



**GCE**

**Classics: Classical Civilisation**

Advanced GCE **H441**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **H041**

**OCR Report to Centres June 2015**

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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## F381 Archaeology: Mycenae and the Classical World

### General Comments:

There were a good number of outstanding and good responses to all of the questions on this year's paper. Particularly pleasing was the candidates' knowledge of central issues and supporting data. Candidates might, however, be encouraged to widen their awareness of supporting examples from both the Mycenaean world and the wider classical milieu. Most essays were appropriate to the task being set but occasionally individuals lost sight of the time factor in their eagerness to show their knowledge and their work tailed off rather abruptly. There was a wide variety of approach to the essay questions and the level of detail employed fluctuated too – the responses on 'display of archaeological sites' were especially vulnerable to generalisation.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Question No. 1

- a. The demands of this question were clearly outlined but there was considerable variation in the depth of response to the three sections on how they were made, how they were preserved and where they were found. Most candidates could muster a convincing explanation on manufacture, though some were less explicit than required, and many also were aware of the standard 'palace fire' explanation for their preservation. The find spots were generally well known. Without any expectation of specific recognition of the individual tablets candidates should be encouraged to make reference to aspects of the sources that they recognise and which are germane to the questions – here this could have included reference to particular elements of the script.
- b. The mark scheme outlines the standard set of social aspects which archaeologists in this period would expect to study and candidates were expected to tackle, if not all of these, a good range of specifically identified topics such as hierarchy, the role of women, slavery and warfare. Good responses were also able to pin clear examples from Mycenaean archaeology to each of their ideas and the disparities in response here provided clear levels of differentiation. At the top end candidates were also able to bring out a discussion of the limitations of their sources. Generic, second hand answers did not score high marks.
- c. This question was deliberately polarised to help candidates construct a balanced response and most answers were able to produce an appropriately structured piece of writing weighing the benefits of written evidence from the past against physical evidence. The best responses identified the overlap between the two types of evidence and discussed their complementarity. Fewer candidates were able to be very specific about particular ancient written sources as examples and many answers limited themselves to generic references to Homer. Given the wealth of potential evidence to be selected from the Classical world at large, candidates should be encouraged to have a wider range of physical sources at their disposal than simply Pompeii and a few other well-known sites. It was good to see sites like Gresham Street and Vindolanda being well used by some.

**Question No. 2**

- a. Even though candidates are not expected to identify specific artefacts many did in fact recognise some of the sources in this question and used their factual knowledge well in their answer. The question asked for four other artefacts to be described and this seemed to cause problems of repetition for a few. Generalisations about particular graves abounded but the specific and detailed data about individual objects was often less secure. Candidates must be led by the rubric of the question and tailor their responses accordingly to give themselves the best chance of scoring higher marks.
- b. Much useful discussion of the graves goods specified in the questions was evinced by candidates, especially in relation to the given sources, but references to the wider set of sources was less secure and often consisted of brief generic discussion of types. The question also asked specifically for this data to be extrapolated to status and some responses were unable to move beyond the general while others successfully discussed hierarchy, ascribed and achieved status – if not always in so many words in terms of vocabulary but that was fine. The best response even began to realise the connection between such deposition and the living left behind by the deceased. There was much useful discussion of exotic materials, symbolism and level of craftsmanship.
- c. A good range of burial types is listed in the mark scheme and the best responses took the cue from the question and used these effectively, usually in a chronological fashion, as an integral part of their answer. However too many responses were rather generic in their use of sources such as the ‘Tomb of Atreus’ with little resort to specific details about the structure which would have lifted their answers into higher mark levels. It was good to see some answers move beyond the architecture to consider organisation of manpower, use of technology and understanding of mathematics and physics at this early date.

**Question No. 3**

This question was well done by many candidates who were able to explore a wide range of non-invasive survey approaches in some technical detail. Less convincing in some cases, however, was the degree of exemplification in terms of specific sites which would have provided the ‘icing on the cake’ and secured those higher marks. Candidates might be asked to sharpen up their case study knowledge by constructing a cross-referenced chart of sites and archaeological techniques demanded by the specification. Otherwise responses often fall back on the generic ‘Hadrian’s Wall’ or even ‘Roman Britain’. Good references were often made to the work of such luminaries as Schliemann, Wace and Blegen or Arthur Evans but more recent archaeologists and their work were conspicuous by their absence.

**Question No. 4**

The most effective responses to this question were able to link a good range of case studies to a similarly inclusive range of types of presentation and education. Most candidates relied on Wroxeter and Pompeii and could be urged to widen their knowledge to encompass more recent examples. Despite the many examples of good generic argument about the core principle of the question it would have been good to see answers that were able to be more explicit about museums, experimental archaeology and the creative use of technology alongside reference to more mundane approaches through the various kinds of archaeological literature.

**Question No. 5**

Most candidates were good at outlining the practical issues involved in archaeological projects but levels of evaluation were very variable and this compromised marks in many cases. Funding was often well discussed but there was rarely much discussion of the different types of project and their different demands and infrastructure. The legal framework was specifically mentioned in the wording of the question and yet this was rarely tackled in much detail and awareness of the actual laws that are relevant here as well as subsidiary aspects like PPG16 et al. was often rather thin. Links to sound examples of good practice in recent classical archaeology were also fairly sparse.

## F382 Homer's *Odyssey* and Society

### General Comments:

Candidates' enjoyment of this unit is manifest in both its popularity and the quality of their engagement with the text which is prevalent in the vast majority of responses. Given the longevity of this current specification, the paucity of rubric errors was not unexpected. Timing also proved to be less of an issue than in previous years and the efforts spent in the classroom refining examination technique and practising past papers had not gone unrewarded. The quality of written communication was invariably indifferent in places, though no worse than in previous years. It is more rewarding to see that the subject is clearly justifying its place within the classroom.

As ever, Questions 1 and 3 proved the most popular combination though this year saw more candidates opting for Question 2. Surprisingly few went for Question 4 and Question 5 continues to remain the abode of an elite few.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Question No.

- 1a** The rubric indicated that students should respond to what had happened to Odysseus. This was too often overlooked and so candidates wasted time by re-telling events such as the council of the gods, Calypso's outrage at divine double standards etc. That said, many answers contained impressive use of detail and many high marks were awarded. Asking candidates to make reference to events after the passage did not seem to cause any problems.
- 1b** Overall, candidates responded well to this question. They cited significant detail and most attempted to comment on it. There was good knowledge shown of literary techniques and language and images were well unpacked including the simile at the end of the passage. Some candidates would have done better to pay closer attention to the wording of the question, preferring instead to explain why it was a vivid and exciting piece of narrative.
- 1c** There was a considerable polarisation in the spread of marks for this question. This was usually due to one or more of the following three factors:
- Either, candidates only knew that Odysseus was fated to return home and that the Suitors were doomed to die.
  - Or they chose to ignore the prompt in the question and understood 'Fate' in its modern, more colloquial sense.
  - Or, they failed to consider what Fate contributes to the epic and just recounted different omens and prophecies.

The need to use the prompts cannot be stressed enough. Those who avoided these pitfalls often did well. Recall was strong and, as far as Homer's use of fate goes, most students focused on it as a plot device. Most saw that knowing the end does not spoil the story, but that the interest of the audience is sustained by the HOW rather than by the WHAT. Better responses discussed the lovely ironies Homer exploits through our advanced knowledge, and saw the moral lessons learned by the suitors' constant refusal (except Amphinomus) to accept the omens and prophecies.

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- 2a** Most responses managed to recall how Penelope's shroud trick was revealed to the Suitors by the servant women. Eurycleia's contribution was not often overlooked. Vague reference to the sexual conduct of the maids was not credited as it is mentioned in the passage. However, naming Melanthe as the mistress of Eurymachus did show specific and detailed study and was rewarded. Few commented on Melanthe's impertinence.
- 2b** Although there were some very full, detailed and thoughtful responses, there were still many that veered towards the superficial. Some wrote about the 'detailed description' but needed to provide evidence in support of the claim. There were only a few who successfully unpacked the simile. There were, however, responses showing the development of Telemachus as well as exploration of the ambiguous stance towards the maids as to how much Homer may have wanted his audience to pity them. The removal of the dead bodies that had only the previous night been lovers, by the women who had been loved was discussed and explored well.
- 2c** There were good studies of revenge and discussions of how appropriate the punishment was to the crime. The best answers managed to include a range of examples of revenge being enacted and to consider its justification from both an ancient and modern perspective. In the face of all the evidence of divine disapproval it was hard to agree with the few who tried to oppose the slaughter of the Suitors. Some responses, however, did see Odysseus as an agent of the gods and so saw the slaughter as a divinely ordered execution. It was surprising how few answers made reference to the passage or considered Melanthe.
- 3** There were very few weak answers to this question. Nearly all candidates were able to, at the least, list all the 'selfish' and 'unselfish' points in relation to Odysseus and make some sort of assessment in the conclusion. Many were able to go beyond this. Responses which took a holistic and comparative approach fared much better. Work was cogent and concise. Personal responses were supported by well-selected material which was fully unpacked. Candidates who tried to re-use an essay on whether they thought Odysseus was a good leader or not tended to narrow the scope of their argument. The question invited discussion of the hero's actions in Ithaca as well as on his travels.
- 4** This question elicited some very thoughtful and detailed responses. At the lowest end Penelope was just a weak wimp for always crying. Such responses were very few and the vast majority discussed her weeping well and showed that her grief was so intense it warranted divine aid from Athene. Gods only help the deserving or winners and candidates saw the significance of Athene's aid to Penelope. There were some lovely discussions of how the ancient world would have disapproved of her not re-marrying and of her duplicity and deception. These points were countered by her obedience to Odysseus' last command and her apparent faults showed just how perfect she is for Odysseus himself: a well-matched couple well worthy of each other.
- 5** There has been a tendency in previous years for this question to be tackled mostly by candidates who did not seem to possess a detailed knowledge of the poem. This was not so apparent this year and there was a marked improvement in the quality of the responses. Candidates generally possessed a very good knowledge of the social and cultural history which they used well to illuminate their understanding of the epic. Some, admittedly, tried to impose their historical knowledge onto the work but the vast majority did not. The epic itself was given primacy and ideas about sacrifice, hospitality and slaves were derived from it and only then interrogated in the light of historical knowledge. The above list represents the areas of most interest. It was a little disappointing not to see diet, technology, burial, *et alia* (see mark scheme) discussed more. None the less overall knowledge of the world of Homer's *Odyssey* was very good indeed.



## F383 Roman Society and Thought

### General Comments:

Candidates generally exhibited a sound knowledge of the prescribed texts and an improved knowledge of Roman society. There were noticeably fewer rubric errors and omissions this year. Most candidates completed all questions within the allocated time. As in previous years, misspellings of common names such "Domition" and "Aria" and technical terms such as "satarists" were evident.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Question No.

Question 1 (Petronius) was markedly less popular than Question 2 (Pliny).

- 1 (a)** Few candidates were able to identify accurately the items of food served before the passage, confusing later courses such as the boar with these earlier dishes. Detail was required for the highest levels of performance.
- 1 (b)** Although most candidates made good use of the passage, employing a range of accurate and relevant quotations, analysis was not always focussed on *entertaining*. Some assumed *vivid* or *dramatic*. Analysis of the *language* used by Petronius was required for the highest level of performance.
- 1 (c)** This question required candidates to assess whether the extent of the humour was from 'beginning to end'. Too often candidates simply listed humorous passages from the work, thus limiting their AO2 marks. The question also required candidates to comment on the passage 'as a starting point' to their response. Some candidates ignored this instruction and therefore limited their marks. Likewise, the wording 'to what extent' required a counter argument which was lacking from some answers, again limiting marks.
- 2 (a)** Weaker responses lost focus on *how* and *why* and gave information on the limitations of being a freedman or on the patron/client relationship. However, many candidates displayed excellent knowledge of this topic.
- 2 (b)** Although most candidates made good use of the passage, using a range of accurate and relevant quotations, weaker responses simply summarised the passage. Analysis of the *language* used by Petronius was required for high AO2 marks.
- 2 (c)** Many responses assumed that Pliny gave useful information and scored well on AO1. However, better responses provided a counter-argument describing the limits placed on the information as a result of Pliny's wealth, position and revision of his letters for publication. Weaker responses simply provided a list of information of topics covered by Pliny's letters.

### Essay Questions

The essays contained some standard themes for candidates who often assumed that the question was general. Candidates should be advised to consider what **aspect** of a theme is being examined; questions at AS Level are rarely general.

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- 3 Most candidates did not agree with the statement. Many candidates displayed excellent knowledge of the emperors and the variety of approaches taken by the relevant satirists' approaches to criticising them. Several could provide very detailed references in support from the texts. Credit was awarded for 'knowledge of Roman society' and knowledge of Lucilius, the position of the emperor, Horace's position in the civil war against Octavian, all gained credit. Information on Pliny's relationship with Trajan was not relevant to this question, although some credit was afforded under knowledge, where relevance was clear.
- 4 This was a popular question and knowledge of the system was good, although a few candidates limited their discussion to *freedmen* as patron and clients. Petronius was not a required author but some credit was given where relevance was clear. Focus for the analysis was on how *essential* the patron-client relationship was. Too often responses were general in their focus.
- 5 As expected, the greatest range of levels of responses came from this question. Centres are advised to consider these questions in their planning. Again, the question required careful reading. This was not a comparison of themes or topics common to Roman and Modern Satire, but a comparison of *purpose*. Few candidates explained the purpose of Roman satire. In addition, modern examples were sometimes comedic rather than satirical and a few candidates struggled to identify ANY examples of modern satire. However, there were some very fine responses with perceptive analysis and well-structured argument.

## F384 Greek Tragedy in its Context

### General Comments:

This unit continues to remain a very popular option. Most candidates had clearly enjoyed their studies of the plays, and were generally able to present personal opinions and argue their case well. However, to back up their arguments, candidates often only made general references to the plots of the plays, without giving specific details. It was pleasing to note that the introduction of two new plays seemed to cause very few issues, although there was some confusion over *Agamemnon* and *Electra*. Some candidates thought that they were part of the same trilogy, and used details from one play to back up points made on the other.

Examiners were pleased to note that there was a more even distribution of answers across the questions. The essay questions had a more or less equal distribution, while Question 1 proved to be more popular than Question 2.

Legibility and quality of written communication have continued to deteriorate. Candidates should be advised to read through what they have written to ensure that their work communicates their ideas accurately and effectively. Spelling of technical terms (*anagnoresis*, *peripeteia*, *stichomythia*) are still causing problems, as are the spelling of names (Aeschylus, Euripides, Aegisthus, Tiresias, Polynices). Most candidates did not start the answer to each question on a new page, despite the instruction on the front of the examination paper.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Question No.

- 1(a) Candidates generally had a good grasp of the events which occurred from Agamemnon's entry into the palace. They were able to give details of Cassandra's prophecies, Clytaemnestra's entry with the bodies, and the following confrontation. There was sometimes confusion over exactly when Clytaemnestra entered the palace, and the range of detail in Cassandra's prophecies also varied. Quite a few candidates began their answers with Agamemnon's entry on stage, thus spending some time giving details which were not relevant to the question.
- 1(b) Candidates were able to pick out the different techniques used by Aeschylus to make the passage dramatic, although these were not always backed up with evidence from the passage. The dramatic nature of the passage was generally dealt with well by the candidates. However, they tended to find it harder to deal with the passage as the ending to the play, ignoring details such as the foreshadowing of Orestes' return, and Clytaemnestra having the last word. Quite a few candidates did not seem to realise that *Agamemnon* is the first play in a trilogy, and that the ending of the play simply set the scene for *Libation Bearers*. The situation on stage was also frequently ignored, quite often despite the fact that the bodies of Agamemnon and Cassandra being brought out on stage had been mentioned in the answer to 1(a). Better answers did discuss this, as well as the potential for violence which could have subverted the dramatic conventions concerning the role of the Chorus and Clytaemnestra's apparent change of character from glorying in the deaths of Agamemnon and Cassandra to wanting no more bloodshed.
- 1(c) Candidates were able to discuss Clytaemnestra's interaction with a variety of male characters. They were able to analyse how she dominated them. Virtually all the candidates mentioned that she persuaded Agamemnon to walk on the tapestries, but often did not give details of how she did this. A few did not use her killing of him as a means of domination. Aegisthus was also discussed by most candidates, although some did not

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mention him, despite the passage on the examination paper. The Chorus were also dealt with, mostly as a collective, but sometimes as a character called the Leader. Less frequently discussed was the Watchman, while the Herald hardly got a look in. Most answers stated that Clytaemnestra did dominate the male characters, but better answers commented on occasions, such as the Chorus' reluctance to believe that Troy had fallen and their condemnation of Agamemnon's murder as evidence that Clytaemnestra did not completely dominate the male characters.

- 2(a) Most candidates were able to give some of the details required by the question. Most described Aegisthus' death, but were a bit vague about events such as Electra's cursing of Aegisthus' head, and Orestes' reluctance to kill his mother. A main point of confusion was exactly when Clytemnestra was informed of Electra's 'baby'. Many candidates thought it happened after Orestes brought Aegisthus' body back, rather than before Aegisthus was murdered.
- 2(b) Candidates made varying use of the passage to produce evidence for their argument. Most were able to mention the death of Iphigenia and Agamemnon bringing back Cassandra as the reasons why Clytemnestra killed Agamemnon, and analysed her thinking about these actions. Fewer looked at the deeper reasons, such as the double standards of society expressed towards the end of the passage. Candidates found it harder to explain how far they agreed with her reasons, although better answers did discuss her own hypocrisy in her affair with Aegisthus. Candidates also approached the question from both a contemporary and a modern standpoint, both of which produced equally valid arguments.
- 2(c) Candidates were generally able to produce a good analysis of how Clytemnestra is portrayed in the passage, discussing her opinions and her actions. Comments were made comparing this portrayal with Electra's opinion of her, but candidates were not always able to use appropriate evidence from the rest of the play to support their argument. Only a few answers mentioned Electra's change of opinion after the murder of Clytemnestra.
- 3 There was a variety of approaches to this question. Candidates tended to describe what they saw as being a tragic hero, then discuss Creon and Antigone in the light of their definition. Some adopted the Aristotelian definition, and were able to use terms such as *anagnoresis* and *peripeteia* accurately in formulating their answer. Others adopted a more modern approach, and even separated out what it meant to be a hero, and what it meant to be tragic, often leading to the conclusion that Antigone was the hero of the play, but Creon was the more tragic figure. All approaches were equally valid. Generally, candidates showed a good awareness of the play, and were able to use appropriate references and quotations to back up their argument.
- 4 This question, as always with *Medea*, polarised opinion amongst candidates between those who felt that Jason had done nothing wrong, and those who believed he deserved everything that happened to him. Candidates looked at the question using both from a modern perspective, and contemporary attitudes, assessing his actions from the point of view of the 5<sup>th</sup> century audience. Most candidates were able to find evidence from the play of Jason's behaviour and attitudes which presented him in a very bad light, but were also able to find occasions which revealed that he did have some redeeming features. A number of candidates tackled each of the assertions in the question separately, coming to conclusions, for example, that although Jason was an unpleasant character, he did not deserve the extremity of his treatment by Medea.

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- 5 All four plays were used by candidates in answering this question. A range of characters was discussed, mostly concentrating on the protagonists of plays. Evidence for characters being swayed by their emotions was found by virtually all the candidates, with different emotions, such as rage, jealousy and love being considered. Discussions ranged from the more straightforward that they are all swayed by their emotions, to answers which argued that there were some characters, such as Jason and Orestes, who had other motivations. Some candidates even argued that characters, such as Clytaemnestra and Medea acted out of their emotions, but suppressed them to achieve their goals.

## F385 Greek Historians

### General Comments:

This unit continues to maintain its popularity amongst centres. Candidates generally had a good grasp of the works of the three authors, and their differing approaches to historiography and qualities as historians. It was pleasing to see that, although Question 1 was the more popular of the commentary questions, Question 2 did have quite a large number of answers. The essay Questions 3 and 5 had a more or less equal distribution, while very few candidates answered Question 4.

Legibility and quality of written communication have continued to deteriorate. Candidates should be advised to read through what they have written to ensure that their work communicates their ideas accurately and effectively. Spelling of names (Thucydides, Themistocles, Peloponnesian) still caused problems. Most candidates did not start the answer to each question on a new page, despite the instruction on the front of the examination paper.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Question No.

- 1(a) Candidates were able to give general details of the events in the war, although the Theban attack on Plataea was not always mentioned, with answers concentrating on the Spartan invasion of Attica, and the Athenian response to it. There were, however, candidates who misinterpreted the question, describing the events which led to the outbreak of the war in Book 1, rather than the events in the war in Book 2.
- 1(b) Candidates were able to pick out features of Thucydides' writing style from the passage, and quote relevant examples. These included his use of facts and figures, his matter-of-fact style, and the reference to Pericles. Candidates were also, in general, able to find examples for comparison in the rest of the text to form the basis of their argument. Better answers also mentioned features seen elsewhere (e.g. use of speeches) which are not found in the passage.
- 1(c) Candidates generally had a good grasp of the occasions on which Thucydides mentions Pericles. They mainly used his speeches, such as his role in the debate on whether Athens should go to war with Sparta, the Funeral Oration, and his defence of his policy. Candidates also commented on the large amount of space given to Pericles, compared to other speakers, especially on the Athenian side. Use of the passage was good, with comments on how Thucydides seemed to approve of Pericles' actions in the conduct of the war at the start, despite its undemocratic nature. There was also mention of a lack of criticism of the results of Pericles' actions, such as the outbreak of the plague. Better answers did discuss Thucydides' eulogy after Pericles' death, and how he blamed Pericles' successors for Athens' defeat in the Peloponnesian War. A few candidates did get confused with Plutarch's account, bringing details from his *Life of Pericles* into their answer.
- 2(a) Candidates generally knew the main details of Themistocles' life before the passage, and were able to point them out, although occasionally, there was confusion with Herodotus' *Histories*.
- 2(b) Candidates generally made good use of the passage to find a range of details, and comment on how they illustrated Plutarch's interest in them. There were some good answers, although in a few cases, the answer was simply a list of details, with little analysis of either content or style.

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- 2(c) Candidates were able to give a good range of detail concerning the role played by Themistocles in the Battle of Salamis. These ranged from the Laurium silver being spent on triremes to, especially, the trick he played on Xerxes to ensure the battle took place in the narrow straits of Salamis. Occasionally, there was some confusion over details found in Herodotus, rather than Plutarch. Many answers adopted a narrative approach, without tackling how effective Plutarch's account was, but better answers were able to analyse the way Plutarch described Themistocles' role, and his approach as a biographer, rather than an historian.
- 3 Candidates had a good knowledge of Herodotus' *Histories* and were able to find examples of a range of digressions, mostly drawn from Book 1. These digressions were both praised for their entertainment value, and criticised for being pointless and breaking up the narrative flow. Other factors in *The Histories* were also considered, such as use of speeches and characterisation, with a balanced discussion of the contribution of digression and the other factors in making Herodotus interesting to read. There were some candidates who hardly mentioned digressions at all, simply unpacking a previously answered question on Herodotus' style in general.
- 4 Although not answered by many candidates, this question did produce some good answers. Candidates showed a familiarity with both biographies. Details of what Themistocles and Pericles did were given, and an analysis was made of the reasons Plutarch gave for these actions. Particularly relevant comments were made on the two subjects' early lives, and their motivations in promoting their careers. Other elements of Plutarch's style were also discussed to produce a balanced argument.
- 5 Candidates were able to discuss the different approaches to historiography found in the work of the three authors. Evidence was given of how each described historical events, often with a reference to the different approaches of each author towards his subject. Candidates found it quite easy to compare how events were described, but found it harder to discuss the reasons the authors gave for why events happened. Thucydides tended to be the most popular choice due to his dry, matter-of-fact style and analysis, as opposed to Herodotus' reliance on the supernatural, and Plutarch's concentration on the actions of individuals.



## F386 City Life in Roman Italy

### General

Centres have used a wide range of resources in their preparation which enabled candidates to draw on information from site visits, DVDs and individual research.

As usual credit was given to relevant houses and buildings beyond the specification. This is not expected, however, and the full range of marks was available to those who used the material set in the specification.

### Question 1

This was by far the most popular choice for candidates. However, candidates are advised to read all parts of a question through before starting to answer it. Some candidates answered 1(a) but were unable to offer detail on 1(b). This resulted in responses being crossed out in favour of Question 2. This meant that that valuable time had been lost.

#### 1(a)

Candidates were familiar with the Temple of Isis in Pompeii. The most detailed responses named Norbanus, Numerius Popidius Ampliatus and Celsinus. The temple's actual location in Pompeii was not always clear. The photograph was used by many candidates although detail beyond what was visible was expected. Many had impressive knowledge from Cooley and Cooley.

#### 1(b)

After 1(a), what was most noticeable about this question was the lack of knowledge about the Temple of Jupiter in Pompeii. It was difficult to argue that it was more important without supporting detail. This resulted in a rather one-sided response based on the Temple of Isis. A balance of argument was required (though not necessarily 50/50). Pliny's donation of a statue was given some credit although centres should make candidates aware that the gift was not made to the Temple of Jupiter *in Pompeii*.

#### 1(c)

Some responses repeated the information from 1(b). Better responses discussed examples of the lararium (particularly in the House of Menander), the influence of Isis in the garden of the house of Octavius Quartio and the tombs of Eumachia and Naevoleia Tyche. Other information was offered on evidence for Judaism from the names of slaves, the temple of Vespasian/Imperial cult, Eumachia as a priestess and the Augustales.

### Question 2

#### 2(a)

This was not such a popular question and responses tended towards the general. Few understood the change over time. Surprisingly few made use of the image which could have been used to discuss the construction of the Great Warehouse. Even fewer mentioned its purpose – to store grain.

#### 2(b)

A few responses used accurate plans and diagrams which are always given credit. There was a certain amount of misunderstanding of the *mole*. Better responses quoted accurately from Strabo and Thylander B310.



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**2(c)**

As with its parallel question 1(c), there was a range of points available. Most appreciated the proximity to Rome where Claudius was pelted (Suetonius) and the importance of the supply. The buildings discussed covered the Piazza of the Corporations and the temple of Ceres, the Firefighters' barracks.

**3**

This question was equal in popularity with Question 4. It was perhaps evident in responses to this question that candidates should have been rather more discerning. Less strong responses gave paragraphs of details of houses in Pompeii and Herculaneum with little regard for the question. Only the best responses addressed the question about *why* domestic spaces changed. Candidates should also note from where details are to be drawn. Sadly domestic spaces in Ostia were not relevant to this question.

**4**

Candidates were able to show knowledge of a wide range of details about both individuals and groups. The most popular references were to Eumachia, Scaurus and Balbus. Again, there was a tendency to lose sight of the question and compare literary and archaeological evidence. *Reliability* was often forgotten. The best responses were from those who planned carefully, thus avoiding a simple list of individuals.

**5**

This was by far the most popular question, but giving the widest range of responses. Many entered into the spirit of the question giving sound advice based on detailed knowledge. The conclusion of most was that there were more business (spelled in various ways) opportunities in Ostia but that the lifestyle in Pompeii was more attractive. Less strong responses focussed on how enjoyable life would have been for a businessman.

## F387 Roman Britain: Life in the Outpost of the Empire

### General Comments:

Knowledge of the period and context was reasonably sound in most cases and familiarity with handling textual sources seemed good. The drawn sources were rather less deftly handled in some cases and there were instances of mis-identification of particular building types. The essays were often well written, contained much useful exemplification and seemed to be making attempts to answer the question, as set, with a real air of integrity and some passionate views were expressed. Awareness of 'the Celtic' background was more variable with constant references to 'the Celts' in rather outmoded and simplistic terms. The comparison of Roman buildings with poorly understood and unexemplified 'mud huts' often dragged down candidates' performance. Where candidates were clearly struggling for an answer they sometimes stretched the phrasing of the question to suit what they wished to discuss rather than responding to what was set.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Question No. 1

- a. The quality of understanding what constitutes a 'Roman lifestyle' was variable but most candidates managed to identify a range of constituent elements and linked them effectively to the sources with the most convincing answers dealing with all of the sources and blending them into an overall explanation. Though this was not required some answers correctly identified the individual buildings and their locations but others were somewhat hampered by the lack of a scale. Some responses showed that not all candidates are comfortable with using this kind of physical archaeological evidence and occasionally the source e) was misidentified as an amphitheatre.
- b. Some responses became too involved with one aspect of the question either urbanisation or the question of 'benefit' at the expense of linking one to the other to make a cogent argument. Few candidates adduced much in the way of specific evidence for urbanisation at specific sites rather using simple site names and assuming that they would speak for themselves. Here too were some of the most simplistic and unsophisticated assessments of the nature of pre-Roman conditions by way of measuring the degree of improvement and therefore 'benefit'. The most convincing answers were able to challenge the notion of large-scale urbanisation.

#### Question No. 2

- a. This question was done moderately well by many candidates who were able to use all of the sources and link them to chronological and spatial considerations as well as addressing their limitations in general and as specific examples. The highest quality responses discussed the possible status and ethnic backgrounds of the people who had set them up and how that might affect the way that they can be used as a picture of the spread of religious practices in the country as a whole – the role of the army and their ethnicity were prominent in these answers.

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- b. Many candidates were able to demonstrate not only secure factual knowledge of this topic but also their appreciation of Roman flexibility towards other religions unless they threatened the 'pax Romana' as in the case of the Druids and also of the so-called 'interpretatio Romana' or syncretism which allowed the subtle blending of native and Roman traditions. Many useful case studies, such as Sulis-Minerva and Antenociticus appeared here in support of answers. A few candidates allowed themselves to get carried away with discussions of Christianity and Mithraism – they clearly knew a lot but not all of it was relevant.

**Question No. 3**

This question provoked many long and detailed responses, all of which had a good outline of the main political events over the whole of the conquest period. Differentiation was achieved through the quality of the argument and the fine supporting detail, especially where candidates were able to address both aspects of the question – 'provincial and local' with reference to particular roles such as Classicianus as 'procurator in the Neronian era, the 'ordo' and diachronic change at a local level, partition of the original province on two major occasions in response to insurrection. The most convincing answers linked these changes to visible changes in the physical archaeological record, particularly of urban sites and Hadrian's Wall.

**Question No. 4**

Most responses took this question at face value as was intended, identifying several areas of the physical landscape of Roman Britain that have provided physical evidence for changes post-conquest. These included agrarian practices, the road system and the urban environment. Most candidates peppered their answer with good examples drawn from these topics and cited by name. The few that were clearly struggling decided to twist the answer to mean factors other than the physical landscape and discussed the 'political landscape' and the 'social landscape' instead. Candidates who attempted this style of answer seldom provided such effective arguments or such high quality examples and therefore most often scored lower marks than those who had adopted the traditional approach to landscape.

## F388 Art and Architecture in the Greek World

### General Comments:

This unit continues to remain a very popular option. Many candidates were well-informed and were able to write enthusiastically about the different aspects of the art and architecture they had studied, but there was generally less evidence of detailed personal response in this year's answers. As in previous years marks covered virtually the whole of the mark range.

Examiners were pleased to note that there was a more even distribution of answers across the questions, with the exception of Question 2.

Examiners believe that the time allocation allows for planning time and that the value of even a brief plan cannot be over-estimated. Very few candidates offered diagrams to support their answers – where they were used, they were generally very effective in enhancing the candidate's line of argument.

Legibility and quality of written communication have continued to deteriorate. Candidates should be advised to read through what they have written to ensure that their work communicates their ideas accurately and effectively. Spelling of technical terms [symmetry, repetition, drapery, pediment etc.] seemed to have improved, but the spelling of names was significantly worse: Praxitiles, Praxikleitos, Arphridite, Andokadies [Painter], Exikias, Euphronyides.

Examiners would like to draw attention to the following points from 2014's report:

- To improve their performance candidates need to answer the question from the paper.
- Candidates should not adapt questions to a version they have practised in class.

Most candidates did not start the answer to each question on a new page, despite the instruction on the front of the examination paper.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Question No.

- 1(a)** This question asked for a discussion of how typical the statues were of 4<sup>th</sup> century sculpture. The best answers were those which stuck to the question and which wrote about Eirene and Ploutos and the Raging Maenad in comparison to the general trends in 4<sup>th</sup> century sculpture, mentioning other relevant statues. It was common for candidates to compare the statues to *kouroi* or *korai* or refer to statues such as Hestia, Diskobolos, Diadoumenos and Aphrodite of the Agora as though they were from the same period.

Many candidates had clearly practised writing answers which required either a critical appreciation and/or a comparison between two works of art – and this was an approach taken by a good number of candidates. Others answered the question purely by observation of the photographs of the two statues and did not bring in any of their own knowledge to support their observations. Some answers fixated on minute details of drapery, pose and facial expressions.

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- 1(b)** This question elicited many strong responses both in favour and against the quotation. The best responses referred not only to the pieces pictured on the paper but also to a range of relevant [and sometimes irrelevant] examples. Again, there was much discussion of works such as the Artemision Zeus, Hestia, Aphrodite of the Agora and Nike.

There was also lots of interpretation of the fine motor skills of Ploutos and Dionysus which clearly made the babies divine and not human.

- 2(a)** There were very few responses to this question. The answers were variable in the quality of the knowledge presented. Successful answers to this question needed to consider a range of different problems faced by the architect and the solutions he devised to overcome the problems. Some candidates omitted reference to key issues such as the sacred sites and the terrain. Others had problems with north and south and as a result confused different elements of the temple.
- 2(b)** This question triggered some lively discussion of the focus of worship in a sanctuary. It was common to think that every sanctuary had a different focus of worship, but the quality of argument and the detail of the factual knowledge varied tremendously. Few seemed to be aware of the importance of the altar in a sanctuary.
- 3** Candidates with a secure grasp of the chronology and detail of the black-figure and red-figure artists and their work scored well on the AO1 element of this question. To score good AO2 marks candidates need to reflect on the ideas of 'exploration' and 'experimentation' with strong reference to specific detail from relevant pots. Although this was a popular question, not all candidates read the question with sufficient care. Some answered this as though it were the Pioneers and Mannerists question from a previous examination paper; others preferred to discuss the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century; others did not know which artists and pots belonged to a specific period.
- 4** Examiners were pleased to see that there were many more candidates who were willing to tackle a question about architectural sculpture. There were many fine responses to this question, with candidates revealing detailed knowledge of a range of pediments from the specification. The best answers really focussed on the ideas of 'simplicity of subject matter and composition' rather than simply offering a chronological overview of pedimental sculpture. As with the vase-painting question, there were some who found the chronology aspect challenging. It is important for candidates to have a firm grasp of the dating sequence and technical terminology for the different aspects of free-standing sculpture, architectural sculpture, vase-painting and architecture.

## F389 Comic Drama in the Ancient World

### General Comments:

Candidates seem to have responded well to this year's paper, most being able to produce appropriate answers to the questions they selected. In Section A, Question 1 was more popular than Question 2. There was a more even distribution of responses to the questions in Section B. Candidates seemed to enjoy showing their understanding of the background to the plays, but it sometimes replaced material more relevant to the question. Candidates who had thought about the ways in which the plays could be performed and how the actors might move on stage were able to comment perceptively on likely audience response. Others had clearly seen modern performances and were able to integrate this experience with the texts they had studied.

While most candidates seemed clear in their own minds as to which characters appeared in which plays, misspelling of proper names used on the question paper is still an issue.

Centres are reminded that this is the last year in which 'Frogs' and 'Pseudolus' will be examined. These plays will be replaced in the June 2016 examination session by Aristophanes 'Clouds' and Plautus 'The Brothers Menaechmus' ('Menaechmi') which are contained in the respective Penguin Classics volumes which contain 'Lysistrata' and 'The Swaggering Soldier'. These latter two plays remain on the Specification.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Section A

Stronger candidates who were able to produce a good balance between quotation/close reference and discussion did well, as did candidates who organised material thematically. This latter trait generally resulted in more economical use of time and a clearer, more consistent argument. It was not necessary to give long introductory descriptions of preceding scenes or to put the passages into historical context; this often resulted in over-long responses and consequent timing problems.

#### Question 1(a)

Most candidates were able to identify a range of different elements in the passage. Sensible comments were made about how this passage contributed to the dramatic unity of the scene as a whole, thus showing clear engagement with the whole of the phrase 'comic drama'. Most were able to comment successfully on the bathos of the reference to 'tears' in relation to 'onions'. The strongest responses included comments on the parody of the rules for admissibility of slave evidence in Athens as well as the traditional portrayal of Aeacus. Some candidates would have benefited from fuller knowledge of the traditional representations of Heracles – his attributes are the lion-skin and club, not the yellow robe and the boots of the tragic actor worn by Dionysus in this play. Some candidates also commented successfully on the weaknesses of the passage as comic drama.

**Question 1(b)**

There were sensible comments on the roles of men and women in Ancient Athens and how these were reversed in 'Lysistrata'. Evidence was adduced primarily from the dressing of the Magistrate in female clothing, the military bearing of the Old Women and the scene between Myrrhine and Cinesias. The political acumen of Lysistrata and her role in the peace negotiations was also discussed successfully. The role-reversal of Xanthias and Dionysus in 'Frogs' was discussed most effectively by those who linked it with the explicit points made in the *Parabasis* about the relative status of slaves and exiled oligarchs. Candidates who made this link focused on the way in which role-reversal in both plays could be used to make political points. Others argued successfully that role-reversal was used primarily for comic effect in 'Frogs', while its main uses in 'Lysistrata' were to advance the plot and make political points. Candidates who looked at authorial intent suggested perceptively that there was a final reversal in the role of Dionysus from ignorant buffoon most of the way through the Tragedy contest in 'Frogs' to serious political commentator at the end. All successful responses, however, linked clear argument to specific evidence from the two plays.

**Question 2 (a)**

Most candidates were able to comment on Periplectomenus' actions and words elsewhere in the play and link these with the characteristics displayed in the stimulus passage. Most commented on his views on women, with good examples from elsewhere. Some also commented on the fact that he was capable of violence towards both Pyrgopolynices and some of the slave characters.

**Question 2 (b)**

There were some very good answers, which showed a thorough understanding of the respective roles of Periplectomenus in 'The Swaggering Soldier' and Simo in 'Pseudolus'. Other candidates would have benefited from greater familiarity with the characters of both plays. Most argued that Periplectomenus was more central to the success of the slaves' plans than Simo; others argued that while this was the case, other characters were even more important than either. A few candidates confused Calidorus' father Simo and the slave Simia but were still able to gain some credit.

**Section B**

Both questions proved equally popular. The wording of both left it open for candidates to choose between concentrating on two plays or discussing all four. Most chose to use all four. Candidates who had carefully considered and planned their responses to the chosen question generally showed greater evidence of relevant analysis and evaluation and were able to target evidence appropriately. It was noticeable that some candidates began by expressing one opinion and changed it as they went along, thus highlighting the importance of taking a few moments to plan a response before starting to write.

**Question 3**

Candidates who defined the term 'effective' in their opening paragraph tended to produce thoughtful analysis and thematic treatment of the dramatists' use of the various slave characters in the plays. Such responses generally made more economical use of time and produced stronger arguments than those which were organised by play or author.

Common suggestions of 'effectiveness' were based on the role of the slaves in the plot or their use by the dramatist to influence audience response to other characters. Most decided that Aristophanes made more limited use of slaves than Plautus. Most noted that Xanthias in 'Frogs' had little effect on the plot. Many candidates made good use of his brief scene with Pluto's slave.



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Very strong responses commented on the references to Xanthias in the Parabasis. Some candidates realised that there were quite a few slaves in 'Lysistrata', and were able to incorporate discussion of their apparent insignificance into their assessments. The metatheatre associated with the Spartan slaves was compared to examples of metatheatre in the other plays – notably the discussion of the 'comic porter' cliché at the start of 'Frogs', or Pseudolus and Palaestrio addressing the audience. Pseudolus and Palaestrio were usually well-discussed, though many responses also made good use of Simia, Sceledrus, Lurcio and – rather more rarely – Milphidippa and Ballio's 'Ugly Boy' slave. Most would benefit from understanding the stock character of the 'Parasite' in Roman comedy in order to avoid mis-classifying Artotrogus as a slave.

**Question 4**

Most candidates were able to mention costume, props, staging and spectacle, and the best produced a balanced range of examples. The question could be approached from either a modern or an ancient perspective, or, indeed, from both. Most came to the conclusion that Aristophanes made better use of visual effects than Plautus, though definitions of 'better' varied. In 'Swaggering Soldier' many were able to cite the behaviour of Sceledrus and Philocomasium in the 'Honorio' scene and the beating of Pyrgopolynices, but rarely considered other visual elements of the play, such as Pyrgopolynices' armour or the drunk slave Lurcio. Finding examples from 'Pseudolus' challenged many; the best responses commented on Pseudolus' drunken dance at the end of the play and the use of costume in relation to Harpax and Simia. Other strong responses considered the impact of the Choruses in Greek comedy and the use of stock masks in Roman comedy, giving a range of examples. Some linked the more extravagant visual effects in Greek comedy to the way in which plays were financed in Athens. Stronger responses benefited from the candidates' use of internal evidence from dialogue. A few candidates would have benefited from being clearer in their own minds about what either ancient or modern audiences could actually see in performance. Some candidates produced sound reflections based on their attendance at modern productions.



## F390 Virgil and the World of the Hero

### General Comments:

F390 continues to be a popular choice of unit amongst centres and there was plenty of evidence of good practice in the classroom and real engagement and interest for the classical world on the part of the candidates. The overall knowledge and understanding of the two epics were impressive. The arguments of stronger responses were supported with carefully chosen evidence from the texts and presented convincing cases. This was especially true of candidates offering original personal responses most of whom were careful also to explain the responses original audiences would have given. At the other end of the scale there were responses which were far too general and little AO1 credit could be given. This affected AO2 as arguments in the absence of support were mere assertions and lacked the necessary depth. Question 1 was by far the most popular choice of context question; it would be difficult to distinguish between the essays.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Question No.

- 1a** The question required use of the passage as a starting point. Too many responses skimmed through it before moving onto the obvious escape from Troy episode. Those which fully explored the passage and unpacked its language and imagery fared a lot better. Candidates explored Book 2 effectively for the most part and some appreciated the role of the slaughter of Priam and the intervention of Venus as being instrumental in shifting Aeneas' focus to his family. There was good contextual knowledge of Augustus and his views on family. A handful also considered Dido and Anna and Dido's murderous brother. Too many candidates were restricted because they did not either consider a range of familial relationships or question whether Virgil promotes its importance at all times. Venus, for example, is important to this question and was often overlooked. The best responses showed her frequent help to her son but also considered the pain her constant distance causes him. Although not necessary, candidates who made reference to the importance of Anchises in Books 3 and 5 were rewarded.
- 1b** This question elicited responses which varied widely in quality. At one end of the spectrum there were those which refuted the argument out of hand as an excuse just to off-load their favourite books. Many responses gave good accounts of the Parade of Heroes and observed its importance in promoting the Augustan regime; reference to the rest of the Book 6 was usually scant. Others considered the content of the whole book, commented on Virgil's descriptive powers, the development of Aeneas' character, the emotional impact, and, refreshingly, saw that although there are no spectacular fight scenes, 'war' and 'battle' are included in that Virgil presents the terrible aftermath of war and the Sibyl predicts future wars against 'a second Achilles'. It was difficult to have sympathy with students who said Book 6 fails because there is no divine intervention when Aeneas is guided to Anchises by the priestess of Apollo.
- 2a** There were some very good responses to this question which fully explored Venus' rhetoric and sexual powers of persuasion. Not many noted that she had chosen Vulcan's bedroom for the encounter and not many unpacked the fire imagery at the end with its highly charged eroticism, although a few did note that such imagery is appropriate to use with the god of fire. Other good responses looked at how Venus refers more to herself than to her son, while some dismissed this as selfishness typical of Venus, others were more subtle. As a dutiful mother (family importance also mentioned here) Venus is appealing on behalf of a son whose father is not her husband and, so in order to persuade Vulcan, she has to make herself vulnerable and threatened so he will act to protect she who flatteringly addresses

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him as her 'dearest husband' and puts herself in the inferior position of a suppliant. Some missed the reference to Jupiter but, on the whole, responses to this question were good and candidates were well versed on tackling this type of question.

- 2b** While there were very many good accounts of the characterisation of Venus, drawing well on passage 2 and also ranging over the whole of the epic, consideration of the effectiveness of Thetis' characterisation was sadly lacking. Scant attention was usually paid to Passage 1 itself, and, where it was used, responses could be general, lacking the necessary depth of detail or analysis of it. A few knew the back-story of why Thetis was married to Peleus and they used it to show how she felt degraded having to give herself to a mortal. But there is evidence for this sense of degradation in the given passage. Whatever her attitude to her marriage, however, some answers did consider Thetis as a loving mother who cared for her baby and son, though the 'plant in the garden' image was not always well unpacked. It was hard to give much credit to those who just saw Thetis as a cry-baby. Although many students chose not to write comparatively those who did rose well to the task. Responses showed how in terms of physical contact and compassion Thetis is all that Aeneas would want Venus to be. Having got off on a sound comparative foot they sustained this type of comparison and were highly rewarded.

**Question 3**

Some highly talented candidates saw three types of hero: the Homeric, the Roman and the universally moral. They were thus able to consider the merits and demerits of each of the characters in their contemporary settings and then stand back and evaluate them today. Such responses were very perceptive, fully supported in their Homeric and Roman terms but also showed why the epics are as relevant today as when they were originally composed. An encouraging number of responses also tackled the question comparatively, linking similarities between the two heroes – leadership qualities, bravery, fighting prowess, commitment to family, duty, piety etc – and considering which was the more admirable or inspiring. Such an approach also gained considerable credit. There was still the not so insignificant minority who went through Aeneas and then Hektor with minimal or no comparison, thus compromising their AO2 mark though, in many cases, they were richly rewarded under AO1.

**Question 4**

This question elicited some highly perceptive, subtle and interesting responses. Unsurprisingly, there were some which dealt first with suffering and then the imperial destiny and only made some sort of comparison in the conclusion, the majority kept an eye on both with small details such as Aeneas' own despair in and after the storm in Book 1 being hidden in his rallying speech to his people about their promised future. When dealing with Book 4, such candidates also considered the importance of the future or made reference to Cleopatra or the Carthaginian wars. Others noted that Virgil chooses to end the description of the pageant of heroes with the fate of Marcellus or the climax of the epic with the description of Turnus' soul unwillingly going down into the underworld. Such responses which discussed this correlation between the triumph and tragedy caused by Rome's imperial destiny were often handsomely rewarded.

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