



# Cambridge International AS & A Level

---

## CLASSICAL STUDIES

9274/42

Paper 4 Greek Literature

October/November 2023

1 hour 30 minutes



You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

---

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **two** questions in total:  
Answer questions from **one** section only.  
For each section, follow the instructions inside on which questions to answer.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

### INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

---

This document has **4** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

## Section A: Greek Tragedy

Answer **Question 1** and **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.

- 1 Read the passage and answer the question.

CLYTEMNESTRA: Helen was a whore, her husband didn't know how to handle  
 A randy wife; and *that* was Agamemnon's reason  
 For murdering my daughter. All the same, for that –  
 Wicked as it was – I would not have turned savage, or  
 Have killed my husband. But he must bring home with him 5  
 The mad prophetess; foist on me a second wife,  
 A fellow-lodger – two kept women in one house.  
 Well, women are frail, I grant you. But when, knowing this,  
 A husband looks elsewhere, and slights his lawful wife,  
 She'll copy him, and find herself another friend. 10  
 And then the glare of public censure lights on *us*;  
 The husbands are to blame – but they're not criticised.  
 Suppose Menelaus had been abducted secretly,  
 Would I have had to kill Orestes, to get back  
 My sister's husband Menelaus? Would your father 15  
 Have stood for that? No: he'd have killed me if I'd touched  
 His son; he killed my daughter – why should he not die?  
 I killed him. I took the only way open to me –  
 Turned for help to his enemies. Well, what could I do?  
 None of your father's friends would have helped me murder him. 20  
 So, if you're anxious to refute me, do it now;  
 Speak freely; prove your father's death not justified.

CHORUS: Your words are just; yet in your 'justice' there remains  
 Something repellent. A wife ought in all things to accept  
 Her husband's judgement, if she is wise. 25

(Euripides, *Electra*)

Using this passage as a starting point, how far do you agree that the portrayal of Clytemnestra is a negative depiction of a wife and mother? [20]

## EITHER

- 2 'The gods do not play an important role in tragedy.' To what extent do you agree? In your answer you should refer to **at least two** plays. [30]

## OR

- 3 'Tragedy is only moving because of the status of the characters who suffer.' How far do you agree? In your answer you should refer to **at least two** plays. [30]

## Section B: Homeric Epic

Answer **Question 4** and **either** Question 5 **or** Question 6.

- 4 Read the passage and answer the question.

When godlike Paris saw Menelaus emerging through the front ranks, his heart failed him completely and he retreated into his own contingent of warriors to avoid death. Like a man who catches sight of a snake in a wooded ravine and sharply recoils, knees trembling, and retreats, pale-faced, so godlike Paris disappeared back into the mass of proud Trojans, terrified of Menelaus son of Atreus. Hector saw him and attacked him sharply: 'Paris, you parody, with your wonderful looks, you sex-crazed seducer, you should never have been born, or married. How I wish that were the case! Far better that than to be the disgrace you are now, trusted by nobody. How the long-haired Greeks must cackle when they see us make a champion of a man because of his good looks, not his strength of purpose or courage. Can you be the same man who picked a crew, crossed the waves in your seafaring ships, mixed with foreigners and carried off a beautiful woman from a distant land, and from a warrior family too, Helen, to be a scourge to your father, to the town and to the whole people, to cause our enemies to rejoice and you to hang your head in shame?'

5

10

(Homer, *Iliad* 3)

Using this passage as a starting point, discuss how typical this portrayal is of Paris in the *Iliad*.  
[20]

## EITHER

- 5 'The Homeric epics are so compelling because they show both the best and worst of humanity.' To what extent do you agree? In your answer you should discuss **both** the *Iliad* **and** the *Odyssey*.  
[30]

## OR

- 6 'The *Odyssey* is only interesting because of the obstacles faced by Odysseus.' To what extent do you agree?  
[30]

**BLANK PAGE**

---

Permission to reproduce items where third-party owned material protected by copyright is included has been sought and cleared where possible. Every reasonable effort has been made by the publisher (UCLES) to trace copyright holders, but if any items requiring clearance have unwittingly been included, the publisher will be pleased to make amends at the earliest possible opportunity.

To avoid the issue of disclosure of answer-related information to candidates, all copyright acknowledgements are reproduced online in the Cambridge Assessment International Education Copyright Acknowledgements Booklet. This is produced for each series of examinations and is freely available to download at [www.cambridgeinternational.org](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org) after the live examination series.

Cambridge Assessment International Education is part of Cambridge Assessment. Cambridge Assessment is the brand name of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES), which is a department of the University of Cambridge.