

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/11
Greek Civilisation

General comments

In general, performance was not quite as good as last year but there seemed to be fewer very weak performances. Examiners noted the following points:

- presentation was significantly better than in 2011;
- quality of written communication was weaker and, in some cases, prevented candidates from expressing their answers clearly;
- there was less evidence of planning than last year;
- some candidates did not read questions carefully enough;
- some essays were too general;
- some essays did not have enough specific, relevant material to address the question.

Comments on specific questions

SECTION ONE: Alexander the Great

Question 1

- (i) This was the most popular question on the paper. Most candidates knew who Cleitus was but struggled to give any further detail about him.
- (ii) The question about what happened at the feast before the incident was poorly answered. Very few could describe events at the feast. It was common for candidates to write about general events before the feast, such as the policy of fusion and its consequences.
- (iii) Candidates were generally better informed about what happened after the incident in the passage. They were able to refer to both what happened when Cleitus returned and Alexander's reaction to his death.
- (iv) Candidates were generally able to discuss a range of ideas, including the policy of Fusion and its consequences, the Susa weddings, and proskynesis. Opinions ranged as to whether the influence of the Persian Empire was good or bad, with some strongly argued cases. Most could answer competently on how Alexander adopted Persian ways and but fewer were able to explain the importance and effects, both positive and negative, of this approach.

Question 2

The siege of Tyre was usually described in a variety of detail, with the best answers able to comment on the exact way the city was captured, although some only gave very general information. Gaza was hardly mentioned, with very little description of how it was taken. Other sieges, such as the Sogdian Rock, were mentioned by some candidates. There was a tendency for some candidates to adapt the question to 'why is Alexander a good general' essay, without referring to any specific sieges.

Question 3

Most candidates struggled to find any detail about Darius, and tended to produce an essay on how strong a leader Alexander was. Some answers dealt not only with Alexander's military superiority over Darius, but also discussed his reception in areas of the Persian Empire, such as Egypt, and his use of local leaders. Some candidates found weaknesses in Alexander's leadership, based on the mutinies he suffered during his campaigns. Very few were able to show any knowledge of Darius beyond the fact that he ran away several times and did not lead from the front. Therefore the majority of responses were significantly unbalanced.

SECTION TWO: Socrates

Question 4

- (i) Not many candidates knew that *Phaedo* was talking to Echecrates.
- (ii) It was common for candidates to state that Crito wanted to spend more time with Socrates without offering further detail or comment.
- (iii) Virtually all candidates knew that hemlock was the poison Socrates took.
- (vi) Some candidates knew that Socrates' last request was a sacrifice to Asclepius in payment for a vow. Many answers mentioned details about looking after his children.
- (v) Most candidates were able to discuss the grief of Socrates' friends, although few mentioned his wife being sent away.
- (vi) There were some good responses to the question about Socrates' views on death in *Phaedo*, with some untypically precise recall from both *Phaedo* and, unfortunately, other dialogues.

Question 5

The essay on the topic of whether it was Socrates' fault that he was put to death was the most popular of the essays and produced some very well-argued essays, using a good range of material well to back up the argument. Most agreed with the statement, displaying a good appreciation of how Socrates managed to antagonise the jury and his prosecutor, but some put the blame on the Athenians. There was also good recall about the conversations which took place in prison. Some responses would have benefitted from more precise recall from the text and looking at why Socrates was perhaps not responsible for his death.

Question 6

The answers to the question on Socrates' views on the duties of a citizen generally did not use the texts to their best advantage, with only general comments being made. Some candidates did notice the differences between the views expressed in *Apology* and those expressed in *Crito*.

SECTION THREE: Aristophanes

Question 7

- (i) Most candidates knew who Dionysus was and some detail of his worship.
- (ii) Most knew Dionysus had gone down to the Underworld to fetch back a poet, but there was some confusion over the reason why Dionysus did this.
- (iii) Most knew this passage was from the *agon*, and its purpose.
- (iv) Lamachus was virtually unknown, though the majority knew the reference to Euripides' household.
- (v) Surprisingly most candidates struggled with this question even though parody is clearly on the specification. Responses were far too general because candidates did not know what went on in the second half of the play and as a result were unable to demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of the parody and the message of the play as a whole. Candidates at the very least should be using the passage as a starting point.

Question 8

Most candidates were able to discuss some features of the question, both in terms of the portrayal and actions of the characters, and features such as the *parabasis*. Many also mentioned other messages the play has, but some answers almost totally ignored the quotation in the question, and simply wrote about messages in *Wasps*. Several candidates inadvertently wrote about *Frogs*.

Question 9

Most candidates were able to compare both plays, with a range of comic techniques mentioned. Better answers compared both plays well, with a range of examples, but many candidates listed some techniques found in the plays, without giving examples. It is not enough to simply say that Procleon's attempts to escape the house are funny without mentioning specific detail. Some candidates were rather vague and woolly over what some techniques actually meant, especially what counts as slapstick, scatological, and sexual.

SECTION FOUR: Greek Vase Painting

Question 10

- (i) Most candidates identified the pot as a belly amphora.
- (ii) A high proportion of the candidates knew the painters of the pot.
- (iii) Most candidates knew the technical term bi-lingual.
- (iv) Athena and her attributes were generally identified accurately, but candidates tended to struggle with identifying Heracles/Dionysus.
- (vi) Although candidates were able to put forward some discussion on whether the pot marks the 'high point of black-figure' and/or the 'birth of red-figure', examples tended to be limited, and were not always used well to address the question. There was occasional confusion between the work of black-figure and red-figure artists.

Question 11

There were very few attempts at either of the essays and they were generally poorly answered. There was limited discussion, with few relevant specific examples, on the strengths and limitations of the black-figure technique.

Question 12

Candidates struggled with the concept of narrative and examples were few and not always relevant.

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Paper 9274/12
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- there was less evidence of planning than last year;
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- (iii) Candidates were generally better informed about what happened after the incident in the passage. They were able to refer to both what happened when Cleitus returned and Alexander's reaction to his death.
- (iv) Candidates were generally able to discuss a range of ideas, including the policy of Fusion and its consequences, the Susa weddings, and proskynesis. Opinions ranged as to whether the influence of the Persian Empire was good or bad, with some strongly argued cases. Most could answer competently on how Alexander adopted Persian ways and but fewer were able to explain the importance and effects, both positive and negative, of this approach.

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Question 12

Candidates struggled with the concept of narrative and examples were few and not always relevant.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/21
Roman Civilisation

General comments

Candidates generally displayed a good knowledge of their chosen topics and selected questions carefully to match their knowledge. However, candidates need to read questions much more carefully to ensure that they address all aspects of a question and so that they offer the evaluative elements required in the higher tariff questions.

Comments on specific questions

SECTION ONE: Augustus

Question 1

- (i) The candidates who tackled this question generally made a sensible guess at Rome for the location of the Ara Pacis, but did not know the exact location of the Campus Martius.
- (ii) Candidates knew little about the Ara Pacis and so could not offer a date, what it commemorated (iii), or who awarded it to Augustus (iv).
- (v) Some candidates did mention the link to the divine ancestry of Aeneas and Augustus' wish to be associated with this but discussion tended to be limited.
- (vi) Knowledge of Augustus' use of art and poetry as propaganda was well tackled on the art side of the question, but the poetry side posed more of a problem – references to Horace were scarce and surprisingly few mentioned Virgil.

Question 2

Most candidates had a sound grasp of Augustus' position at the end of his reign. Better answers discussed both how he eliminated opposition, and gained supreme power. Other answers concentrated on what happened after he achieved control of the Empire, with some not even mentioning the settlements of 27 and 23 B.C. Some candidates argued against the quotation, citing his difficulty in choosing his heir as a reason to disagree.

Question 3

Candidates generally displayed a good awareness of the aims of Augustus' religious and moral policies but too many responses did not address the second half of the question. Of those which did, many argued that the example of Julia showed that Augustus was unsuccessful, but did not consider the religious side to the question even though they had cited all the temples Augustus had restored and the reintroduction of festivals. Sometimes candidates found it hard to distinguish between moral and religious policies.

SECTION TWO: Virgil

Question 4

- (i) Most candidates knew some of the signs, but very few knew them all.
- (ii) Whilst there were some well-analysed responses, there were too many which gave an example from the passage and said that it was vivid without explaining why. Surprisingly few made reference to the literary devices used in the passage.
- (iii) Candidates generally did not know the details revealed by Creusa about Aeneas' destiny.
- (iv) There was good relevant recall and argument from both the passage and Book 2 as a whole. Many responses would have gained even more credit by making reference to Books 4 and 6. It was pleasing to see the number of responses which considered both sides of the question. There were, however, some who considered Dido to be a member of Aeneas' family.

Question 5

The question of whether the gods are more of a help than a hindrance to Aeneas was by far the most popular question on the paper. Almost all candidates were able to cite examples of the actions of the gods (some going beyond the set books) and many were able to sort them into whether they were good or bad actions. Only the very best answers analysed why they were either a help or hindrance or saw that Venus was both and came down off the fence and argued either for or against the quotation. There was often good recall about the contribution of the minor gods.

Question 6

The question about the *Aeneid* being a patriotic epic was not well done. Answers tended to be limited in both knowledge and in discussion. The weakest responses struggled to understand what is meant by a 'patriotic epic' and sometimes discussed Augustus without reference to the wider context. Even where there was some understanding of the term, there was frequently little precise reference to the patriotic sections in Books 1, 4 and 6. Augustus' relationship with Virgil was often well done.

SECTION THREE: Juvenal

Question 7

- (i) Most candidates were able to identify all the faults Juvenal found with Crispinus.
- (ii) Although most candidates mentioned eating the fish, few were able to discuss why Crispinus was criticised in *Satire 4*.
- (iii) As is usually the case in this topic, candidates have been well-trained to recognise and select relevant examples of Juvenal's satiric technique. Not only did they demonstrate a good knowledge of the techniques employed by Juvenal but they were also able to offer sound explanation of the effects. Examiners awarded a good number of high marks for this question.
- (iv) The question about the reasons Juvenal gives for writing Satire was not as well answered as the other questions in this topic. Candidates did not seem to know the text in sufficient detail and consequently could only comment in general terms on why Juvenal writes satire.

Question 8

There were some good responses to the question about how Juvenal uses the theme of food and dinner – parties. Candidates were able to draw together a divergent range of material to discuss the inadequacies of the patron-client system in *Satire 5* and the degeneracy of the Emperor in *Satire 4*. It was pleasing to see the precise recall from these two satires as well as many candidates making reference to *Satire 3*.

Question 9

Candidates were good at identifying what Juvenal thinks has gone wrong with Roman society, with adequate references to the Satires as well as an attempt to balance the argument by using the end of *Satire 10*. Most candidates agreed with the quotation, not seeing any advice on solving the problems, although a few did see the possible solutions.

SECTION FOUR: Roman Architecture

Question 10

- (i) Most candidates identified the building correctly and were able to give the location of the baths.
- (ii) A very high proportion of the candidates knew Hadrian had commissioned the baths and most offered the correct dates.
- (iii) Most candidates identified the tepidarium and caldarium but few could name the apodyterium. There was some confusion over the use of the rooms and many struggled to make any useful points.
- (iv) Hadrian's baths at Leptis Magna were most usually compared to the baths of Diocletian or the baths of Caracalla. There was a good level of detail, with candidates generally offering sound discussion, supported by good arguments to back up the often strong opinions of the candidates.

Question 11

Though not a particularly popular question, the question on the basilica of Constantine and Maxentius was often well done. Candidates had a detailed knowledge of the layout, materials and decoration of the basilica. A varied range of other basilicae was employed as comparative material. Many candidates would have benefitted from paying closer attention to the wording of the quotation. Offering knowledge of the established basilica plan, and careful use of that knowledge, would have enabled them to provide more of an argument rather a detailed factual response.

Question 12

There was generally good understanding of what makes a building have a practical function whilst still making a striking impression on the visitors. A range of buildings was considered – with examples ranging from the Pantheon to the Colosseum and the arches of Titus and Constantine. Some candidates made detailed use of the plan of Hadrian's baths at Leptis Magna from the examination paper. Discussion was generally relevant with both use and appearance being considered. Some candidates argued that, in some cases, the use of the building was to impress.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/22
Roman Civilisation

General comments

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There was generally good understanding of what makes a building have a practical function whilst still making a striking impression on the visitors. A range of buildings was considered – with examples ranging from the Pantheon to the Colosseum and the arches of Titus and Constantine. Some candidates made detailed use of the plan of Hadrian's baths at Leptis Magna from the examination paper. Discussion was generally relevant with both use and appearance being considered. Some candidates argued that, in some cases, the use of the building was to impress.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/23
Roman Civilisation

General comments

Candidates generally displayed a good knowledge of their chosen topics and selected questions carefully to match their knowledge. However, candidates need to read questions much more carefully to ensure that they address all aspects of a question and so that they offer the evaluative elements required in the higher tariff questions.

Comments on specific questions

SECTION ONE: Augustus

Question 1

- (i) The candidates who tackled this question generally made a sensible guess at Rome for the location of the Ara Pacis, but did not know the exact location of the Campus Martius.
- (ii) Candidates knew little about the Ara Pacis and so could not offer a date, what it commemorated (iii), or who awarded it to Augustus (iv).
- (v) Some candidates did mention the link to the divine ancestry of Aeneas and Augustus' wish to be associated with this but discussion tended to be limited.
- (vi) Knowledge of Augustus' use of art and poetry as propaganda was well tackled on the art side of the question, but the poetry side posed more of a problem – references to Horace were scarce and surprisingly few mentioned Virgil.

Question 2

Most candidates had a sound grasp of Augustus' position at the end of his reign. Better answers discussed both how he eliminated opposition, and gained supreme power. Other answers concentrated on what happened after he achieved control of the Empire, with some not even mentioning the settlements of 27 and 23 B.C. Some candidates argued against the quotation, citing his difficulty in choosing his heir as a reason to disagree.

Question 3

Candidates generally displayed a good awareness of the aims of Augustus' religious and moral policies but too many responses did not address the second half of the question. Of those which did, many argued that the example of Julia showed that Augustus was unsuccessful, but did not consider the religious side to the question even though they had cited all the temples Augustus had restored and the reintroduction of festivals. Sometimes candidates found it hard to distinguish between moral and religious policies.

SECTION TWO: Virgil

Question 4

- (i) Most candidates knew some of the signs, but very few knew them all.
- (ii) Whilst there were some well-analysed responses, there were too many which gave an example from the passage and said that it was vivid without explaining why. Surprisingly few made reference to the literary devices used in the passage.
- (iii) Candidates generally did not know the details revealed by Creusa about Aeneas' destiny.
- (iv) There was good relevant recall and argument from both the passage and Book 2 as a whole. Many responses would have gained even more credit by making reference to Books 4 and 6. It was pleasing to see the number of responses which considered both sides of the question. There were, however, some who considered Dido to be a member of Aeneas' family.

Question 5

The question of whether the gods are more of a help than a hindrance to Aeneas was by far the most popular question on the paper. Almost all candidates were able to cite examples of the actions of the gods (some going beyond the set books) and many were able to sort them into whether they were good or bad actions. Only the very best answers analysed why they were either a help or hindrance or saw that Venus was both and came down off the fence and argued either for or against the quotation. There was often good recall about the contribution of the minor gods.

Question 6

The question about the *Aeneid* being a patriotic epic was not well done. Answers tended to be limited in both knowledge and in discussion. The weakest responses struggled to understand what is meant by a 'patriotic epic' and sometimes discussed Augustus without reference to the wider context. Even where there was some understanding of the term, there was frequently little precise reference to the patriotic sections in Books 1, 4 and 6. Augustus' relationship with Virgil was often well done.

SECTION THREE: Juvenal

Question 7

- (i) Most candidates were able to identify all the faults Juvenal found with Crispinus.
- (ii) Although most candidates mentioned eating the fish, few were able to discuss why Crispinus was criticised in *Satire 4*.
- (iii) As is usually the case in this topic, candidates have been well-trained to recognise and select relevant examples of Juvenal's satiric technique. Not only did they demonstrate a good knowledge of the techniques employed by Juvenal but they were also able to offer sound explanation of the effects. Examiners awarded a good number of high marks for this question.
- (iv) The question about the reasons Juvenal gives for writing Satire was not as well answered as the other questions in this topic. Candidates did not seem to know the text in sufficient detail and consequently could only comment in general terms on why Juvenal writes satire.

Question 8

There were some good responses to the question about how Juvenal uses the theme of food and dinner – parties. Candidates were able to draw together a divergent range of material to discuss the inadequacies of the patron-client system in *Satire 5* and the degeneracy of the Emperor in *Satire 4*. It was pleasing to see the precise recall from these two satires as well as many candidates making reference to *Satire 3*.

Question 9

Candidates were good at identifying what Juvenal thinks has gone wrong with Roman society, with adequate references to the Satires as well as an attempt to balance the argument by using the end of *Satire 10*. Most candidates agreed with the quotation, not seeing any advice on solving the problems, although a few did see the possible solutions.

SECTION FOUR: Roman Architecture

Question 10

- (i) Most candidates identified the building correctly and were able to give the location of the baths.
- (ii) A very high proportion of the candidates knew Hadrian had commissioned the baths and most offered the correct dates.
- (iii) Most candidates identified the tepidarium and caldarium but few could name the apodyterium. There was some confusion over the use of the rooms and many struggled to make any useful points.
- (iv) Hadrian's baths at Leptis Magna were most usually compared to the baths of Diocletian or the baths of Caracalla. There was a good level of detail, with candidates generally offering sound discussion, supported by good arguments to back up the often strong opinions of the candidates.

Question 11

Though not a particularly popular question, the question on the basilica of Constantine and Maxentius was often well done. Candidates had a detailed knowledge of the layout, materials and decoration of the basilica. A varied range of other basilicae was employed as comparative material. Many candidates would have benefitted from paying closer attention to the wording of the quotation. Offering knowledge of the established basilica plan, and careful use of that knowledge, would have enabled them to provide more of an argument rather a detailed factual response.

Question 12

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CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/03

History: Sources and Evidence

The majority of candidates attempted the question on the Greek world, so this report is largely based on the responses to **Question 1**. In general, the feeling of Examiners was that candidates approached the essay more effectively this year, though there were some interesting differences between centres.

Essay length varied considerably; there were some very short responses, though the majority of answers were developed in greater detail. In many cases there was evidence of planning; this could be very helpful in ensuring that the passages on the paper were used effectively to develop an answer. There were a number of essays that made no clear reference to the passages at all, but rather focused on the question set, often in a rather general way. Some candidates methodically worked their way through the passages and tried to relate them to the question, but without communicating a real sense of understanding. However the strongest responses were able to use the passages critically as an important part of their answer, drawing effectively on broader reading to suggest the wider context in a very effective way.

For the most part essays were reasonably presented; handwriting was clear and spelling of classical names was consistent. A few candidates would have been better advised to write on alternate lines, so that they could communicate more effectively. One or two candidates made use of correction fluid to tidy up their work, and in at least one case this led to a gap on the page, either because the candidate failed to write the correction in or because they wrote while the correction fluid was still wet. It is worth reminding candidates that it is quicker and much more effective simply to cross out errors and then either continue after the crossing out, or make a clear link to the continuation. There were a few cases where marks (such as asterisks) appeared to be used to direct the Examiner's attention elsewhere, but no link could be found: this is unhelpful. Examiners are very keen to award the appropriate mark for work, but would rather not waste time looking for something that cannot be found.

Relatively few candidates evaluated the sources they used (whether the passages on the paper or those drawn from memory). A discussion of the Aristophanes passage that acknowledged the genre (comedy) and the context was more likely to be effective; many candidates appeared to treat Aristophanes and Thucydides in the same way.

Some candidates were able to bring in a wide range of reading, including other relevant ancient sources (such as Aristotle or the Old Oligarch) and modern authorities, sometimes with relevant material directly quoted. The Examiners do not require direct quotation, though they are pleased to acknowledge appropriate understanding of the evidence for the period studied.

The strongest answers communicated effectively a clear understanding of the broader context. For example, in **Question 1**, many candidates showed a clear understanding of change over time: there were periods when Athenian citizens could be said to have gained a great deal and others when the opposite was the case. The best responses were able to convey this with appropriate supporting detail: for example, a number of candidates recognised the relevance of cleruchies to the question, but not all were clear what these were, and relatively few were able to give specific examples. In a similar way, a discussion of revolts was in some cases related well to the question (Athenian citizens were placed at risk through the need to maintain the Empire); some candidates were able to give some specific examples to support this (e.g. Potidaea, Mytilene), but a number were drawn into a descriptive narrative which steered the essay away from the question.

The Rhodes passage raised the issue of democracy, which provided a further interesting element to many responses. A number of candidates took this as a cue to rehearse the development of the democracy in Athens from the time of Solon, which drew them away from the question. Most, however, resisted the temptation to broaden the question too far and dealt effectively with the growth of democracy in this period.

Those candidates who were confident about the final stages of the Peloponnesian War were able to shape their answer in **Question 1** with that in mind; but some candidates were rather vague about what happened

after the outbreak of the war. In a similar vein, candidates who attempted **Question 2** were in some cases very clear about the importance of the emperor in different parts of the Roman world and could support what they said with relevant material; others wrote very generally, in some cases without making significant use of the two passages from the sources.

For many candidates it is clearly a difficult balance to utilise the passages printed on the paper and also draw on other material for a wider context. A good strategy is to make sure at the planning stage that each passage is used explicitly and, preferably, critically addressed; and it is also important to ensure that broader detail is used to support an argument without allowing an extended, irrelevant narrative to develop.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/04

Classical Literature - Sources and Evidence

In this paper only one candidate attempted the question on the nature of Tragedy and so, like last year, there is little that can be said about this question though the general points made below will apply to any answer on Tragedy.

This was the second time this paper has been sat and the number of candidates was considerably higher than last year. It was felt that, overall, the standard was higher, with some candidates achieving exceptionally high marks, but that there was a large group of candidates who found it more challenging to use the stimuli on the question paper effectively.

Although a number of candidates wrote competent answers without any obvious evidence of planning, it is still felt that planning is an important part of the exercise and helps candidates keep track of their arguments. It is also clear that planning needs to be focused on the demands of the question and not just generalities. In these questions, candidates have to identify the key points of the critical passage and link them to the other passages. Thorough and clear planning will help them achieve this. Orthography and legibility are still issues for some candidates. At this level, candidates should be able to spell characters' names and the titles of the works correctly. Planning should help candidates to inform and organise their arguments into paragraphs and thus aid the flow of their essay to a substantiated set of conclusions. Some candidates still write in one long paragraph, one of which went to five pages. Many candidates introduced technical terms but, too often, the terms were not exemplified or not employed correctly and added little to the essay.

Candidates should make sure that their accounts are accurate. In some essays, it was clear that the examples given were picked from film versions like 'Troy' or 'the Odyssey' where the detail represented was not the same as in the text itself. In some cases candidates started quite well but then drifted into a more narrative account of events without explaining their relevance to the line of argument or moved onto a different tack such as 'the tragic paradox of the hero' or 'the relationship between gods and heroes'. It was also sometimes difficult to see the relevance of awarding heroic status to the more minor characters, like Eumaeus. It is also worth reminding candidates that Aeneas did not find, form or found Rome.

The initial quote from Jenkyns encouraged candidates to look at two sides of a hero's make up and also consider, by extension, the importance of these qualities and their development in later classical literature. In the better essays, it was pleasing to see that important speeches from elsewhere in the works were recalled, e.g., Sarpedon to Glaucus or the influence of Nestor or Achilles and Odysseus in the underworld. Protagonists other than Achilles, Odysseus and Aeneas were also mentioned to good effect.

Although it was possible to argue that Achilles was 'a doer of deeds', Odysseus was 'a speaker of words' and that Aeneas was an amalgam of the two, but driven by other imperatives, better candidates picked out both sides for each of these characters. They showed Achilles not only to be an action hero but also a fine orator and musician, Odysseus not only cunning and clever but also capable of feats of arms, and Aeneas both a motivational speaker and a great warrior.

At the lower end, using the passages effectively remained demanding. Some essays did not mention any of the passages. Using the passages in an analytical way to address the question remains quite a demanding task for many candidates. Some candidates focused on 'the nature of the ideal hero', which was not quite what was asked for in the question, and used this to write about heroes. These answers tended towards narrative and lacked logical argument. Odysseus seemed to be the most accessible character to write on in terms of the essay and led to many competent answers. As last year, there was a range of answers in terms of length or brevity and breadth in terms of the lines of argument selected and their substantiation.

One of the main criteria of this paper is that candidates are encouraged to respond in the exam room to a set of stimuli and a question. Accuracy, clear thought and planning closely linked to the essay title and the stimuli will pay dividends as will an in-depth knowledge of the material studied and the avoidance of general assertions.