CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/11
Written Paper 11

Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:
- read the instructions carefully
- follow the instructions carefully
- answer the correct number of questions
- answer from one section only
- write clearly so that an examiner can read and give credit for what is known
- make greater use of the passage or image for the 20 mark question
- write in greater depth using a range of relevant examples
- make the knowledge they have relevant to the question
- learn the dates of key events
- not write too much for the low tariff questions

General comments

The standard on this paper was generally higher than last year. Although there were still some rubric errors there were far fewer than last year and fewer than on the Roman Civilisation paper. Generally, knowledge of the topic(s) was stronger than last year, but the AO2 element still needs to be stronger.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Alexander the Great

The Alexander topic was the most popular topic on the Greek Civilisation paper, with the vast majority of the candidature attempting the questions in this section.

Question 1

(a) (i) Only about half of the candidates were able to give the year of the battle of Issus.

(ii) By and large, most were able to name Alexander's horse, although few could spell it correctly. A substantial number of candidates gave a long retelling of the story of how Alexander tamed the horse.

(iii) Virtually all the candidates could give an answer to the question about Darius' family, and many got full marks.

(b) Candidates generally had something sensible to say about why Alexander won battles. They could discuss his personal bravery, as well as other factors such as his strategic and tactical skills, and the army and generals he inherited from his father. Many of these points were general, and lacked specific examples, but better answers provided evidence from his battles and sieges to back up their arguments. These included Granicus, Issus, Gaugamela and Hydaspes, as well as Tyre and Gaza. Better answers referenced his capture of the city of the Malli. There were also differing interpretations of bravery, such as Alexander was brave to besiege Tyre.

The rubric of the question stated that candidates should use the image as a starting point. Some candidates did not refer to it at all; others talked about details in the other parts of the mosaic which were not reproduced on the question paper and did not mention what was on the paper. Some were unclear about the identities of the two main figures, often unable to identify Darius.

Essay Questions

There was a fairly even split between the two 25-mark essay questions. Candidates who decide to tackle the 25-mark essay first are advised to look at **Question 1(b)** before starting, to make sure they do not cover material required there. This prevents them including irrelevant material in the essay. Some candidates found they were repeating material in their response to **1(b)**.

Question 2

Most candidates were able to discuss the question about whether Olympias had more impact on Alexander's life than any other person. Many discussed Olympias' influence, but many limited their discussion to his early years, and her assertion that Zeus was his father. There were those who mentioned her possible role in his accession, and her position after he left for Asia. The impact of Olympias was compared to other figures in his life, mainly his father Philip, but also Aristotle and Hephaestion. Some also mentioned Zeus and Bucephalus. A few candidates did not discuss Olympias at all, concentrating on the other people in his life,

Question 3

Most candidates agreed with the proposition that Alexander should not be called 'the Great' because his empire fell apart after his death. They did not blame him for the collapse of the empire, and cited reasons for his 'greatness'. The most common reason was his success in war, although ideas such as the policy of fusion, and the Hellenic legacy were also mentioned. Stronger answers mentioned his failure to secure the succession.

A number of candidates wrote down all the anecdotes they could remember, regardless of whether or not they actually answered the question (lots of detail about Hephaistion's death and the taming of Bucephalus). Several candidates recounted Alexander's life story without linking it to the question.

Section B: Aristophanes

Question 4

(a) (i)   Very few candidates knew who Aeacus was in the play.

    (ii)   Fewer candidates could identify the skene or stage building.

    (iii)   Candidates seemed generally unaware of the different types of humour and very few could name scatological humour.

    (iv)   Few candidates knew that Dionysus was impersonating Herakles.

(b)   Most candidates simply analysed Xanthias' portrayal in the passage and were not able to compare this portrayal to the rest of the play. Some were aware of the role reversal between Xanthias and Dionysus but were unable to give specific examples.

Question 5

The question about Greek Comedy needing to be watched rather than read to fully appreciate its humour tended to attract general comments with few references to any of the plays. Candidates had some idea of the visual elements which can only be imagined from the texts, but only provided a few, if any, examples from the plays.

Question 6

In the question about the Choruses in *Lysistrata* and *Women at the Thesmophoria*, candidates were generally unaware of the roles of the Chorus in the two plays. There was some knowledge of the two Choruses in Lysistrata, but very little on *Women at the Thesmophoria*. Some answers did not even mention *Women at the Thesmophoria*.

Section C: Themes in Greek Vase Painting

There were very few attempts at the questions in the vase painting section. The answers tended to come from candidates who did not follow the rubric and answered all three sections.

Question 7

(a) (i)   The shape of the pot was not correctly identified. Some just tried to describe it or said it was one associated with soldiers.

(ii)   The black figure technique was rarely identified.

(iii)   The date of the pot tended to be random dates from 617 BCE to 1912 CE.

(iv)   Very few responses were given to this question.

(b)   The very few responses lacked any accurate knowledge about the pot. Answers tended to be the statement in the question and either a sentence which agreed or disagreed, with little or no reference to the pot or any others to back up the answer.

Question 8

Although the daily life of women was a popular subject for Greek vase painters, candidates' knowledge of the pots on the syllabus was limited. The responses were rarely more than a paragraph long and were lacking reference to specific pots with domestic scenes.

Question 9

The question about painters experimenting and exploring different ways of painting and decorating pots by the end of the 6th century BCE was even less popular than the question about pots depicting women. The answers were similar in that they were brief and lacked knowledge of relevant pots from the relevant time period.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/12
Written Paper 12

Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:
- read the instructions and the questions carefully.
- follow the instructions carefully.
- answer from one section only.
- write clearly and legibly so that an examiner can read and give credit for what is known.
- use quotation appropriately and ensure that it is relevant to the point being made.
- produce plans for the essay question.
- make more use of the passage or image for 20 mark questions

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Alexander the Great

The Alexander topic was by far the most popular topic on the paper. Candidates do not need to write long answers to the low tariff questions.

Question 1

(a) (i)   Many candidates were able to give the correct date for the assassination of Philip.

(ii)   Few candidates were able to give the name of the city in which Philip was assassinated. Some candidates did not focus on the word 'city' but instead gave a region or even a whole country.

(iii)   Most could identify the correct Cleopatra, but did not know her relationship to Attalus. Some did not seem to realise the reference was to the Cleopatra named in the stimulus passage and produced irrelevant and anachronistic responses. Some confused her with Cleopatra of Egypt. Candidates should remember that the **(a)** questions refer specifically to the stimulus provided.

(iv)   Most candidates knew that Olympias caused the deaths of Cleopatra and her son.

(b)   Most candidates were aware of Olympias' importance in Alexander's life. Those who used the passage discussed her potential role in Philip's assassination and her revenge on Cleopatra. A few mentioned Alexander's reaction to this revenge. Most candidates discussed her influence on Alexander in his youth – his descent from heroes such as Heracles and Achilles, and having Zeus as his father, as well as the separation between Philip and Alexander. Better answers dealt with her role in Macedon while Alexander was on campaign, and her disagreement with Antipater. Some answers compared her influence with others in Alexander's life, such as Philip. Occasionally, these were the focus of the answer at the expense of Olympias' role. A few candidates dismissed Olympias in one sentence and went on to write extensively about another influential person.

Essays Questions

There was a fairly even split between the two 25-mark essay questions. Candidates who decide to tackle the 25-mark essay first are advised to look at **Question 1 (b)** before starting, to make sure they do not cover material required there. This prevents them including irrelevant material in the essay. Some candidates found they were repeating material in their response to **1(b)**.

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Question 2

Candidates were generally aware of the relationship between Alexander and his men, including the obeying of orders during the early years of the campaigns, to the men's resistance to the Policy of Fusion, and their refusal to carry on marching into India. Better answers cited specific examples, such as the deaths of Cleitus, Philotas and Parmenio, and Callisthenes' opposition to the practice of proskynesis. Strong candidates also gave specific details of the reasons for the mutinies at Opis and the river Beas.

Question 3

Candidates were generally able to formulate an argument based on both Alexander's own abilities, and also the army and generals provided by Philip. Better answers mentioned the structure, training and equipment of the army Philip left Alexander, including the engineering corps. They also discussed the roles played in Alexander's successes by generals such as Parmenio and Antipater; Parmenio's leadership of the left wing and Antipater's post as regent of Macedon. These answers were also aware of Alexander's own contribution. They gave examples of Alexander's strategic and tactical skills, as well as his personal leadership and fighting skills. Most concluded that it was a combination. Alexander could not have succeeded without the army and generals, but it was his own skills that made his campaigns so successful.

Section B: Aristophanes

There were some very good responses to the questions in the Aristophanes section. Overall, very few candidates tackled this topic.

Question 4

(a) (i)   Most candidates knew that Stratyllis was the leader of the women's chorus.

(ii)   The majority of candidates knew that Euripides was a Greek tragedian.

(iii)   Most candidates knew that 'there' referred to the Acropolis.

(iv)/(v) Candidates were less confident about where the women had got the water from and the reference to the 'wedding bath'.

(b)   The question about the effectiveness of visual humour in *Lysistrata* produced a range of different answers – from those who were able to discuss the idea of effectiveness alongside making reference to appropriate examples from the text, to those who could recall examples but not fully address the issue of effectiveness. Some candidates did not seem to understand what is meant by visual humour.

Question 5

There were very few responses to the question about whether audiences are only able to laugh at Aristophanes' characters in *Frogs* and *Lysistrata* because they are exaggerated and not believable as real people. Strong responses covered an excellent range of points and made good reference to the text of both plays.

Question 6

There were some good responses to the question about reality and fantasy in *Women at the Thesmophoria* and *Frogs*. Such responses dealt with elements of realism and fantasy in both plays, discussing both how they contributed to the success of the play, and why they were either realistic or fantastic. Other answers had some discussion of both elements, but got drawn into comparing other elements, such as masters and slaves without really linking this to reality and fantasy.

Section C: Themes in Greek Vase Painting

The vase painting section was not as popular this year as in previous years.

Question 7

(a) (i)   Some candidates could identify the pot as a belly amphora or a one-piece amphora.

(ii) Most were able to identify Achilles and Ajax.

(iii) Candidates were less confident in identifying the Andokides Painter as the painter of the pot.

(b) The responses were rather limited in quality both in accurate knowledge of the pot and detailed knowledge of suitable pots to address the question fully.

Question 8

There were very few answers to the question of whether the daily life of women was depicted more successfully on black figure or red figure pots. Candidates were able to select appropriate pots for discussion and mostly felt that women's lives were depicted more successfully on red figure pots. As always relevant detail about the pots cited was key in answering the question.

Question 9

There were too few responses to this question to provide a meaningful comment.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

> **Paper 9274/13**
> **Written Paper 13**

Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:
- read the instructions and the questions carefully.
- follow the instructions carefully.
- answer from one section only.
- write clearly and legibly so that an examiner can read and give credit for what is known.
- use quotation appropriately and ensure that it is relevant to the point being made.
- produce plans for the essay question.
- make more use of the passage or image for 20 mark questions

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Alexander the Great

The Alexander topic was by far the most popular topic on the paper. Candidates do not need to write long answers to the low tariff questions.

Question 1

(a) (i) Many candidates were able to give the correct date for the assassination of Philip.

(ii) Few candidates were able to give the name of the city in which Philip was assassinated. Some candidates did not focus on the word 'city' but instead gave a region or even a whole country.

(iii) Most could identify the correct Cleopatra, but did not know her relationship to Attalus. Some did not seem to realise the reference was to the Cleopatra named in the stimulus passage and produced irrelevant and anachronistic responses. Some confused her with Cleopatra of Egypt. Candidates should remember that the **(a)** questions refer specifically to the stimulus provided.

(iv) Most candidates knew that Olympias caused the deaths of Cleopatra and her son.

(b) Most candidates were aware of Olympias' importance in Alexander's life. Those who used the passage discussed her potential role in Philip's assassination and her revenge on Cleopatra. A few mentioned Alexander's reaction to this revenge. Most candidates discussed her influence on Alexander in his youth – his descent from heroes such as Heracles and Achilles, and having Zeus as his father, as well as the separation between Philip and Alexander. Better answers dealt with her role in Macedon while Alexander was on campaign, and her disagreement with Antipater. Some answers compared her influence with others in Alexander's life, such as Philip. Occasionally, these were the focus of the answer at the expense of Olympias' role. A few candidates dismissed Olympias in one sentence and went on to write extensively about another influential person.

Essays Questions

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Question 2

Candidates were generally aware of the relationship between Alexander and his men, including the obeying of orders during the early years of the campaigns, to the men's resistance to the Policy of Fusion, and their refusal to carry on marching into India. Better answers cited specific examples, such as the deaths of Cleitus, Philotas and Parmenio, and Callisthenes' opposition to the practice of proskynesis. Strong candidates also gave specific details of the reasons for the mutinies at Opis and the river Beas.

Question 3

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Section B: Aristophanes

There were some very good responses to the questions in the Aristophanes section. Overall, very few candidates tackled this topic.

Question 4

(a) (i) Most candidates knew that Stratyllis was the leader of the women's chorus.

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Section C: Themes in Greek Vase Painting

The vase painting section was not as popular this year as in previous years.

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(iii) Candidates were less confident in identifying the Andokides Painter as the painter of the pot.

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Question 9

There were too few responses to this question to provide a meaningful comment.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:

*   answer questions on one section only
*   use the passage or image when answering the 20-mark questions
*   read the questions carefully
*   not rely on narrative
*   provide more detailed responses to the higher tariff questions
*   have a clearer knowledge of the chronology of the books of the *Aeneid.*

General comments

There was an overall improvement in the quality of answers this year.

The most popular topic, by some margin, was Virgil's *Aeneid*, followed by Augustus, with Architecture of the Roman City the least popular topic.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Augustus

Question 1

(a) (i)   Many candidates were able to give the correct date for the battle of Actium, though some confused BCE and CE.

   (ii)   Most candidates knew that Marcus Agrippa commanded Augustus' forces at the battle of Actium.

   (iii)   Most candidates knew that Antony was married to Cleopatra.

   (iv)   Not all candidates could give the jobs of both Neptune and Mars. Most could give the job of one of the gods. Many resorted to using the Greek names for the gods despite the Roman names being used in the question.

(b)   Most candidates were able to identify relevant information from the passage (dredging of Nile, founding of city, restoration of temple) and link it to the question. Knowledge from elsewhere sometimes proved more challenging. Many candidates were able to mention one or two examples (including roads, Pax Romana and the tax system) and a few candidates showed good knowledge of other additional aspects and could discriminate between senatorial provinces and those under the control of Augustus. Analysis was mainly adequate. Only a few candidates mentioned how trade, prosperity and communications improved. Some showed confusion between what happened in the provinces and what happened in Rome – for instance Augustus' actions in Rome were applied to the whole empire, especially his religious reforms and his building programme.

Question 2

The question on whether Augustus would have been successful as emperor without his family was by far the most popular essay in this topic area.

Candidates were aware of several members of Augustus' family, and of their role in his rule as emperor. Most answers mentioned Julius Caesar and how he helped Augustus gain power. Dynastic marriages of Octavia and Julia were also discussed. Fewer candidates mentioned Tiberius and Drusus. While many candidates knew what the various members of Augustus' family did, they were not always able to fully address the question of the contribution they made to Augustus' success as emperor.

The best responses showed detailed knowledge of Augustus' links with a range of family members, discussing their contribution to Augustus' strategies and successes and displaying incisive evaluation of their contributions. Few answers offered a counter argument to suggest that Augustus would have been successful without the involvement of his family. Those that do this spent too little on this element of the argument.

Weaker answers tended to lack facts: they were good on Julius Caesar, but often hazy on Julia or Octavia or Livia. They were not sure who was married to whom, or which children they had. They were able to express a good opinion but did not always have the evidence to support it.

Question 3

There were fewer answers to **Question 3** about whether Augustus deserved to be honoured for saving the Roman Republic, and they tended to be less effective than answers to **Question 2**. Most were able to construct a reasonable argument and had some knowledge of how Augustus reshaped the Republic to his own benefit. Most candidates were able to identify at least an adequate range of information in support of their argument. A small number of candidates wrote sophisticated answers using their knowledge of how Augustus' reforms changed the forms of republican government, but most did not seem to understand how the government worked in a republic versus an empire. As with other answers, some candidates preferred to rely on sweeping statements with few facts to support their ideas.

Section B: **Virgil's** *Aeneid*

This section was by far the most popular on the paper, with the majority of candidates answering questions on the *Aeneid*. There were some superb responses, particularly to the higher tariff questions.

Some candidates did not read the questions carefully enough and so offered material which was beyond the remit of the question. A few candidates did not refer to the specified books and could only give a general overview of the epic.

Question 4

(a) (i)   Most candidates were unable to identify Tiberinus. There was a range of incorrect answers, including: Anchises, Dido, Evander, Mercury and Jupiter.

(ii)   Most candidates knew that Venus was the mother of Aeneas.

(iii)   The majority of candidates could make reference to Aeneas building a new city. There was often confusion regarding founding and finding a city.

(iv)   The majority of candidates recognised that Ascanius was the son of Aeneas.

(b)   Many candidates found Virgil's exploration of the theme of fate and the future of Rome in Book 8 to be quite challenging. When a question's rubric states 'using this passage as a starting point', it is important for candidates to follow this approach; many candidates did not use the passage as a starting point. There was a good deal of important/useful information contained within the passage which some candidates used quite profitably.

Knowledge of what actually takes place in Book 8 seemed very vague. A good proportion of candidates thought that this was the book in which the fighting takes place, while others knew the basic details but were not able to connect them to the idea of fate and prophecy. Too many candidates took the approach of discussing which other books picked up the theme of fate and prophecy. It is important for candidates to read the question carefully to ascertain whether they are being asked to evaluate whether this book is the most significant exploration of this theme or whether they are being asked to focus on a particular book as in this instance. Book 2, Book 6 and Book 12 were often discussed at length.

The best responses dealt with the passage in detail and included specific episodes from elsewhere in the book, including Evander and his tour of the future site of Rome and key depictions from the shield of Aeneas.

Question 5

The question of the importance of family in the *Aeneid* was a slightly more popular option than **Question 6**. Candidates were generally aware of some family relationships in the *Aeneid*. Mostly, answers dealt with Aeneas, and his relationships with Anchises, Ascanius and Venus. Higher scoring responses dealt with a wider range of familial relationships, including Evander and Pallas, Mezentius and Lausus, Dido and Anna, and even Juno and Venus. A few candidates treated Aeneas and Dido as being family. Although most answers concentrated on the theme of family, quite a few discussed other themes, which were generally not made relevant to the question.

There was some thoughtful analysis of the ways Venus aids Aeneas throughout the poem and how Aeneas is inspired by Anchises, and some made some good points about the relative unimportance of the husband/wife relationship as evidenced by Aeneas/Creusa. All candidates found the question accessible as a starting point and there was plenty of opportunity to gain high level marks through the range of points or depth of discussion of certain relationships.

The weakest responses sidestepped the topic of family and discussed other themes entirely, for instance heroism.

Question 6

In response to the question about human villains in the *Aeneid*, a range of characters was offered up for discussion. Most discussed both human and divine figures, with some only discussing gods after concluding that there are no human villains. Juno was the most discussed figure, with Turnus and Dido also being popular. Other figures who were mentioned were Mezentius, Sinon, Pyrrhus and the Greeks as a whole. Many times the reason given for someone being a villain was that they opposed Aeneas. A few argued that there were no human villains, as any villainous acts they performed were only done because they were influenced by the gods.

Some switched the focus of the question to humans and/or immortals who helped Aeneas. A few candidates argued that Aeneas was a villain in the epic because of his treatment of Creusa, Dido and Turnus.

Section C: **Architecture of the Roman City**

This was the least popular section on the whole paper, with very few tackling the questions in this section.

Question 7

(a) (i) Few recognised the Arch of Constantine.

(ii) Very few knew that the Senate and the people of Rome dedicated the arch.

(iii) The date of the dedication eluded most candidates.

(iv) Very few candidates knew that the arch was to commemorate Constantine's victory at the battle of Milvian Bridge.

(b) Very few candidates could name another monumental arch.

Question 8

There were too few responses to this question to make comment.

Question 9

The question about whether the Pantheon was the most perfect of all Roman temples provoked a positive response from those who attempted it. Whilst some of the points made were sound, the knowledge of detail

from the temple was not strong enough for candidates to achieve a high level AO1 mark. The rubric about referring to two other temples was usually not followed.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:

- answer questions on one section only
- use the passage or image when answering the 20-mark questions
- read the questions carefully
- learn the detail to be able to answer the low tariff questions quickly and accurately
- understand the difference between the 20-mark questions and the 30-mark questions and plan and write accordingly
- provide more detailed responses to the higher tariff questions
- have a clearer knowledge of what happens in each of the books of the *Aeneid.*

General comments

There was an overall improvement in the standard of answers this year. There were far fewer rubric errors than in the past and far fewer candidates who did not attempt particular questions. There were, however, still some candidates who attempted questions from all three sections. Candidates should only be answering on one section.

The most popular topic, by some margin, was Virgil's *Aeneid*, followed by Augustus, with very few candidates tackling Architecture of the Roman City.

The standard of the factual knowledge seemed much better this year, especially in the extended writing questions in the *Aeneid* section than in the legacy syllabus. Again, the low tariff questions presented significant problems for many candidates.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: **Augustus**

Question 1

(a) (i) Most struggled to identify the coin as a denarius. Often responses were generic type coins such as a 'propaganda coin'.

(ii) Candidates mostly knew that Gaius and Lucius Caesar were depicted on the coin.

(iii) Most were able to say that it was Augustus who was depicted on the other side of the coin.

(iv) There were very few candidates who were able to identify the metal correctly. Even those who had said that the coin was a silver denarius in their answer to **Question (i)**, got this question wrong.

(b) The question about whether Augustus' family was important to his success as emperor was generally well answered. Virtually all of the candidates referenced Julius Caesar, with his adoption of Octavian as his heir being cited as a major reason for Octavian gaining power. However, a few candidates regarded Julius Caesar as being emperor of Rome. Most candidates discussed Augustus' use of marriage as a political tool, with Octaivia's marriage to Mark Antony, and Julia's marriages being mentioned, as well as his own marriage to Livia.

Not all candidates used the image or discussed the role played by Gaius and Lucius. Fewer still mentioned the roles of Tiberius and Drusus, and their military campaigns. Agrippa was treated as a family member. There was some confusion in certain answers over the exact family relationships of the various members of Augustus' family. There was also some discussion of the negative effect of Augustus' family, such as the exiles of the two Julias for adultery.

Question 2

The question about the extent to which Augustus' reforms of the provinces benefitted both the people of the provinces and the people of Rome was not a popular one. Candidates did not seem to have the knowledge required to be able to answer the question in any depth. Responses tended to become accounts of Augustus' rise to power and his subsequent career with little reference to the provinces.

Question 3

The question of whether Augustus destroyed the Roman Republic rather than saving it was a much more popular question than **Question 2**. It was also generally well answered, with many examples of good work which considered both elements of the question and discerned that Augustus saved what he could from an institution which was already destroyed.

Most candidates were aware of the way in which Augustus gained and held onto power, and the state of the republic at his death. Candidates discussed the two settlements and how they put more power into Augustus' hands. Better answers separated Rome's state of peace and prosperity after the civil wars from the political situation and the changes in the way Rome was governed.

Section B: Virgil's *Aeneid*

The *Aeneid* remains the most popular topic on the new syllabus, with the majority of centres and candidates choosing to answer on this topic, and responses to the questions were among the strongest on this paper. The low tariff questions for this section seemed to be very accessible. A common theme in the Virgil answers was the use of Greek names for Roman gods.

Question 4

(a) (i) The majority of candidates were able to identify Dido.

(ii) Most candidates were able to identify exactly where Aeneas was.

(iii) Almost all the candidates stated that the shore was Carthage/Libya.

(iv) The question about the gods was generally well answered. Some candidates used Greek names for the gods and others identified only one god.

(b) Candidates could find examples of how Aeneas was portrayed in the passage and dealt with this aspect of the question really well. They were able to make comments about Aeneas' behaviour in the passage and draw some comparisons with how he behaves in Books 4 and 6. There was occasional confusion about the order of events in these two books. Some answers limited themselves to the relationship between Aeneas and Dido, but better answers also considered his meeting with his father. Some candidates made reference to typical Roman characteristics, such as *pietas*, and shaped their answers according to how Aeneas displayed these characteristics. But only the very best answers were able to link the passage and examples from Book 4 and Book 6 and make a range of valid comparisons.

Question 5

The question about whether the first half of the *Aeneid* is more interesting and exciting than the second half of the *Aeneid* was a fascinating question to mark. Candidates generally had a sound knowledge of the plot of the *Aeneid*, and the specific events which occurred in the two halves. They were sometimes less secure on which books contained which specific events. Most candidates were aware of the Homeric influence on the *Aeneid*, and how this affected the contrast between the two halves.

Many thought that interesting and exciting were the same. It was clear that many had thoroughly enjoyed the text. A good number of candidates could analyse exactly what made it exciting. Candidates needed to discuss both halves in more or less equal depth for a fully developed response. Many responses were lacking in discussion of the second half.

A variety of topics was discussed: the character of Aeneas and how it changed during the course of the epic, the tragedy of Dido, the battles between Turnus and Aeneas. Most candidates favoured the first half over the second, mainly because they found the battle scenes to be less interesting.

Question 6

This question about whether the *Aeneid* was an effective piece of propaganda for Augustus and his regime was generally answered quite well. Many candidates could recall the relevant patriotic passages in impressive depth and explain how Augustus was praised in them. The best answers distinguished between the glorification of Rome and propaganda on behalf of Augustus. It was also very encouraging to see how many candidates were aware of the negatives – Gate of Ivory, Golden Bough resisting, Aeneas' flawed character etc. Candidates were able to discuss passages where Virgil seems to undermine his message of glorifying Rome and Augustus.

Section C: Architecture of the Roman City

This was the least popular topic on the whole paper.The questions were generally better answered than last year.

Question 7

(a) (i)   Most candidates could identify the structure as an aqueduct.

   (ii)   Most were able to name the Pont du Gard.

   (iii)/(iv) The majority were able to name Agrippa and give a sensible date.

(b)   'A masterpiece of simplicity which blends in with the landscape.' The candidates generally had a good knowledge of the structure of the Pont du Gard and were able to employ this knowledge effectively to answer the question. There was an even split between those who agree with the statement and those who disagreed.

Question 8

There were too few responses to this question to make comment.

Question 9

The question about Roman temples had a range of responses from good to very good. Knowledge of the temples was generally detailed. All the candidates followed the rubric by discussing at least three temples from the syllabus. The Pantheon was used by all the candidates, with the temple of Jupiter, Pompeii, Maison Carrée, Nîmes and the temple of Bacchus at Baalbek all rating a level of discussion.

Whilst candidates were able to pick out some of the traditional Greek and Etruscan elements from each of the temples, they were not always able to identify the unique characteristics. Candidates could pick out elements where the architect used traditional features in the design of the Pantheon and could also discuss innovative elements such as the method of construction and decoration in the rotunda of the Pantheon.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:

- answer questions on one section only
- use the passage or image when answering the 20-mark questions
- read the questions carefully
- learn the detail to be able to answer the low tariff questions quickly and accurately
- understand the difference between the 20-mark questions and the 30-mark questions and plan and write accordingly
- provide more detailed responses to the higher tariff questions
- have a clearer knowledge of what happens in each of the books of the *Aeneid.*

General comments

There was an overall improvement in the standard of answers this year. There were far fewer rubric errors than in the past and far fewer candidates who did not attempt particular questions. There were, however, still some candidates who attempted questions from all three sections. Candidates should only be answering on one section.

The most popular topic, by some margin, was Virgil's *Aeneid*, followed by Augustus, with very few candidates tackling Architecture of the Roman City.

The standard of the factual knowledge seemed much better this year, especially in the extended writing questions in the *Aeneid* section than in the legacy syllabus. Again, the low tariff questions presented significant problems for many candidates.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: **Augustus**

Question 1

(a) (i) Most struggled to identify the coin as a denarius. Often responses were generic type coins such as a 'propaganda coin'.

   (ii) Candidates mostly knew that Gaius and Lucius Caesar were depicted on the coin.

   (iii) Most were able to say that it was Augustus who was depicted on the other side of the coin.

   (iv) There were very few candidates who were able to identify the metal correctly. Even those who had said that the coin was a silver denarius in their answer to **Question (i)**, got this question wrong.

(b) The question about whether Augustus' family was important to his success as emperor was generally well answered. Virtually all of the candidates referenced Julius Caesar, with his adoption of Octavian as his heir being cited as a major reason for Octavian gaining power. However, a few candidates regarded Julius Caesar as being emperor of Rome. Most candidates discussed Augustus' use of marriage as a political tool, with Octaivia's marriage to Mark Antony, and Julia's marriages being mentioned, as well as his own marriage to Livia.

Not all candidates used the image or discussed the role played by Gaius and Lucius. Fewer still mentioned the roles of Tiberius and Drusus, and their military campaigns. Agrippa was treated as a family member. There was some confusion in certain answers over the exact family relationships of the various members of Augustus' family. There was also some discussion of the negative effect of Augustus' family, such as the exiles of the two Julias for adultery.

Question 2

The question about the extent to which Augustus' reforms of the provinces benefitted both the people of the provinces and the people of Rome was not a popular one. Candidates did not seem to have the knowledge required to be able to answer the question in any depth. Responses tended to become accounts of Augustus' rise to power and his subsequent career with little reference to the provinces.

Question 3

The question of whether Augustus destroyed the Roman Republic rather than saving it was a much more popular question than **Question 2**. It was also generally well answered, with many examples of good work which considered both elements of the question and discerned that Augustus saved what he could from an institution which was already destroyed.

Most candidates were aware of the way in which Augustus gained and held onto power, and the state of the republic at his death. Candidates discussed the two settlements and how they put more power into Augustus' hands. Better answers separated Rome's state of peace and prosperity after the civil wars from the political situation and the changes in the way Rome was governed.

Section B: Virgil's *Aeneid*

The *Aeneid* remains the most popular topic on the new syllabus, with the majority of centres and candidates choosing to answer on this topic, and responses to the questions were among the strongest on this paper. The low tariff questions for this section seemed to be very accessible. A common theme in the Virgil answers was the use of Greek names for Roman gods.

Question 4

(a) (i) The majority of candidates were able to identify Dido.

(ii) Most candidates were able to identify exactly where Aeneas was.

(iii) Almost all the candidates stated that the shore was Carthage/Libya.

(iv) The question about the gods was generally well answered. Some candidates used Greek names for the gods and others identified only one god.

(b) Candidates could find examples of how Aeneas was portrayed in the passage and dealt with this aspect of the question really well. They were able to make comments about Aeneas' behaviour in the passage and draw some comparisons with how he behaves in Books 4 and 6. There was occasional confusion about the order of events in these two books. Some answers limited themselves to the relationship between Aeneas and Dido, but better answers also considered his meeting with his father. Some candidates made reference to typical Roman characteristics, such as *pietas*, and shaped their answers according to how Aeneas displayed these characteristics. But only the very best answers were able to link the passage and examples from Book 4 and Book 6 and make a range of valid comparisons.

Question 5

The question about whether the first half of the *Aeneid* is more interesting and exciting than the second half of the *Aeneid* was a fascinating question to mark. Candidates generally had a sound knowledge of the plot of the *Aeneid*, and the specific events which occurred in the two halves. They were sometimes less secure on which books contained which specific events. Most candidates were aware of the Homeric influence on the *Aeneid*, and how this affected the contrast between the two halves.

Many thought that interesting and exciting were the same. It was clear that many had thoroughly enjoyed the text. A good number of candidates could analyse exactly what made it exciting. Candidates needed to discuss both halves in more or less equal depth for a fully developed response. Many responses were lacking in discussion of the second half.

A variety of topics was discussed: the character of Aeneas and how it changed during the course of the epic, the tragedy of Dido, the battles between Turnus and Aeneas. Most candidates favoured the first half over the second, mainly because they found the battle scenes to be less interesting.

Question 6

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Section C: **Architecture of the Roman City**

This was the least popular topic on the whole paper.The questions were generally better answered than last year.

Question 7

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Question 9

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Whilst candidates were able to pick out some of the traditional Greek and Etruscan elements from each of the temples, they were not always able to identify the unique characteristics. Candidates could pick out elements where the architect used traditional features in the design of the Pantheon and could also discuss innovative elements such as the method of construction and decoration in the rotunda of the Pantheon.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/31
Written Paper 31

Key messages

- Stronger answers had a more secure understanding of the chronology of the period studied.
- Whilst credit is given for correct factual information, this is a source-based paper and higher marks are obtained by candidates who include and analyse sources.
- Candidates should always aim to give specific examples to back up their points.

General comments

Answers to the compulsory source questions (**Questions 1** and **4**) were occasionally hampered by ineffective use of the passage. It is important to start with the passage and set it in context. Details relevant to the question in the passage can be quoted and briefly analysed before extending the answer beyond the passage.

As far as the essays were concerned, **Question 3** on the impact of the Sicilian expedition was more popular than **Question 2** on ostracism in which few candidates were able to discuss specific examples. **Question 5** about women of the Imperial Court was quite popular and candidates were able to discuss several key examples, whereas in **Question 6** candidates tended to over-generalise about the emperors' need for the support of senators and found it difficult to distinguish between different emperors.

Weaker answers tended to stray from the main thrust of the question; for example, when discussing the impact of the Sicilian expedition on Athens, candidates might introduce the effects of the much earlier plague.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Stronger answers put the passage in the context of the 460s and explained how relations were soured between Athens and Sparta following Sparta's rejection of aid sent by Athens and the ostracism of Cimon, who had pro-Spartan views. Better answers also explained how relations between Sparta and Athens changed after the recall of the allied leader Pausanias to Sparta and the setting up of the Delian League. More detail about the roles of key leaders such as Aristides and Cimon would have been helpful. Many answers tended to be rather vague about the period between the Persian Wars and the outbreak of the 2nd Peloponnesian War and tended to fast forward to reasons for the 2nd Peloponnesian War, focussing on the Megarian Decree and disagreements with Corinth. Whilst these later events were not entirely irrelevant to the question, candidates were really being asked to focus on the immediate aftermath of the Persian Wars and issues leading up to the 1st Peloponnesian war shortly after the quoted passage.

Question 2

Candidates needed to include examples of ostracism in their answers. Several were confused between ostracism and banishment, claiming wrongly, for instance, that Alcibiades and the historian Thucydides were ostracised. It was important to define the term ostracism at the start of the essay: many candidates successfully did this, explaining that the original purpose of ostracism was to remove tyranny and was later used to safeguard against its return. Weaker answers viewed ostracism as a punitive measure rather than a preventative one; better answers understood how politicians such as Pericles and Nicias/Alcibiades used

ostracism as a way to enhance their own power. There was some confusion about the initial vote as to whether to hold an ostracism or not and the quorum of 6,000 votes was often claimed to be the number required to ostracise an individual politician. The better answers also discussed the relative importance of ostracism as a process within the democracy as a whole, emphasising that all citizens in the Assembly had a role to play in it, rather than a limited body such as the Council.

Question 3

Stronger answers focused on the aftermath of the Sicilian expedition, including the attitude of Athens' allies, the loss of its fleet, the role of Alcibiades and political upheaval in Athens. Answers tended, however, to put the entire blame for Athens' defeat in the Peloponnesian War onto the Sicilian disaster without analysing other contributing factors, such as Persian aid to Sparta in the latter stages of the war.

There tended to be too much narrative of the initial decision by the Assembly to send an expedition to Sicily and the final defeat of Demosthenes and Nicias at Syracuse rather than discussion of its impact on Athens.

The most important source to discuss was Thucydides (and in particular his admiration for Pericles, who had advised the Athenians not to expand their empire) but Plutarch's biography of Alcibiades and Xenophon's account of the latter stages of the war should also have been included.

Section B

Question 4

The passage highlights Nero's obsession with putting on a good show even in his final moments. This led some candidates to interpret 'show' in a more general sense than a public spectacle such as a play or gladiator fight. Credit was given for taking 'show' in this sense though the main question involved the importance of putting on public shows for the people as in Juvenal's famous quote 'bread and circuses'.

Answers tended to try to compare an individual emperor's attitude to public games rather than accept that such entertainments were important to all of the emperors. Several answers wrongly argued that whereas Nero and Domitian saw games as important, Claudius and Trajan did not. Credit was given to those who included military triumphs and monuments (such as Trajan's Column) in their answer since these were certainly a way for an emperor to show their power.

More successful answers explained why it was important for emperors to keep the people happy and gave examples e.g. Claudius putting on annual gladiatorial games to mark his accession, Domitian's completion of the Colosseum.

Question 5

Essays generally focused on Claudius' wives Messalina and Agrippina and Nero's wives Octavia and Poppaea. Some candidates described the gory details of their deaths or murders rather than answering the question about their 'influence on politics'. Stronger answers gave evidence of how Claudius was influenced by his wives e.g. agreeing to the adoption of Agrippina's son Nero or how Agrippina appeared on coins with Nero early in his reign. Candidates also mentioned how Trajan's wife was involved in the accession of Hadrian.

Question 6

Answers tended to pair off the four emperors as follows: Claudius and Trajan as having a good relationship with senators, whereas Nero and Domitian not so, based primarily on their 'reigns of terror'. This is an over-simplification: Claudius' relationship with the Senate, for instance, was strained from the start and he was heavily influenced by freedmen such as Narcissus and Pallas. It was he who had executed 35 senators, not Nero as some candidates claimed. Claudius had a better relationship with the plebs than the senate.

This question gave candidates an opportunity to discuss the bias of senatorial sources such as Tacitus and Suetonius against the emperors. Only a few answers did so. Likewise, only a few answers showed an understanding of how the emperor worked with the senate, for example in helping to govern the provinces. Answers tended to focus on bad relationships between the emperor and the senate rather than on whether he had any need for their support. Clearly Nero did need their support, for example, given that eventually the senate declared him a public enemy and chose to endorse Galba as his successor.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

> **Paper 9274/32**
> **Written Paper 32**

Key messages

- Stronger answers had a more secure understanding of the chronology of the period studied.
- Whilst credit is given for correct factual information, this is a source-based paper and higher marks are obtained by candidates who include and analyse sources.
- Candidates should always aim to give specific examples to back up their points.

General comments

Answers to the compulsory source questions (**Questions 1** and **4**) were occasionally hampered by ineffective use of the passage. It is important to start with the passage and set it in context. Details relevant to the question in the passage can be quoted and briefly analysed before extending the answer beyond the passage.

As far as the essays were concerned, **Question 3** on the impact of the Sicilian expedition was more popular than **Question 2** on ostracism in which few candidates were able to discuss specific examples. **Question 5** about women of the Imperial Court was quite popular and candidates were able to discuss several key examples, whereas in **Question 6** candidates tended to over-generalise about the emperors' need for the support of senators and found it difficult to distinguish between different emperors.

Weaker answers tended to stray from the main thrust of the question; for example, when discussing the impact of the Sicilian expedition on Athens, candidates might introduce the effects of the much earlier plague.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Stronger answers put the passage in the context of the 460s and explained how relations were soured between Athens and Sparta following Sparta's rejection of aid sent by Athens and the ostracism of Cimon, who had pro-Spartan views. Better answers also explained how relations between Sparta and Athens changed after the recall of the allied leader Pausanias to Sparta and the setting up of the Delian League. More detail about the roles of key leaders such as Aristides and Cimon would have been helpful. Many answers tended to be rather vague about the period between the Persian Wars and the outbreak of the 2nd Peloponnesian War and tended to fast forward to reasons for the 2nd Peloponnesian War, focussing on the Megarian Decree and disagreements with Corinth. Whilst these later events were not entirely irrelevant to the question, candidates were really being asked to focus on the immediate aftermath of the Persian Wars and issues leading up to the 1st Peloponnesian war shortly after the quoted passage.

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There tended to be too much narrative of the initial decision by the Assembly to send an expedition to Sicily and the final defeat of Demosthenes and Nicias at Syracuse rather than discussion of its impact on Athens.

The most important source to discuss was Thucydides (and in particular his admiration for Pericles, who had advised the Athenians not to expand their empire) but Plutarch's biography of Alcibiades and Xenophon's account of the latter stages of the war should also have been included.

Section B

Question 4

The passage highlights Nero's obsession with putting on a good show even in his final moments. This led some candidates to interpret 'show' in a more general sense than a public spectacle such as a play or gladiator fight. Credit was given for taking 'show' in this sense though the main question involved the importance of putting on public shows for the people as in Juvenal's famous quote 'bread and circuses'.

Answers tended to try to compare an individual emperor's attitude to public games rather than accept that such entertainments were important to all of the emperors. Several answers wrongly argued that whereas Nero and Domitian saw games as important, Claudius and Trajan did not. Credit was given to those who included military triumphs and monuments (such as Trajan's Column) in their answer since these were certainly a way for an emperor to show their power.

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CLASSICAL STUDIES

Key messages

- Stronger answers had a more secure understanding of the chronology of the period studied.
- Whilst credit is given for correct factual information, this is a source-based paper and higher marks are obtained by candidates who include and analyse sources.
- Candidates should always aim to give specific examples to back up their points.

General comments

The passages of the compulsory source-based questions both afforded ample opportunity for discussion and the better answers used them well as a basis for discussion. Weaker answers did not set the passage in context, particularly in regard to **Question 4** where some candidates did not realise that Domitian is reacting to Agricola's victories in Britain.

In *Section A*, **Question 2** proved more popular and was generally more successfully answered; several answers to **Question 3** reflected a lack of knowledge of slaves' role in Athenian society. In *Section B,* the more open-ended **Question 5** was significantly more popular; however, a number of those who answered **Question 6** about Roman patronage, scored high marks through good discussion of sources.

It should be emphasised that whether or not a question specifies 'using evidence from sources you have studied' candidates should always aim to do so.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The passage from Herodotus about Spartan kings included a number of details regarding the kings' role in Sparta. Stronger answers went beyond repeating information from the passage, showing additional knowledge about the dual hegemony and the roles of the kings in war. Better answers introduced specific examples such as Leonidas in the Persian Wars and Archidamus in the Peloponnesian War; they also explained how kings were overseen by ephors and how they fitted into the mixed constitution of Sparta, as well as their important role in religion and society. For those candidates who knew the subject well this question was answered successfully.

Question 2

This question required knowledge of the Peloponnesian League, particularly just before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War up to the end of the war, but also earlier in the period after the Persian Wars. Stronger answers explained the role of Corinth in persuading the Spartans to go to war with Athens and her relations with other allies such as Megara and Argos.

However, even stronger answers tended to be less successful in discussing the relationship between Sparta and her allies after Persia's intervention or Sparta's rejection of allied demands at the end of the war.

Weaker answers confused the Peloponnesian League with the Hellenic League and the Delian League and focused too narrowly on merely the reasons for the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War.

Question 3

There were a number of weak answers to this question from candidates under the unfortunate misapprehension that slaves could participate in the Assembly, act as rowers in the fleet or even populate cleruchies: candidates who based their whole argument on the false premise that slaves were 'lower class citizens' could only achieve a low mark. Stronger answers understood the indirect contribution of slaves to the democracy, allowing their citizen owners the time to attend the Assembly or law-courts as well as military training. It was important to discuss the economic roles of slaves, whether working in the silver mines or on building projects, or on their master's farm.

Section B

Question 4

Stronger answers fully explained the context of Domitian's reaction to Agricola's victory at Mons Graupius and his concern that Agricola might even prove a threat to his own position, resulting in Agricola's recall. Domitian's relative lack of military success during his reign was generally understood in contrast to Trajan's victories in Dacia. Claudius' invasion of Britain and Nero's relative lack of military success were regularly mentioned.

Stronger answers rightly mentioned Tacitus' bias against Domitian especially as being the son-in-law of Agricola.

Answers tended to assume that military victories were important for increasing the emperor's glory and popularity rather than explaining why. Financial benefits could also have been included such as opportunities for trade and employment.

Question 5

This was potentially quite a broad question, allowing scope for candidates to discuss more than one emperor or just one. In general, the most successful essays focused in a more detailed way on one emperor, Claudius for instance. Candidates who tried to deal with too many emperors had a tendency to over-generalise. It was important to define what is meant by 'groups': this could have included the army, women, freedmen and slaves as well as political groupings such as the senate, equites and plebs. Candidates had a free choice and could score high marks if they limited themselves to political groups. Many answers chose to focus on the Emperor's relations with the senate, somewhat ignoring other groups.

This question provided a good opportunity for candidates to use sources which deal with social issues such as Pliny and Juvenal as well as the more historical Tacitus and Suetonius.

Question 6

This question proved less popular than **Question 5** but there were several impressive answers which showed a good understanding of the Emperor at the top of the patronage pyramid and the various ways in which he maintained good relations with his 'clients'. Stronger answers included a wide variety of benefits an Emperor might provide for his people such as entertainments, corn dole, and new public facilities. Benefits given to the army in terms of pay and length of service were also mentioned. Some candidates took the opportunity to discuss the relationship between Pliny, governor of Bithynia, and Trajan as shown in their interchange of letters. Other sources which were usefully included were Juvenal and Petronius. Most answers limited themselves to the Emperor as patron and would have benefitted from also considering wider aspects of Roman society.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Key messages

Candidates should:

*   Read the question carefully.
*   Give specific, detailed examples from the texts.
*   Avoid giving paragraphs of general backstory.
*   Answer questions in an analytical rather than descriptive fashion.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Greek Tragedy

Question 1

Candidates found this question challenging. This was mainly due to a lack of specific knowledge of the plays. A significant number did not realise that the passage was from *Electra* not *Agamemnon*. However, most candidates made use of the passage and were able to make some comments about Clytemnestra's role as a wife, especially in light of the comment made by the chorus in the passage. A large proportion of answers gave little detail beyond the facts that Clytemnestra had an affair with Aegisthus and killed Agamemnon in revenge for Iphigenia's sacrifice. Only a handful of answers gave specific details from either play. Candidates needed to show a greater familiarity with the plays themselves. Most answers were focused on the question but lacked the necessary depth of knowledge.

Question 2

In general, candidates made a good attempt to answer this question. However, there was a tendency for candidates to give very narrative answers. Often answers would include an overview of the plot of all four plays with a brief analytical sentence at the end of each summary. There were some excellent answers that looked in detail at the role of gods, versus the autonomy of the characters. As with the previous question though, a lack of knowledge beyond the storyline made it hard for some candidates to write a meaningful answer.

Question 3

A large number of candidates answered this question, unfortunately most answers had either misread or misunderstood the question. The question was primarily about the status of characters in Greek tragedy; however, most candidates had answered as if the question were 'tragedy is moving because characters suffer.' This led to a large number of answers that tended to list all the suffering in Greek tragedy. The examples tended to be vague rather than specific and due to the misunderstanding were often not helpful in supporting an argument.

Section B: Homeric Epic

Question 4

Candidates found this question challenging, although most showed a good understanding of how Paris was portrayed in the passage and made use of the extract on the paper. However, very few candidates went beyond what was given to them on the paper; with only a very few using the examples of Paris' portrayal before and after this passage. A significant number of candidates could not correctly place the passage and

believed that Paris had already fought. Most candidates also seemed unaware that Paris had initiated the duel - not Menelaus. In general, candidates did not have enough knowledge to fully do this question justice. There were lots of references to Paris being cowardly, but no specific examples to back up assertions. There were also some confusion about the events which take place within the poem and those that are part of the wider myth. Overall, answers made good use of the passage but candidates needed to show their broader knowledge.

Question 5

This essay asked candidates to consider whether one of the most compelling elements of the Homeric epics is the fact that they show both the best and worst of humanity. In general, candidates showed a good knowledge of both epics and were able to pick out some interesting examples that illustrated both the best and worst of humanity. For example, candidates knew the episode with the suitors, and were able to point to this as an example of the worst of humanity, some candidates also looked at the brutality of war in the *Iliad*. It appeared that candidates found it harder to find examples of the best of humanity but there were some good examples given with Nausica's generosity to Odysseus frequently featuring. Overall candidates showed a good knowledge of the plot and storyline of the epics. However, a number of candidates did not give specific enough detail in their answers and were making points about the general storyline rather than giving examples.

Candidates did not always define their terms and only the very best answers looked at the idea of what made something 'compelling'. Often the analytical aspect of the essay was overlooked and candidates tended to take a more narrative approach and list examples of good and bad humanity. As in previous years the most successful answers were those that took an analytical rather than narrative approach.

Question 6

This question looked at whether the *Odyssey* was interesting because of the obstacles faced by Odysseus. Candidates had a made a good attempt at answering this, however, often the idea of what made the story 'interesting' was overlooked. A large number of answers simply listed the obstacles that were faced by Odysseus. This tended to lead to very narrative answers that lacked focus on the question. The examples given by candidates also tended to be rather vague with references to things such as 'the suitors' or 'the Cyclops' rather than detailed examples.

There were also a number of answers that looked at the mental trials that Odysseus overcomes during the *Odyssey* and his change from an Iliadic hero. Although this was not completely irrelevant to the question, candidates did not link their points to this specific question. The most successful answers were those that focused on the question and used detailed examples. Overall, answers showed a sound overview of the plot of the *Odyssey* but lacked detail and analysis.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Key messages

Candidates should:

- Read the question carefully.
- Give specific, detailed examples from the texts.
- Avoid giving paragraphs of general backstory.
- Answer questions in an analytical rather than descriptive fashion.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Greek Tragedy

Question 1

Candidates found this question challenging. This was mainly due to a lack of specific knowledge of the plays. A significant number did not realise that the passage was from *Electra* not *Agamemnon*. However, most candidates made use of the passage and were able to make some comments about Clytemnestra's role as a wife, especially in light of the comment made by the chorus in the passage. A large proportion of answers gave little detail beyond the facts that Clytemnestra had an affair with Aegisthus and killed Agamemnon in revenge for Iphigenia's sacrifice. Only a handful of answers gave specific details from either play. Candidates needed to show a greater familiarity with the plays themselves. Most answers were focused on the question but lacked the necessary depth of knowledge.

Question 2

In general, candidates made a good attempt to answer this question. However, there was a tendency for candidates to give very narrative answers. Often answers would include an overview of the plot of all four plays with a brief analytical sentence at the end of each summary. There were some excellent answers that looked in detail at the role of gods, versus the autonomy of the characters. As with the previous question though, a lack of knowledge beyond the storyline made it hard for some candidates to write a meaningful answer.

Question 3

A large number of candidates answered this question, unfortunately most answers had either misread or misunderstood the question. The question was primarily about the status of characters in Greek tragedy; however, most candidates had answered as if the question were 'tragedy is moving because characters suffer.' This led to a large number of answers that tended to list all the suffering in Greek tragedy. The examples tended to be vague rather than specific and due to the misunderstanding were often not helpful in supporting an argument.

Section B: Homeric Epic

Question 4

Candidates found this question challenging, although most showed a good understanding of how Paris was portrayed in the passage and made use of the extract on the paper. However, very few candidates went beyond what was given to them on the paper; with only a very few using the examples of Paris' portrayal before and after this passage. A significant number of candidates could not correctly place the passage and

believed that Paris had already fought. Most candidates also seemed unaware that Paris had initiated the duel - not Menelaus. In general, candidates did not have enough knowledge to fully do this question justice. There were lots of references to Paris being cowardly, but no specific examples to back up assertions. There were also some confusion about the events which take place within the poem and those that are part of the wider myth. Overall, answers made good use of the passage but candidates needed to show their broader knowledge.

Question 5

This essay asked candidates to consider whether one of the most compelling elements of the Homeric epics is the fact that they show both the best and worst of humanity. In general, candidates showed a good knowledge of both epics and were able to pick out some interesting examples that illustrated both the best and worst of humanity. For example, candidates knew the episode with the suitors, and were able to point to this as an example of the worst of humanity, some candidates also looked at the brutality of war in the *Iliad*. It appeared that candidates found it harder to find examples of the best of humanity but there were some good examples given with Nausica's generosity to Odysseus frequently featuring. Overall candidates showed a good knowledge of the plot and storyline of the epics. However, a number of candidates did not give specific enough detail in their answers and were making points about the general storyline rather than giving examples.

Candidates did not always define their terms and only the very best answers looked at the idea of what made something 'compelling'. Often the analytical aspect of the essay was overlooked and candidates tended to take a more narrative approach and list examples of good and bad humanity. As in previous years the most successful answers were those that took an analytical rather than narrative approach.

Question 6

This question looked at whether the *Odyssey* was interesting because of the obstacles faced by Odysseus. Candidates had a made a good attempt at answering this, however, often the idea of what made the story 'interesting' was overlooked. A large number of answers simply listed the obstacles that were faced by Odysseus. This tended to lead to very narrative answers that lacked focus on the question. The examples given by candidates also tended to be rather vague with references to things such as 'the suitors' or 'the Cyclops' rather than detailed examples.

There were also a number of answers that looked at the mental trials that Odysseus overcomes during the *Odyssey* and his change from an Iliadic hero. Although this was not completely irrelevant to the question, candidates did not link their points to this specific question. The most successful answers were those that focused on the question and used detailed examples. Overall, answers showed a sound overview of the plot of the *Odyssey* but lacked detail and analysis.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

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Paper 9274/43
Written Paper 43
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Key messages

Candidates should:

- Read the question carefully.
- Give specific, detailed examples from the texts.
- Make full use of the passage given on the paper.

General comments

Candidates showed a good level of knowledge this year. Focusing on giving specific examples will help to make answers even stronger.

All candidates answered **Section B** so comments will focus on those questions.

Question 4

This question asked candidates, about Odysseus' control over his own fate. In general, this question was well answered. Not all candidates made use of the passage that was given to them on the paper making more use of this would have helped some candidates to have written a stronger answer. Most candidates correctly used the passage as a springboard to discuss wider examples, but a significant number made no use of it at all. Overall, candidates showed a good knowledge of the *Odyssey*. There were a few minor errors about the sequence of events and some candidates seem to be confused between Calypso and Circe. The strongest answers considered how Odysseus had some agency within what was fated for him, discussing how although he might not be able to change the end result, he could change the method of getting there. There was also some excellent discussion of the use of the narrative voice with candidates arguing that the parts of the poem in the first person are more likely to show Odysseus as being in control of fate, compared with the sections in the third person which show the involvement of the gods. Overall, this was a well answered question.

Question 5

This question required candidates to look at the concept of loyalty in the Homeric epics. Generally, it was very well answered with some extremely strong answers. Candidates answered especially well when looking at the *Odyssey* and there was some superb discussion of the loyalty of the maids and slaves in Ithaca. Candidates were able to give a great deal of specific detail about the role of different members of the household. For example, a significant number were able to cite the exact rewards that were given to Eumaeus for remaining loyal to Odysseus.

Candidates found the concept of loyalty in the *Iliad* a more challenging idea and did not always see how this could fit with the heroic ideals of *kleos* and *time*. In some cases, however this led to some really superbly nuanced discussion.

There was some use of secondary scholarship when answering this question and this year it tended to be used very well; candidates added references to scholars that enhanced their argument rather than distracting from it. There were a few candidates who had clearly studied 'the heroism of the domestic' and attempted to bring this into their answers with varying degrees of success.

Overall, this question was answered strongly by candidates.

Question 6

This question asked candidates to discuss whether immortals were a distraction to the storyline in the *Iliad*. In general, candidates demonstrated a very secure knowledge of the appearances of gods and goddesses within the poem. However, there were a significant number of answers where candidates simply listed all the appearances of the gods and goddesses that they could remember in the poem. This resulted in answers that were narrative rather than analytical. Only a small number of candidates approached this question in an analytical fashion. Overall there was a greater lack of evaluation compared with the answers to **Question 5**.

The strongest answers were those that focused on the impact that each immortal intervention had on the outcome of the event and the plot overall. The very best answers considered the degree to which different gods and goddesses had an impact.

In general a good knowledge of the *Iliad* shown.