non-existent 'the' in front of it.

(ii)   There were a number of common errors in this section such as the translation of νέον as 'new' (although a meaning on the defined vocabulary list, it wasn't accepted in this context), ὄντα being mistranslated, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα being translated as 'with this' or even being omitted, τοῦ παιδὸς being mistranslated as 'his son' and τὰ being omitted at the end of the sentence.

(iii)  This was usually translated well. Most marks in this section were lost on the opening two words τότε and δὴ. It was pleasing to see how well candidates dealt with the purpose clause.

(iv)   This part of the translation caused the most problem for candidates. Some candidates thought the gods were being addressed and treated οἱ θεοί as vocative. The tense of the verb γνώσονται caused many issues as did the construction following it.

(v)    This section was answered well by many candidates. The most common errors were mistranslating ἐπεὶ as 'then', rendering ᾔσθοντο as either 'they knew/understood/realised' or even as 'they ate' and perhaps most understandably the difficult phrase τὰ … πραχθέντα.

Q9
(a)    Almost all candidates answered this question correctly.

(b)    Candidates found this question difficult on the whole with many translating ἡ θυγάτηρ as 'his daughter' and even more candidates unsure of the meaning of ἀπελήφθη, with some candidates needlessly killing Persephone off.

Q10   Some candidates struggled with the tense of ποιεῖ with translations such as 'what he/she had done' or 'what had been done'. There were also many repeated errors of αἰσθομένη which were not penalised.

Q11
(a)    This question was answered very well with any problems arising around a vocabulary error on the word υἱόν.

(b)    This was answered very well with candidates making good use of the glossed vocabulary.

Q12   Answered correctly by almost 100% of candidates.

Q13

(a)     This was generally well done but some candidates did not give enough detail stating that Tantalus was forced 'to stand', omitting ἐν ὕδατι. Some had Tantalus standing 'on water', 'in a river' or even 'in a forest'.

(b)     Many candidates answered this correctly; however, a significant number relied on their knowledge of the story rather than the Greek text given for the answers. In fact one candidate told us he was recalling it from Robert Graves! Consequently answers such as 'the water was too low' were given with candidates not correctly translating κατέβη.

Q14     Candidates needed to pay attention to detail here in order to access full marks. Errors included candidates referring to κλάδος in the plural, thinking that ἔχων related to Tantalus, not κλάδος and being unclear on the meaning of ἀνέβη.

Q15     It was pleasing to discern that there were fewer errors in terms of technique on this question this year.  Most candidates managed to think of suitable derivations with candidates tending to want to show that they could come up with more original responses such as automaton and autopsy, or hydrofoil and hydroelectric. These were very pleasing to see but they were not always clearly defined. Overall, αὐτός was answered more successfully than ὕδωρ  which some candidates attempted to define as something to do with 'odour' or 'udder'.

# B402 Classical Greek Language 2 (History)

**General comments**

I was impressed with the high standard of accuracy this year in both the translation and comprehension. In particular the translation seemed to have been carefully worked out by the vast majority. Some candidates did not look carefully enough at the glossed words. There were particular problems with candidates mistranslating Greece for Greeks, despite the word being given in the glossary. There were some grammatical phrases that caused particular problems and where the majority of mistakes occurred. Centres would do well to ensure that their candidates have thoroughly prepared these grammatical topics. Areas of difficulty included comparatives and superlatives, connecting participle phrases, prepositions and conditional clauses.

**Comments on Individual Questions:**

1a    Very well answered with almost all candidates gaining the mark.

1b    Many pupils lost marks on this question. The most common error was failing to spot the superlative, although there were a few who fell into the common trap of mistaking invade and attack. A small number of candidates struggled with 'prepared'.

2    Very well answered. One or two students wrote lucky instead of unlucky.

3a    This was answered fairly well, with the most common errors coming in the translation of the dative - there were a number of 'for/to the fleet'. A few students also translated fleet as sea-battle.

3b    The majority of students got this question correct. A small minority lost marks for writing 'they destroyed many ships'. Some candidates confused ships with 'disease'.

4    This question caused some problems, with a number of students mistranslating 'withdrew' and a number making Mardonius the subject.

5    This was answered fairly well, with the most common error coming in the phrase 'by land' despite it being in the examination most years.

6    This was a well answered question, despite it being a testing bit of Greek.

7    There were very few problems with this question. A few candidates translated 'all' as 'many'.

8i    Most candidates translated 'soon' correctly, which has not always been the case in previous years. The majority of marks lost in this section were for candidates translating the participle θαυμάζων as a main verb without the subsequent connective. The vocabulary 'however' also caused a few problems, with significant numbers of candidates mistranslating it. Some candidates had difficulties translating νόμους.

8ii    This was done pretty well, with the most common error being the genitive absolute. A number of candidates translated it as 'although being of the enemy'. The confusion between 'Greece' and 'the Greeks' was more common than expected given that the word was glossed.

8iii    This section caused difficulties for many candidates. A number of candidates translated the relative pronoun as 'in this', many put 'it said' instead of 'he said' and lots of pupils omitted τάδε.

8iv     This was translated fairly well. Some candidates did not spot that παρέχων was a participle. Most students translated the future tense οἶός τ᾽ ἔσῃ correctly. The most common errors were translating money as 'gold', translating 'with me' as 'after me' and giving the wrong person in οἶός τ᾽ ἔσῃ. Some candidates mistranslated μετ᾽ ἐμοῦ.

8v      This caused quite a few problems. A number of students failed to spot the reported statement and translated the first part as 'Xerxes said to do these things'. Some candidates did not spot the genitive of comparison and translated it as 'the richest of the Greeks'.

8vi     This was done very well. A few candidates put 'councils' instead of 'plans' and a few singular guards, but the majority got this correct. Generally the purpose clause was well translated.

8vii    The majority of candidates got this correct, but a fair number mistranslated οὕτως as 'of this', assuming that it was a pronoun. The majority still managed to get the result clause though.

8viii   This caused a few problems too, as 'he decided to block up the door for/with the Ephors' was a very common answer. Another common error was making θύραν plural.

8ix     This was one of the most challenging of the translation sections, with many candidates dropping marks. A few struggled with the genitive absolute, translating it as 'doing this' or having Pausanias as the subject; some weaker candidates mistook 'time' for 'money/gold' and therefore missed the time phrase; a number of candidates didn't connect the participle phrase correctly if they made it into a main verb and a number did not translate the superlative.

8x      The main difficulties with this question were with the preposition πρὸ, with a lot of students translating it as 'for death'; The conditional also caused some problems, despite the conditional being tested every year, with many candidates omitting the 'had' and 'would have' from their translation of the conditional.

# B403 Classical Greek Prose Literature

**General Comments:**

Overall, this was another very impressive cohort. As expected, the Section A text (Herodotus *Captures of Babylon*) was the more popular option, but the new Section B prescription (Lucian *Vera Historia*) was offered by a sizeable number of pioneering centres, whose candidates had evidently enjoyed their foray into ancient sci-fi. Many sophisticated responses, to both sections of the paper, conveyed candidates' engagement with and appreciation of original Greek literature.

Some general points to note:

- The safest approach to the 5-mark translation question is to check that every word has been translated.

- In the extended answer questions (the 10-mark and 8-mark essays), the quality of written communication (QWC) will often determine whether or not full marks can be awarded.

- In responding to the 10-mark essay question, candidates should cover the whole of the stimulus passage.

- Candidates should be wary of revising – and then 'tweaking' – pre-prepared responses to the 8-mark essay questions. The best answers to these kept the question firmly in mind and included a range of relevant supporting detail from the text.

- Candidates are encouraged to use breathings and iota subscript in their hand-written Greek quotations. Most other diacritical marks can be omitted.

- The new format of the answer booklet offers plenty of extra pages for extended answers. Centres should not need to distribute many additional answer booklets.

**Comments on Individual Questions:**

Section A: Herodotus

Question No.

Q1   Almost universally correct.

Q2   Almost all earned 3 marks on this question.

Q3(a) An accurate translation of the lemma or detailed contextual information earned 2 marks.

Q3(b) The phrasing of the response was important here. Full marks were achieved by those who translated εἰ as 'if/whether' rather than 'how much'.

Q4   There was a rich selection of potential style points in the lemma, which yielded some excellent responses, especially by those who could identify and translate a relevant piece of Greek. Candidates were particularly keen on the alliteration of κ and the repetition of 'mutilate / mutilation', although the vivid use of the present tense in λωβᾶται rarely elicited comment. Appreciation of the polysyndeton could be credited, provided that the quoted Greek and translation included more than just the word καί.

Q5(a) A wide range of meanings for δοκιμώτατον was accepted and most responses therefore achieved two marks here. Translations of the superlative as 'so' or 'such' were not accepted.

Q5(b) Most achieved at least 2 of the 3 available marks. Reference to mutilation was needed for the third mark.

Q6 Almost universally correct.

Q7 This proved to be a challenging translation passage on which full marks were often elusive. Common stumbling blocks were: ἀπὸ (translated 'on' instead of 'from'); πύργων (singular, or translated as 'walls'); κατὰ τοῦτο τεταγμένοι (omitted); [τὴν] ἑτέραν [πύλην] (mistranslated or omitted); οὗτινος δεόμενος ἥκοι ('why he had come' was not precise enough). Nonetheless, many candidates managed to achieve 4/5 here.

Q8 There were many impressive answers to this extended response question, with candidates writing at length and in detail, demonstrating accurate understanding of the whole passage, and an appreciation of its literary merits. The best responses employed technical terms appropriately (chiasmus, polysyndeton, tricolon and pleonasm all feature in the passage) and were supported with well-chosen, accurately translated quotation from the passage. There was some evidence of confusion between juxtaposition and antithesis - μέγιστον ἀγαθόν...μέγιστον κακόν, for instance, is an example of the latter, not the former - but the point could still earn credit if used as illustration of the confidence displayed and inspired by Zopyrus. Equally, the polyptoton in πεπονθέναι...ἐπεπόνθειν...παθεῖν is not a tricolon employed by Zopyrus (since the middle verb, ἐπεπόνθειν, is authorial), but could be employed as illustration of the untruths he tells.

Q9 Most achieved three marks here, although a fair number chose D rather than E.

Q10 This was well answered by most. Perhaps some candidates had been spared the exact details of impalement by their teachers, so that ἀνεσκολόπισε was occasionally short-changed, translated just as 'killed' or 'slaughtered', but almost every candidate answered the 'mercy' part correctly.

Q11 The numerous valid points in answer to this question enabled most candidates to achieve four marks.

Q12 The final 8-mark essay elicited some very lively answers, exploring how our sympathy is manipulated by Herodotus in his account of Babylon's capture. Most candidates wrote at length and were not short of ideas, with feelings of sympathy more or less equally divided between Persians and Babylonians. The best candidates eschewed rehashing a practice essay (on Zopyrus, for example) and tackled the question in hand, writing persuasively and backing up their arguments with detailed examples. Some were upset by the strangling of so many innocent women (occasionally even misinterpreting Darius' siege of Babylon as punishment for this), though the preservation of the mothers meant that others extolled the virtues of Babylonian attitudes to family. Reference to the previous capture of Babylon (by Cyrus) was used effectively to justify sympathy for either side: for the Babylonians, having been subjugated by the Persians once already; and for the Persians, having to endure the protracted endeavour to recapture the city.

Section B: Lucian

Question No.

Q13  Almost universally correct.

Q14  Almost all candidates achieved 3 marks.

Q15(a)  A straightforward, factual question, correctly answered by nearly all.

Q15(b)  Most candidates were able to achieve three marks here, especially if they included the detail that Lucian found no source (πηγὴν...οὐδεμίαν).

Q16  Although there were perhaps fewer obvious 'style' points to extract from this passage (compared with its Section A equivalent), most candidates were able to make at least one comment on the entertaining quality of Lucian's style. Many appreciated the tongue-in-cheek use of ἀμέλει, the inversion of the usual Greek practice of watering down wine with water, and the coinage in οἰνοφαγίας. As with the parallel question in Section A, however, the vivid use of the present tense (εὑρίσκομεν) rarely received attention.

Q17(a)  A wide range of meanings for τεράστιον was accepted and most responses therefore achieved two marks here.

Q17(b)  This was usually well answered, although in some cases the present participles (καταλαμβάνοντος and ἀποδενδρουμένην) were rendered in the wrong tense, and the finite verb γράφουσιν was misinterpreted as a dative plural participle.

Q18  Most correctly chose B (noon), although C (mid-afternoon) seduced some.

Q19  A good number earned full marks here. Some had difficulties with τὰς ἴσας νύκτας (for which 'seven equal nights' was not accepted) and others mistranslated ἀεροδρομήσαντες, omitting 'air'. Flexibility was agreed with φωτὶ μεγάλῳ καταλαμπομένην, so that both a passive and a middle rendition ('lit up by' or 'shining with') could be credited.

Q20  Again, clear 'style' points were not as abundant here as in the parallel 10-mark question in Section A, but many candidates produced excellent answers, and more narrative answers were acceptable, given that the question asked about how Lucian gives a 'vivid account'. The best responses covered the whole passage, kept the question in mind, and showed an appreciation of how the atmosphere changes - from threatening to welcoming - over the course of the extract. Misunderstandings arose at the beginning and end of the passage: since it begins after the description of the vulture cavalry, reference to their exaggerated size could not be credited; and τὴν γῆν in the penultimate sentence was mistaken by a number as referring to the Earth. Some excellent observations included appreciation of the parallel phrasing (ἡμεῖς..διηγούμεθα...ὃς..διεξήει) as reflecting the reciprocal conversational exchange with Endymion; and speculation about Endymion's lack of education in the ways of good *xenia*, given that he had spent most of his time on Earth asleep.

Q21  Most earned 3 marks on this question. Some were tempted by E.

Q22  Those who mentioned both cheese and honey earned two marks.

Q23  There were not quite as many acceptable points here as for the parallel question in Section A, but many candidates nevertheless achieved four marks.

Q24 The final 8-mark essay drew some rather wonderful and enthusiastic accounts of Lucian's bizarre adventures and encounters, illustrating where candidates found humour in the story. There were many excellent comments on the various types of humour employed in the text: parody, word play, hyperbole, paraprosdokian. Here too, the best responses were those composed for the question rather than answers pre-prepared for a different essay title. There was informed reference to the writers of epic and history parodied by Lucian, and even awareness of other sections of the work: for example, the detail that Lucian later talks about finding Herodotus eternally punished for lying. Candidates (and their teachers) seemed to have found Lucian genuinely entertaining.

# B404 Classical Greek Verse Literature

**General Comments:**

The overall standard was high, with the vast majority of candidates showing a good knowledge and understanding of the text studied. Very few candidates were totally lost, although in some cases it was clear that sections of the text were not known. Even so, almost all could write knowingly on the narrative and/or plot of the chosen text. Weaker candidates usually lost marks on the extended answers, either because they could not make points clearly or because they did not make enough good points, and some let themselves down by writing poor English and/or delivering a prepared essay rather than answering the question set.

Approximately 85% of centres chose Section A, Homer, and 15% chose Section B, Euripides.

**Comments on Individual Questions:**

Section A: Homer, *Odyssey XXI*

1    This question, about the beggar considering himself fortunate in the suitors' company, was answered very well by most candidates. The MS was generous e.g. various translations were accepted for ὑπερφιάλοισι, such as 'proud/noble/honourable' etc. Answers were not limited to 1 mark per bullet point e.g. 2 marks were awarded for an answer such as "he is feasting at ease with honourable men" (see MS).

2    Most correctly described Odysseus as 'a stranger etc. and a beggar', although a few gave two meanings for ξεῖνος (e.g. stranger and guest) and nothing for πτωχὸς or simply offered 'a strange beggar' etc.

3(a)  Answered well, although occasionally there were some odd translations of μελιηδής, such as 'honey-hearted' (which was not accepted).

3(b)  Initially it was assumed that answers to this question (the warnings about drinking wine) would come from line 6 of the passage (ὃς ἄν μιν χανδὸν ἕλη μηδ' αἴσιμα πίνη), but a number of candidates, reasonably, took their answer from the first part of the sentence (οἶνός σε τρώει   μελιηδής, ὅς τε καὶ ἄλλους / βλάπτει) and this was accepted. Thus it was relatively easy to gain full marks on this question.

4    The translation was handled well by most. Some answers got off to a sticky start by failing to translate ἔλπεαι (not 'hope' here) as a question and/or misunderstanding the conditional αἴ. There was a tendency to omit/ignore αὐτός and που, and 'mind' seemed an odd choice of vocabulary for στήθεσσιν. The translation of χερσίν τε βίηφί τε ἧφι as "the strength of his hands" (hendiadys) was appreciated.

5    MC question. Virtually everyone knew that Eurymachus was 'one of the suitors'.

6    Another MC question – again well answered. A very few candidates perversely chose to indicate their MC answers with a cross rather than a tick. This was not a problem here in view of how the answers to Q5 and Q13 were indicated, but if ever a paper contains only one MC question, asking for three correct answers from a choice of six (or two from four etc.), examiners have a problem marking correct answers indicated with a cross.

7       Some got the wrong end of the stick here and thought the 'disgrace' in the question referred to the fact that the suitors would be viewed as inferior men wooing Penelope. However, most candidates realised that the issue concerned the damage to their reputations if they were seen to fail with the bow where a beggar/tramp (not simply 'stranger' here) succeeded. The MS offered a number of routes to full marks.

8       Weaker candidates often find this type of question challenging. The Greek references (ideally key words/phrases) need to be selected with a view to addressing the question, they need to be written up accurately (e.g. ἄγε οἱ δότε, not just ἄγε οἱ) and their meaning needs to be made clear (most easily achieved by translating the phrase). Otherwise, marks were lost here because answers omitted to explain what point the speaker (Penelope) was making. A typical example of an incomplete answer would be: "ἀνδρὸς ἀριστῆος, the alliteration reinforces the speaker's point".

9       Almost all knew that Eurycleia was the nurse; 'maid' was not accepted.

10      Telemachus orders Eurycleia to close/shut the doors of the great hall/women's quarters. See the prescribed edition for the note on acceptable meanings of μεγάροιο here; 'palace' was considered too general for μεγάροιο.

11      Most candidates found plenty to say on this question about Odysseus' skill at stringing the bow, showing an accurate knowledge of the Greek quoted and a detailed understanding of the contents of the passage, while at the same time keeping in mind the wording of the question. A not uncommon error was to compare Odysseus and the bow with lyre playing and singing in general, thus missing the essential point of comparison between the skill of stringing the bow and the stringing of a lyre by an expert. Some took the liberty of describing Odysseus as stringing the bow 'easily', quoting ῥηϊδίως, or describing the bowstring as made of 'well-twisted sheep gut' (ἐϋστρεφὲς ἔντερον οἰός). On the question of style, those who picked out the formulaic phrase πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς struggled to make a convincing link with Odysseus' skill; similarly with those who noted the repetition of Ὀδυσσεύς at the end of lines 1 and 6, and those who focused on the phrase μέγα τόξον – these points were not usually argued successfully. The phrase φόρμιγγος ἐπιστάμενος καὶ ἀοιδῆς was not always used accurately and σπουδῆς was sometimes quoted without ἄτερ. However, there is still a significant minority of candidates who either do not attempt to discuss the stylistic features of the Greek or think it enough simply to write out phrases or even whole sentences of Greek with a translation. Too many candidates made points that were either unclearly explained or incomplete or simply nonsense; an extreme example being "Odysseus strings the bow and makes it swallow like a bird"! The correct use of technical terms (e.g. superlative, imperative, assonance, chiasmus) is to be encouraged, but is by no means necessary to gain full credit for stylistic points. However, candidates should be wary of throwing in such terms gratuitously. Misuse of a technical term can easily confuse the point being made; 'enjambement' was one such term used fairly indiscriminately and incorrectly by a number of candidates. Similarly, it is easy to find words beginning with the same letter but this does not necessarily add up to an effective instance of alliteration.

12      Most candidates had a clear idea of the loading and shooting of the arrow, or at least produced a translation that made sense, but some were less certain or even confused; a diagram (or even a practical demonstration?) might have helped the learning process here.

13      Most picked out 'bronze-weighted' as the correct description of the arrow, although a few chose 'swift'.

14    The short essay on tension and suspense produced a lot of good, interesting answers, including a wide range of points such as the idea of the suitors' arrogant behaviour foreshadowing their downfall and the atmosphere of mounting tension as the various characters engaged in heated exchanges of direct speech. But although many answers were potentially good, they sometimes fell short because the points made were too general and lacked specific examples from the text e.g. "the conversation between Penelope and the suitors helps to build up the tension" or "the suitors' arrogance reminds us of the punishment awaiting characters in a Greek Tragedy" or reference to the deliberately drawn out description of Odysseus with the bow – good ideas, but too often left undeveloped and unsupported with examples etc. It was also disappointing that more candidates did not pick out some of the more obvious instances of tension and suspense (too often conflated into 'suspension'), such as the suitors' intimidation of Eumaeus as he takes the bow to the beggar, or the arrows 'which the Achaean lords were soon to experience', or the 'thunderclap from Zeus'. References to stylistic features and/or quotations from the Greek are not normally helpful for this type of question. There was some evidence to suggest that a few candidates had tried to adapt a prepared essay, on a theme such as 'dramatic irony', to fit this essay – these were not usually successful. Some candidates who had time to write a lengthy answer might have benefited from better organisation of material i.e. a little less time writing, a little more time planning.

Section B: Euripides, *Iphigenia in Aulis*

15    MC - most, but by no means all, scored the full 3 marks.

16    Too many answers assumed that 'whether to give or not to give his daughter' made adequate sense. Omission of the idea of 'marriage' often cost a mark.

17    The generous MS meant that almost all candidates scored full marks on this question about the suitors' support for Tyndareus.

18    Again the MS was generous in offering a number of possible elements regarding what Agamemnon had just heard, although 'Artemis on the plane' conjured up an odd picture!

19    A straightforward MC question for most.

20    Few had a problem picking out δεινά and giving an accurate translation.

21(a) Almost all recognised δάμαρτα as referring to Clytemnestra.

21(b) Agamemnon's instructions were usually recalled accurately, although candidates had to be sure to include all three points of the MS.

22    There were errors made in all elements of the answer (see MS) to this question about Agamemnon persuading his daughter to come to Aulis, but most candidates secured at least three of the four points for full marks. Candidates quite often failed to explain clearly the point about 'a bride from Agamemnon's family' (see MS), and 'Phthia' was hardly ever spelled correctly – 'Pythia' came up more than once.

23    A lot of very good translations, although some got off to an awkward start by ignoring or misunderstanding the first word ὡς. Marks were also lost by omitting νῦν (especially in line 4), ἀλλ' and ἅπας. 'thoughts' was not an appropriate translation for φροντίδας in this context; something more negative was needed, such as 'anxieties/cares'. ἄλλοθι was occasionally mistranslated.

24    Some strong answers on this 10-mark question about Agamemnon's feelings for his daughter. The second half of the passage was particularly well used, with frequent references to the agonisingly ironic appeal ὦ στέρνα καὶ παρῇδες, ὦ ξανθαὶ κόμαι, the emphatic enjambement of Ἑλένη, the effect of παύω τοὺς λόγους, and the feelings behind νοτὶς διώκει μ' ὀμμάτων, although the metaphorical effect of νοτὶς was usually missed. On the other hand, candidates found it difficult to explain the feelings behind the first line (ζηλῶ σὲ μᾶλλον ἢ 'μὲ τοῦ μηδὲν φρονεῖν), and the separation of δαρὸν . . . χρόνον was rather fancifully linked to the distance in time that father and daughter would spend apart, an idea further compromised by candidates who concentrated on χρόνον as the emphatic last word in the line and failed to identify corrrectly the word for 'long'. More disappointing was the reference (more than once) to τέ μοι (line 3) as the juxtaposition of contrasting pronouns 'you' and 'me'. As with the corresponding Q11 in Section A, references to the Greek with a view to stylistic features were very limited, especially among the weaker candidates who continue to omit a translation or fail to show an understanding of the Greek quoted. And just as weaker answers stopped short of tieing in references to Odysseus' skill in Q11, so here weaker answers failed to use references from the text to explain what Agamemnon was feeling.

25(a) Almost all were able to explain the meaning of ἡδὺ γὰρ τὸ φῶς / βλέπειν.

25(b) Almost all understood τὰ δ' ὑπὸ γῆς to refer to the underworld/Hades.

26    This question, on the mutual affection between father and daughter, was parallel to Q8 in Section A (see comments above). As long as some Greek was quoted and translated and a reasonable explanation was given, there was a good chance that full marks would be awarded. Weaker candidates often misunderstood the Greek and/or mistranslated the phrase quoted. It was surprising that more candidates did not make use of ἔδωκα κἀντεδεξάμην for one of their points.

27    Stronger candidates were able to produce arguments both for and against Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia. Frequent reasons given 'for' were: the oath to Tyndareus, the roles of Artemis and Calchas, Agamemnon's loyalty to his brother and the army. Reasons 'against' were: the innocent and naive character of Iphigenia in her first scene with Agamemnon, and her pleas and arguments in her second scene. Weaker answers tended to offer generalisations rather than specific supportive examples (even quotations?) from the text, and some were unsure about Iphigenia's relative state of ignorance in her first scene with Agamemnon, where sympathy for her position is largely generated by her youthful innocence, and her second scene with Agamemnon where she argues for her life in the knowledge that she is about to be sacrificed.

# B405 Sources for Classical Greek

**General Comments:**

The standard of this year's cohort was encouragingly high, and in general candidates showed both a strong knowledge of the sources in the specification and the ability to respond to sources that they had not previously studied. The quality of their written answers was strong, and candidates showed an interest in the ancient world, as well as the ability to compare it with the modern.

The strongest candidates used the sources very carefully, and were able to quote them to support their valid ideas or comment in detail about the images in the vase paintings. It would be good to see candidates in general make greater use of visual evidence and really take time to look at the information that we are given about the ancient world through vase paintings, statuary or architecture – there often seems to be the assumption that written evidence is somehow more accurate and believable, which is often not the case.

The greatest problem that the candidates faced was discussing the provenance of sources in the final 12-mark question. They tended to be very knowledgeable about the context of the sources and were more than able to answer the question in light of the sources they had chosen, but found it much harder to comment in depth about the limitations they had as pieces of evidence for the ancient world. Often, answers avoided the issue of limitation completely or merely touched on it, which was a shame as the quality of the answers were otherwise very high.

The range of answers and candidates' ability to respond to the questions with perceptive and dynamic answers made the marking of this paper particularly interesting for the examiners.

**Comments on Individual Questions:**

1(a)(i) A surprising number of candidates struggled with this question, and were unsure what the altar was, calling it a shrine or 'sacrificing holder'

1(a)(ii) This question elicited some excellent answers, ranging from basic common sense, such as the unpleasantness of the blood on a temple floor or the risks of smoke inside a building, to the need for large numbers of people to be able to witness the sacrifices. Candidates who simply said that sacrifices never took place inside temples did not gain the marks available.

1(b) The majority of candidates were unsure of the answer to this question, and although they gave a range of suggestions of alternative deities, both male and female; sadly the only acceptable answer can be Hermes given the easily identifiable features particular to a herm.

1(c) This was generally answered well, and candidates who were unsure were able to offer some sensible guesses.

2(a) and (b) This was particularly well answered across the board, despite the fact that Source C was set by the examiner and was not prepared in advance, which was very encouraging. Candidates were able to identify different types of religious worship from the sources and also used Source C to explain the worshippers' motives behind their actions. Candidates often quoted the sources to support their points, and although this was not specifically required to gain the available marks, it was a very good way of anchoring their ideas to the texts, and showed that they had been well prepared.

3     There were many impressive answers given to this question, and the candidates that achieved full marks were those who made the most detailed reference to the sources. Their answers typically reflected a good understanding of this particularly important aspect of the ancient world.

4     The answers to this question were among the most interesting to read from the examiners' perspective. A handful of candidates misinterpreted the question or failed to use the sources sufficiently in their answers, but in general they were well able to select relevant information from the specified evidence and comment on it in depth. Most agreed that there were a surprising number of similarities between modern and ancient forms of worship, particularly clear in Source C, and also agreed that animal sacrifice is far less prevalent nowadays. There were some fascinating responses that discussed religious practices in religions other than Christianity, or went into impressive depth about parallels in traditional Christian worship, such as giving things up for Lent as a means of sacrifice.

5(a)    This was well answered across the board – clearly candidates had a good grasp of the concept of 'oriental seclusion'.

5(b)    This question elicited some interesting answers. Those candidates who merely stated a preference but did not explain their reason were not credited with the mark available. Many candidates preferred Source D to Source E on the grounds that the women collecting water seemed happy, whereas the atmosphere of slavery and hint of threat in the symposiast's gesture in Source E is less appealing to many. Other candidates preferred the simplicity of the second image over the busy detail of the first; either way, the responses were interesting and showed some degree of interest in vase paintings.

5(c)    The features of a symposium were fairly easy to identify from the vase painting, and candidates had little difficulty in doing so. The only problem proved to be the wine cup on the low table next to the symposiast, which some candidates took to be a *krater* (mixing bowl), despite the fact that it is far too small (although very large for a wine cup).

6(a) and (b) These two questions were generally poorly answered even by the strongest candidates. They were often left blank, which is always a pity, or the answer made it clear that the candidate did not fully understand the workings of Athenian democracy. Typically candidates did not mention the slaves who performed the tasks that freed up citizens to attend the Ekklesia or Dikasteria, instead suggesting that citizens would go to the gym either before or after work, which has a very modern feel to it. Some referred to the Plato source (G), suggesting that since each citizen only had one job to do, this would free him up for leisure or political duties.

6(c)    This question was straightforward given the information available in Source G, but weaker candidates tended to simply make up responses without checking the sources first, which was a shame.

7     The quality of responses to this question was consistently high. Candidates generally made good, detailed reference to the specified sources, and were able to quote and comment well to support their points. In some cases, candidates did not comment on each of the four sources, which was a pity as the standard of answers was very good. Sources F and G are quite difficult to grasp fully, and some candidates struggled to convey their points on them, but answered well on the two vase paintings.

8     The responses to this question varied hugely, which made them interesting to mark. As mentioned in the comments for Section 1, the greatest problem that candidates faced was clearly establishing the limitations to the sources that they had selected to discuss; at this level, candidates are not expected to write in enormous depth about provenance, but establishing the value of a piece of evidence forms a vital part of any source-based study.

Weaker candidates omitted the subject altogether, while stronger ones tended to mention it only in passing. This aspect of the specification is extremely interesting and has significant applications in the modern world also, and it would be good to see GCSE candidates being a little less trusting of the material that they study, but instead to show a healthy suspicion.

Candidates are advised to check that they are answering the question when they discuss their chosen sources, as at times it seemed as though they were simply talking about particular piece of evidence without applying the information it held to the question.