

2011 Latin and Classical Greek

Advanced Higher – Dissertation

Finalised Marking Instructions

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Advanced Higher Dissertation:

The dissertation is marked out of 100, distributed as follows:

Component	Marks (%)
Content	30
Sources and Interpretation of Sources	30
Argument and Analysis	30
Impact/Presentation and Clarity of English	10

The dissertation is designed to permit candidates to:

- Identify a suitable topic or question
- Explore a number of complex arguments
- Analyse these arguments
- Select, organise, analyse and interpret evidence from primary and secondary sources
- Demonstrate an ability to think critically and express opinions
- Show awareness of different interpretations and academic opinions
- Arrive at reasoned conclusions which show evidence of analysis, interpretation and synthesis
- Present relevant findings in a clear and precise manner

The candidate should be able to:

- Plan and research a dissertation about an aspect of the ancient classical world
- Show knowledge and understanding of a specific aspect of the Roman/Greek world by identifying sources of information and interpreting the evidence
- Draw comparisons and reach conclusions
- Communicate findings and present results (where appropriate making a personal response by commenting on values and attitudes)

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The descriptions below are of expected performance at Grade C, the minimum pass, and the minimum required to achieve Grade A. They are intended to assist candidates, teachers/lecturers and users of the certificate and to help establish standards when question papers are being set. The grade of the award will be based on the total score obtained in the examination together with the mark awarded for the dissertation.

Translation

Grade C	Grade A
Without prior knowledge of the passage set, the candidate can produce a reasonably accurate translation of much of the passage with only some omissions and/or errors of detail.	Without prior knowledge of the passage set, the candidate can produce a reasonably accurate translation of the passage, with only some omissions and/or errors of detail.

Interpretation

Grade C	Grade A
The candidate can express the main concerns of the text, bringing forward some evidence.	The candidate can express the main concerns of the text, bringing forward fuller evidence and/or, where relevant, relating main themes to sub-themes or other parts of the prescription.
The candidate gives description of an author's technique.	The candidate gives description and explanation of an author's technique.
The candidate can give a detailed personal response to the text or sections of the text and can give simple justification of the responses made.	The candidate can give a detailed personal response to the text or sections of the text and can give justification of the responses.

Dissertation

Grade C	Grade A
In conducting an investigation into an aspect of the classical world, the candidate can demonstrate reasonable knowledge and understanding of the topic chosen; provide basic analysis and evaluation of information; and communicate and present findings in a way which is clear and highlights the main issues involved. The planning and research are appropriate to the topic.	In conducting an investigation into an aspect of the classical world, the candidate can demonstrate wide knowledge and understanding of the topic chosen; provide detailed analysis and evaluation of information; and communicate and present findings in a way which is clear but recognises some of the complex issues involved. The investigation is well planned and well researched.

		D	C	B	Lower A	Upper A
Content	<i>Relevance of Information & Approach</i>	Elements of the factual content and approach do not relate closely to the title	Factual content and approach relate to the title	Factual content and approach are focused on the title	Factual content and approach are clear & consistent with the title	Factual content and approach are very clear & consistent with the title
Sources and Interpretation of Sources	<i>Use and interpretation of primary and secondary sources</i>	There is no discernible reference to primary/secondary sources	There is limited reference to primary and secondary sources	There is reasonable reference to primary/secondary sources	There is effective reference to primary/secondary sources	There is substantial reference to primary/secondary sources
	<i>Includes use of sources in the original language</i>	No reference to primary sources	Limited reference to primary sources	Reasonable reference to primary sources	Effective reference to primary sources	Very effective reference to primary sources
Argument and Analysis	<i>Structure</i>	The structure is weak with a poorly organized presentation of the arguments	The structure displays basic organization	The work is clearly structured	There is a well defined structure displays a confident grasp of the demands of the title	The work is structured so that the argument builds and develops convincingly throughout
	<i>Introduction and Conclusion</i>	The introduction and conclusion are ineffective	There is a basic introduction and conclusion	There is a clear introduction and a summative conclusion	There is an insightful introduction; the conclusion arises logically from the evidence and arguments	There is a fluent and insightful introduction; the conclusion gives a robust overview/synthesis and a qualitative judgement
	<i>Degree of Analysis</i>	There is much narrative and description rather than analysis	There is an attempt to analyse the issues involved; not sustained	There is a firm grasp of the aims of the dissertation; the analysis is fairly sustained	There is an assured and consistent control of the arguments and issues	There is detailed and effective analysis which advances the argument and considers various possible implications going beyond the most obvious ones
Impact/ Presentation and Clarity of English	<i>Thoroughness/ Generic Approach</i>	The treatment shows an elementary knowledge but has major omissions	The treatment shows sufficient knowledge which reflects a basic understanding	The treatment shows an awareness of the width and depth of the knowledge required	The treatment is based on wide research and demonstrates a depth of knowledge	The treatment is clearly based on wide research and demonstrates a considerable depth of knowledge.
	<i>Clarity of Expression</i>	There is weak expression	Expression is generally clear and accurate	Expression is clear and accurate with vocabulary appropriate to the topic	Expression is clear, accurate and fluent, with a vocabulary appropriate to the topic	Expression shows sustained fluency, clarity and sophistication

Allocation of Marks

The dissertation is marked out of 100 – marks are distributed as follows below:

Content	30 marks (30%)
Sources and Interpretation of Sources	30 marks (30%)
Argument and Analysis	30 marks (30%)
Impact/Presentation and Clarity of English	10 marks (10%)

Further Breakdown of Marks

	D	C	B	A	A +
Content	0 – 12 marks (40 %)	13 – 17 marks (50%)	18 - 20 (60%)	21 - 25 (70%)	26 - 30 (85%)
Sources and Interpretation of Sources	0 – 12 marks (40 %)	13 – 17 marks (50%)	18 - 20 (60%)	21 - 25 (70%)	26 - 30 (85%)
Argument and Analysis	0 – 12 marks (40 %)	13 – 17 marks (50%)	18 - 20 (60%)	21 - 25 (70%)	26 - 30 (85%)
Impact/Presentation & Clarity of English	0 – 4 marks (40%)	5 marks (50%)	6 marks (60%)	7 – 8 marks (70%)	9 – 10 (85%)

Further General Guidance – Dissertations

Although markers will mark positively and reward candidates for their work, there may be criteria which result in a candidate failing.

Factors which lead to a dissertation failing:

(a) Total misunderstanding of the title. It is unusual for a candidate to misinterpret their own title, but it may happen. While what is there should be marked positively, it is likely that such a dissertation will not pass.

(b) Extreme brevity. A very short dissertation of only 2,000-3,000 words would have to be very well argued indeed to achieve a pass. It is highly unlikely that there will be sufficient depth and breadth of argument to convince a marker that sufficient criteria have been covered to pass.

(c) Lack of Reference to Primary and Secondary Sources. The need for primary and secondary sources is clearly set out in the Grade Criteria Grid (page 4). Dissertations without reference to primary and secondary sources must therefore fail. What is expected at Advanced Higher level is that there are signs of the candidate's reading, and therefore some awareness of the field of research around a subject.

Factors which are NOT in themselves prejudicial to the candidate's chances:

Structure. This may be poor. However, other perceptive and relevant aspects may be explored in sufficient depth to ensure that the candidate is awarded a pass. A sense of structure often 'appears' during the dissertation and a candidate should not be penalised or down-graded just because nothing much seems to have been laid out in the introduction.

Accuracy. Several minor inaccuracies will not in themselves be sufficient to fail a dissertation. It may be that the marker becomes increasingly convinced that the candidate is not in full control of the evidence, and that may deter the granting of an A pass, but it does not automatically lead to a fail.

Relevance. While relevance is important, it is not the sole criterion on which a response is judged. It is a question of degree; responses will be marked positively. A pass at the C level can be gained by a dissertation with enough relevance to convince the marker of its overall strength; an A pass may be granted despite the odd lapse or digression.

Thoroughness. This aspect of depth of detail is clearly a major discriminating factor in determining a grade. It is NOT a pass-fail factor. Therefore the marker will mark the dissertation for the argument it contains and not for the degree to which it conforms to the marker's view.

Use of language. Candidates' linguistic skills vary. Dissertations may often be poorly expressed in English, but still contain many admirable criteria which merit high reward. Equally, there can be fluent and stylish pieces which flatter to deceive when the marker gets beyond the language and studies the other criteria.