

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/11 Written Paper
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Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:

- read the instructions and questions carefully
- answer questions from one section only
- take account of the mark allocation for each question
- plan before beginning to write their answers to essay questions
- make greater use of the passage or image for 20-mark questions
- learn dates carefully
- learn the visual sources carefully
- write clearly and legibly

General comments

There were fewer candidates who attempted to answer questions from all the sections or even all the questions.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Alexander the Great

The Alexander topic was again the most popular topic on the paper.

Question 1

- (a) (i) Few candidates were able to identify Lysimachus as the king who had this coin made. Popular answers included Porus, Julius Caesar, Napoleon and even Alexander himself.
- (ii) Around half of the candidates correctly identified silver as the metal the coin is made of. A number gave steel, bronze, gold or copper as their answer. Some candidates listed several different metals in an attempt to gain the mark.
- (iii) Many candidates were unsure about the Egyptian god represented by the horns on Alexander's head. About half of the candidates gave the name of a Greek god – Artemis, Apollo, Athena and Zeus.
- (iv) Just over half of the candidates correctly identified Athena as the goddess shown on the reverse of the coin.
- (v) Few candidates gave the correct answer. Suggested dates ranged from the 9th century BCE to the 20th century CE.
- (b) This question about how Alexander claiming to be the son of Zeus and a descendent of Greek heroes influenced his actions and behaviour produced a range of responses. Candidates need to take care to address the main demands of this type of question. Many tended to repeatedly restate the question without giving any evidence. The requirement in the question to refer to the image was also often omitted from answers.

There was some confusion between 'descendants' and 'ancestors.' The main effect of having such ancestors was that Alexander fought bravely in the front line careless of his safety. It was rare for candidates to cover Zeus and 'descent from heroes' with equal importance, with a significant number not naming any heroes or confusing them with gods. Some of the weaker responses treated 'the son of Zeus and a descendant of Greek heroes' as one thing, rather than trying to distinguish between Zeus and any Greek hero.

Several candidates were keen to say that it was really rivalry with his father that motivated Alexander, citing the Bucephalus incident as proof and Philip telling him Macedonia was too small for him. The cutting of the Gordian knot appeared as both proof of divine ancestry and doing better than his father.

Some good responses looked at other potential influences on Alexander, including Lysimachus, Aristotle and Philip. A few looked in depth at the effects of omens and oracles on Alexander and what they suggested about his claims to divine descent. In general, however, candidates demonstrated only partial knowledge of Alexander's actions outside the military sphere. The journey to Siwah and the unnecessary march through the Gedrosian Desert were regularly conflated, though several commented on their irrelevance to the military aspects of Alexander's campaign.

Several answers gave too much detail about Alexander's birth and did not include any relevant discussion concerning the rest of his life.

Essay Questions

Question 3 was the more popular of the two 25-mark essay questions. The responses to both questions were similar in standard.

Question 2

Candidates mostly demonstrated sound knowledge of Alexander's policy of fusion, even if they were not always able to argue effectively on the topic of whether it did more harm than good. As with all questions that deal with a policy or quality, it would have been useful for the candidates to define their understanding of fusion in their opening paragraph. Many responses stated that fusion was either good or bad because it did not cause harm and then spent the rest of the essay commenting generally on the topic with limited factual evidence.

If there were examples given, these often included Cleitus, as well as Callisthenes who was variously related to Aristotle or Alexander. Most knew that Cleitus had saved Alexander's life at Granicus. There was a lot of discussion about the soldiers' feelings with little to support it, but some candidates did refer to the Epigoni (even if not using the word). The weddings at Susa were often cited, though they were often placed at the wrong place in the timeline and on occasion the mutinies at Hyphasis and Opis were confused.

Stronger responses showed a sound understanding of the Policy of Fusion. Candidates tended to focus either on Alexander's adoption of Persian dress and proskynesis or on the Susa weddings.

Question 3

Stronger responses showed a balance between 'king' and 'general' and produced arguments which led logically to their assessment. Dates of the various battles and sieges were usually accurate. There was lack of awareness of the role of Antipater as regent of Macedon.

Some used arguments relevant to military leadership in discussion of his role as a king. Candidates needed to understand that the two qualities were not necessarily mutually exclusive; some responses seemed to be using Alexander's military ability solely as a sign he was a good king. His relationship with his soldiers was a common example of his good generalship but his pursuit of fusion was an example of him not being a good general. Good generalship was the conclusion in most essays, however, as there was clearly more evidence available whereas there was an equal number of responses who thought leaving Antipater in charge in Macedonia was good or bad.

Weaker responses gave few, if any, details and either made general comments about Alexander as 'a leader' focused on just one or two incidents or battles or took the opportunity to recount Alexander's life story without

linking it to the question. Many weak responses wrote far too much about the hammer and anvil tactic and Bucephalus.

Section B: Aristophanes

Question 4

- (a) (i) Few candidates knew that 'that sort of thing' referred to tragedy. The responses ranged from pea soup to Greek mythology, cosplaying to sexual appetite.
- (ii) Most candidates were successful in explaining why Herakles was wearing a lion skin.
- (iii) This question was answered well. The majority of candidates wrote about a 3-headed dog guarding Hades and Pluto's ownership of him.
- (iv) Most candidates knew that Dionysus was trying to get to the Underworld.
- (b) In answer to the question about the types of humour in the passage and elsewhere in the play, many candidates discussed the content of the passage, mostly general comments or lists of jokes, but did not discuss humour elsewhere. Candidates are advised to ensure they address this requirement of the question.

Candidates who read the question carefully made efforts to give examples of humour. Some candidates discussed humour in general terms only and sometimes not even humour but some aspect of the storyline that followed through into the rest of the play. Sometimes humour from the passage was selected but analysed only in terms of what it did in the passage before the candidate turned to other types of humour elsewhere in the play. Sometimes only the type of humour was given without detail, e.g. 'Aristophanes uses scatological humour here and elsewhere in the play.' Some candidates showed a lack of understanding that Xanthias knew perfectly well that his master was not Heracles.

Better responses gave specific examples from both halves of the play or compared the types of humour in the first and second halves as well as citing examples from the passage.

Essay Questions

There was a fairly even split between two 25-mark essay questions.

Question 5

Responses to the question about Greek comedy being just a series of loosely related comic scenes, not needing a clear plot, mostly focused on the plots of the two plays selected. Candidates were usually able to identify a couple of scenes from each of the plays selected but often without developing their commentary on them. Candidates needed to show a greater awareness of the parabasis or the choral songs. Of those who cited *Frogs*, very few discussed the second part of the play beyond the dialogue between Xanthias and Pluto's slave. The political context was generally not known other than 'The Peloponnesian War', suggesting that the parabasis and the final questions by Dionysus had been overlooked.

Many candidates agreed that a plot was important and went on to explain the plot of each play and then restated that a plot was important. Some of the weaker responses simply listed the scenes that they liked in each of the plays.

Question 6

In the question about the visual element being the most important part of Greek comedy, candidates tended to narrate the plots of the two plays, with varying accuracy or else discussed the role or status of women in ancient Athens. Candidates needed to show greater awareness of the audience experience, which is an important element of the question.

The strongest responses gave details of costumes, masks, props over several plays. Weaker answers talked generally about how it was easier to get the joke if you could see something as if the joke relied on context or events current at the time of performance then it would not have been so understandable to the Athenian audience. A few responses simply gave the storyline with some reference to things they thought were funny.

Section C: Themes in Greek Vase Painting

There were too few responses to this section to make meaningful comment.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/12 Written Paper 12

Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:

- take account of the mark allocation for each question to ensure they fully address the requirements of the questions
- plan before beginning to write their answers to essay questions
- make more use of the passage or image for 20 mark questions
- read the questions carefully

General comments

The Alexander topic was the most popular on the paper.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Alexander the Great

Question 1

- (a) (i) Most candidates were able to identify the Nile as the river.
- (ii) Most candidates knew that Homer composed the *Odyssey*.
- (iii) Many candidates were able to correctly identify two captured cities, although some named battles, while others named cities captured later in Alexander's campaigns.
- (iv) Many candidates correctly named Ammon-Ra in his various guises.
- (b) The responses to the question about Alexander's importance ranged from straightforward accounts to some very perceptive analysis of his legacy.

There were many effective answers to this question with candidates able to discuss both Alexander's achievements during his life and his legacy. Candidates mostly answered in the order of the question, legacy first and life second. They generally showed good knowledge of what happened after Alexander's death, both short term with the collapse of his empire and the establishment of the Hellenistic kingdoms and the longer term Hellenistic world, including the influence of the library in Alexandria (although many thought he had built it) up to writing of the gospels in *koine* Greek.

Some candidates also discussed his influence in the more eastern parts of his empire. Discussion of his life centred on his military success and the establishment of his empire and the Policy of Fusion. The arguments ranged from the effects and influence of Hellenistic culture on the world to this not being possible without his lifetime achievements. Some responses also made the point that he was called 'the Great' for his military success, not his legacy.

Candidates are reminded to provide evidence to support whichever view they express; this was sometimes lacking, particularly in those responses where a candidate was expressing a general opinion.

Essays

Question 2 was the most popular essay question not only in this section, but also on the whole paper, with about two thirds of candidates attempting it.

Question 2

In the question about Alexander's ability to command an army but inability to rule an empire, candidates generally showed good knowledge of both Alexander's command of his army and his role as ruler of the empire. Discussion of his role as commander included the fact that he never lost a battle, as well as the reasons for his success. These included his strategic and tactical awareness, as well as his personal leadership, such as his front-line role in the fighting and his relationship with his men. There were some very thoughtful evaluations of Alexander's skills as a commander and a ruler, with some effective use of quotations from Arrian and Plutarch. Some very good responses also commented on the credibility of the ancient sources and the possible motives of the writers.

Better answers referred to specific battles and sieges. Negative aspects of his command included the mutinies and *pothos* events such as the trips to Siwah and the journey across the Gedrosian desert. Weaker responses simply described individual battles in detail and did not distinguish between Macedon and the newly conquered lands in the East.

Discussion of his rule of the empire included use of satraps, the Policy of Fusion and the collapse of the empire after his death due to the lack of an heir. Most candidates agreed with the proposition.

Question 3

The question about Alexander's passion for glory produced a wide variety of responses, some of which were quite narrow in range possibly because the word 'only' in the Arrian quotation was not noted. Candidates are reminded to always read the question carefully.

Candidates discussed Alexander's search for glory, both in the general military campaigns, and in *pothos* events. They cited his attitude as a youngster, as seen in the taming of Bucephalus and his worry that his father would not leave him any land to conquer. They also mentioned how he always fought in the front-line and how frustrated he was when his army refused to march into India. *Pothos* events included the crossing of the Gedrosian desert and the capture of Aornos, undertaken simply to outdo heroes from the past, and with no strategic importance.

Stronger answers noted that there were other passions in his life, such as the relationship with Hephaestion, and so concluded that glory was his main passion, but not the only one.

Section B: Aristophanes

Question 4

- (a) (i) Candidates were generally able to offer a sensible reason as to why Xanthias might have called for Heracles' help.
- (ii) Candidates were mostly able to name a type of humour from the passage, although examples did not always exemplify the type of humour cited.
- (b) The question about the relationship between Dionysus and Xanthias was generally well answered. Candidates made good reference to the passage and the remaining scenes featuring both characters. Some made good use of the prologue to part 2: the conversation between Xanthias and Pluto's slave.

Weaker response did not deal with the passage and focussed instead on elements of humour to be found in the rest of the play or offered a prepared answer which did not focus on the question posed.

Question 5

The essay question about the comic techniques in *Women at the Thesmophoria* being wider than those used in *Lysistrata*, was tackled with great enthusiasm by a number of candidates. Most responses were very good, showing clear awareness of the range of humorous techniques available to Aristophanes and used in the two plays. Many answers made good points about the stereotyping of women in both plays.

Question 6

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

Section C: Themes in Greek Vase Painting

Question 7

- (a) (i) Most candidates were able to identify the painter of the pot as the Brygos Painter.
- (ii) Most candidates correctly identified the date for the pot.
- (iii) The majority of candidates knew the pot was a *kylix*.
- (iv) The majority of candidates knew the young man had been attending a symposium.
- (b) There were some interesting responses about how the two images portrayed the roles of men and women in society as being different. Stronger answers tended to make more use of detail from the two images and provided a range of detail from both pots. Weaker responses concentrated on one pot, usually **Image 2**, at the expense of the other pot.

Weaker responses demonstrated a sound knowledge of the role of women in society but did not justify the arguments made with reference to detail from the pots.

Question 8

The question about which red-figure vase painter was a master of mood elicited some very good responses, many of which scored high marks because of the range of pots and painters discussed and the level of detail provided.

The most commonly discussed painters were the Kleophrades Painter, the Berlin Painter, the Sosias Painter and Euphronios, with candidates offering a wide range of points about the moods conveyed in their work. The vast majority concluded that all the painters they had discussed were masters of mood.

Weaker responses often supplied black-figure pots as examples even though the question was about red-figure pots.

Question 9

Only one candidate disagreed with the proposition that black-figure vase painting is regular, repetitive and boring. Other candidates took the opportunity to shift the essay to their advantage to discuss pots depicting scenes from the lives of women and so the thrust of the essay became that women's lives were regular, repetitive and boring. Other candidates argued that the black-figure technique had its limitations and so was regular, repetitive and boring.

Knowledge of individual pots was generally solid, and a good range of detail was provided to support whichever line of argument was offered.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/13 Written Paper 13

Key messages

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General comments

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CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/21 Written Paper
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Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:

- read the instructions and questions carefully
- take account of the mark allocation for each question
- plan before beginning to write their answers to essay questions
- make more use of the passage or image for 20 mark questions
- offer a counter argument where this is implied in the question
- ensure their writing is legible.

General comments

The Virgil topic was the most popular of the three topics, followed by the Augustus topic.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Augustus

Question 1

- (a) (i) The majority of candidates were able to identify the Prima Porta statue.
- (ii) Around half of the candidates scored at least 1 mark, although there was some uncertainty about the historical event depicted on the breastplate. A few candidates scored full marks.
- (iii) The majority of candidates correctly identified Cupid as **Figure A**.
- (b) Candidates found the question about sculpture being the best form of propaganda for Augustus challenging. Most candidates made at least some reference to the image as a starting point to their answer. Those that knew it well described and analysed relevant features of Augustan propaganda such as the statue's youthful appearance, the link between Cupid/Venus and Augustus, the breastplate and the dolphin reference to Actium. Some candidates did not advance their answer much beyond the image and concluded in agreement with the statement in the question. The ability of the candidates to analyse the source was linked to their knowledge of it. Some responses did not follow the question's instruction and did not mention the image at all in their answer.

Stronger answers offered at least some comparison of the Prima Porta with other forms of propaganda. Some answers mentioned the images on the Ara Pacis and identified other temple buildings such as the temple of Mars Ultor. Augustus' Mausoleum was mentioned by some for its contribution to Augustus' dynastic legacy. A few went further and mentioned literature as a comparative source of propaganda. These mentioned the *Aeneid* and Horace, and some also usefully mentioned the *Res Gestae* together with its prominent positioning outside the Mausoleum as a means for Augustus to promote his achievements. Candidates needed to provide a link between the details mentioned and their use as propaganda, e.g. the use of the *divi filius* phrase on coins to show Augustus' links with Julius Caesar.

Candidates should aim to improve the quality of their analysis. Many answers offered some evaluation of the benefits of the different propaganda mostly focusing on the ease of interpretation

for many who view sculpture, though some also mentioned the ubiquity and ease of interpretation of coins. Few mentioned the limitations of the various propaganda or made more meaningful comparisons between them. Those that did mentioned such ideas as the limitations of poetry to the literate, wealthy or powerful and the limited subject matter of coins for propaganda purposes.

Question 2

There were few responses to the question about whether Augustus was a role model for Roman men. A key element of analysis was the successful interpretation of what constitutes the characteristics of a role model. Several answers described Augustus' achievements such as his military victories, his bringing of peace or the building/restoration of temples whilst not always analysing how he portrayed himself as an ideal Roman through the various sources of propaganda. Stronger answers attempted to analyse how Augustus came across to the Romans, both positively and negatively, mentioning the strengths and limitations of such things as his methods of controlling power, his attempts to promote morality through behaviour and his military participation. The focus was very much on public image though a few answers mentioned his treatment of his family focusing particularly on the exiles of the two Julias as punishment for immorality. Very few mentioned the details about his home life, his marriage with Livia and his education of his adopted sons as methods that Augustus used to promote his standing as the ideal *paterfamilias*.

Question 3

There were more responses to the question about whether Augustus was a very successful emperor. The question implied that candidates should analyse and evaluate Augustus' achievements in the period following Actium and the First Settlement of 27 BC though many mentioned events before this time such as Augustus' rise to power in the wake of Julius Caesar's assassination, his role in the various other battles of the civil war and his use of the proscriptions as a political weapon. Good answers linked this subject matter to Augustus' use of his power as emperor as part of the argument of the essay.

Stronger answers considered a wide range of achievements such as the rebuilding of Rome and its infrastructure, the benefits of sustained peace and the resulting prosperity, and increased religious practice. They also provided balanced evaluation with consideration of areas where he was less successful such as the negativity towards the Julian Laws and the Varian disaster, arriving at a suitable conclusion based on the evidence advanced in the essay.

Most candidates were able to offer analysis and evaluation on at least a few relevant areas.

Section B: Virgil's *Aeneid*

Question 4

- (a) (i) The majority of candidates knew that Mercury was bringing the 'warnings of Jupiter'. Other answers included Venus, Dido and Aeneas.
- (ii) Most candidates mentioned the requirement for Aeneas to remember his destiny to score one mark. Few were able to add a second valid point.
- (iii) The majority of candidates were able to name Carthage as Dido's city.
- (iv) The majority of candidates knew that Priam was the king of Troy.
- (b) Most candidates demonstrated a general understanding of the concept of Aeneas' sense of duty and were able to offer some examples and analysis of how *pietas* influences his actions and behaviour. Candidates tended to follow the advice of the question and used the passage as a starting point commenting on Aeneas' obligation to follow Mercury's commands, the tension within him between love and duty and his longing for Troy. Some did not use the passage at all.

Stronger responses showed excellent understanding of the various aspects of the concept and considered Aeneas' duty towards family, country and the gods. The more popular areas of reference were his commitment to saving his family at Troy, his vain quest to save Creusa and the visit to the Underworld. Analysis and evaluation were often sound, and candidates commented on Aeneas' gradual realisation of the duty that faces him during the fall of Troy, his neglect of duty during his episode with Dido and the inspiration for his mission that he acquires in the Underworld. Several questioned his adherence to duty through his bouts of *furor*, usefully mentioning his

intention to kill Helen and his killing of Turnus as evidence for this. Some thoughtfully argued that his killing of Turnus was dutiful vengeance for the death of Pallas at Turnus' hands.

Question 5

The question about whether Aeneas could be considered a 'good leader' was the most popular question on the paper. Successful responses hinged on the understanding of what constitutes leadership, particularly Aeneas' leadership of his people on his mission to settle in Italy and how far Aeneas rises to the challenge that this presents. Many understood this and so made mention of such things as his attempts to lead a counter-attack at Troy, his care for his men upon arrival at Carthage, his mission to provide allies from Evander in support of his men, his bravery in the war with the Rutulians and his killing of Turnus to end the war.

Stronger answers offered a more critical perspective mentioning his neglect of his mission at Carthage and thoughtfully analysing how his *furor* may potentially diminish his moral leadership of his people. Less obvious areas of discussion were his adherence to *pietas* and how the gods support him. Candidates needed to take care to make their comments relevant, for example showing how Aeneas' sense of duty supports the mission for which he leads his people. Some candidates mentioned irrelevant content such as Aeneas' quest to find the golden bough as evidence of leadership.

Question 6

Candidates responded well to the question about glory in warfare in the *Aeneid*, analysing a range of relevant content both for and against the statement in the question.

Stronger answers looked at both sides and provided focused evaluation accordingly. Many recognised elements of Homeric-style glory in the fighting, bravery and victory of combatants, the killings of Pallas by Turnus and Turnus by Aeneas, and Aeneas' attempts to save Troy being useful examples. Some also usefully mentioned the glory of Augustus on Aeneas' shield as well as the privileges of the afterlife that await heroes in Elysium. Many placed greater emphasis on the suffering and loss that war involves. Useful areas of discussion here included the pathos engendered by the tragic deaths of sons before their fathers (Lausus/Mezentius, Polites/Priam) and more generally the deaths of young men in their prime such as Pallas. Aeneas' *furor* in response to Pallas's death was used as evidence for the emotional ties that alliances in war engender. Reference was also made to the sufferings of the Trojans at Troy.

Most candidates reached a suitable conclusion based on the weight of the evidence for or against the statement that they provided in the essay.

Section C: Architecture of the Roman City

Question 7

- (a) (i) A minority of candidates knew that the house was located in Pompeii.
- (ii) The House of the Faun was generally not known.
- (iii) Many candidates were able to identify the atrium.
- (iv) Few candidates were able to name the impluvium/rainwater pool.
- (b) Most candidates did not agree that the House of the Faun was 'The most impressive and luxurious house in the city.' Responses tended to be brief and focus on the house as depicted in the image not as it would have been before 79CE. Candidates needed to pay closer attention to the question's instruction to discuss the size, layout and decoration of the house and two other houses from Pompeii.

Question 8

Candidates found the question about the importance of concrete in the development of Roman architecture challenging. Responses tended to be descriptions of buildings or structures and then a comment that concrete was used in them. Candidates needed to demonstrate sufficient knowledge about concrete or the buildings it was used in to be able to tackle the question effectively.

Question 9

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

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/22 Written Paper 22

Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:

- read the instructions and questions carefully
- take account of the mark allocation for each question to ensure they fully address the requirements of the question
- recognise the importance of dates and the sequence of events in the Augustus topic
- plan before beginning to write their answers to essay questions
- make more use of the passage or image for 20 mark questions
- offer detail from the sources studied.

General comments

The most popular topic was Virgil's *Aeneid*, followed by Augustus, with fewer candidates responding to Architecture of the Roman City.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Augustus

Question 1

- (a) (i) There were few candidates who were able to give 17BCE as the date for the Secular Games.
- (ii) A range of different deities was offered, but only a few candidates gave a correct answer of either Apollo or Diana.
- (iii) The majority of candidates gave a suitable response about Romulus.
- (iv) Around half of the candidates were able to offer the name of Aeneas as the 'glorious offspring of Anchises and Venus'.
- (v) Very few candidates were able to identify the Medes referred to in line 9 as Parthians. It was common for candidates to offer a generic response such as a tribe or an enemy of Rome.
- (b) All of the candidates were able to give a considered response to this question. They generally demonstrated a good knowledge of Augustus' role in Roman religion, citing his extensive religious building programme, his restoration of traditional festivals and his role as a priest, including being *Pontifex Maximus*. Candidates agreed that he was a religious man, although more perceptive answers showed some cynicism as to whether his religious nature was genuine, or just for show.

Weaker responses made no reference to the passage and did not offer any kind of counter-argument.

Question 2

The question about Augustus wanting to be seen as ‘a man of peace, rather than as a man of war’ was more popular than **Question 3**. Candidates who were able to show their knowledge of, and comment on, Augustus’ military campaigns and his victories during his rise to power generally performed well on this question. Most were more factual in their approach and discussed how Augustus was seen rather than how he projected himself. The best answers analysed his use of propaganda with good references to specific examples, though few mentioned the Prima Porta statue.

Candidates found the ‘man of peace’ element of the question more challenging. Some answers demonstrated a little knowledge of his peacetime rule with the temple of Janus and the Golden Age being mentioned. More detailed reference to evidence such as the *Res Gestae* and *Ara Pacis* would have been useful.

Question 3

There was a range of responses to this question about Augustus being an excellent role model for future rulers.

Answers showed reasonable knowledge of how Augustus ruled the empire, citing his delegation of work and his benevolence. Candidates mentioned several sources, such as the *Res Gestae*. Often answers seemed to be more of a critique of Augustus’ rule than an examination of him as a role model.

Some candidates did discuss his rise to power and his ruthlessness but were also able to note how he changed his approach when he had achieved his aim. Stronger responses were able to apply the concept of role model to these details and extrapolate the good/bad qualities Augustus demonstrated and whether this made him a good role model. Future rulers mentioned were Napoleon and Mussolini.

Section B: Virgil’s Aeneid

Question 4

- (a) (i) Most candidates identified Pallas as the speaker.
 - (ii) Most candidates were able to give Evander as the father of Pallas.
 - (iii) Few candidates achieved full marks on this question. Most were able to give one detail, usually that Hercules had killed Cacus.
 - (iv) Almost all candidates knew that Aeneas was destined to kill Turnus.
- (b) This question about the role played by Jupiter was generally well answered and some candidates were able to demonstrate an excellent knowledge of Jupiter’s involvement. Candidates made good use of the passage. Counter-argument was also generally well done, especially by those who considered how Jupiter was subservient to Fate. The majority, however, considered the importance of the roles of the other deities, especially Juno and Venus.

Weaker answers, which seemed unsure about Jupiter, concentrated on other factors, rather than addressing the question.

Question 5

The essay question about whether Turnus is more deserving of the audience’s sympathy than Dido proved the more popular choice of the two essays.

This question elicited some strong responses, especially in the volume of genuine personal response and the ability of candidates to answer the question from both a modern and ancient perspective. The best answers adopted a comparative approach, highlighting the similarities and differences between the two characters. The majority of candidates demonstrated good knowledge of the text and were able to about each character in detail. Most answers considered why each of them deserved to be pitied, while the strongest also analysed why they did not deserve pity before coming to a conclusion.

Although candidates generally demonstrated a good knowledge of both Dido and Turnus, weaker answers tended to be more narrative led with limited analysis. A minority only elected to write about one character, usually Dido rather than Turnus.

Question 6

The question about whether the most important relationships shown in the *Aeneid* are those between fathers and sons was generally well answered. Most candidates found they could write about a range of father/son connections, the most popular being that of Aeneas/Anchises. Here there was good detail from the epic and candidates explained the importance of the role of the paterfamilias to Aeneas and the imperial destiny.

Evander/Pallas and Mezentius/Lausus were also popular, though candidates were not always so clear on their importance. The counter-argument was not always clear or well-constructed. Some candidates queried the depth of the connection between Aeneas and Ascanius which was promising; others took their argument off at a tangent onto very general relationships, e.g. gods and humans or Aeneas and his men, where it was perhaps harder to compare this to father/son. More effective answers addressed the 'most important' aspect of the question by comparing father/son relationships with a range of others, including other familial relationships.

Section C: Architecture of the Roman City

Question 7

- (a) (i) About half of the candidates were able to identify the house as the House of Octavius Quartio or the House of Loreius Tiburtinus
- (ii) The majority of candidates were able to give Pompeii as the location of the house.
- (iii) The majority of candidates were able to identify the room as the *atrium*.
- (iv) Many of the candidates were able to supply the term *impluvium* or rainwater pool.
- (b) Some candidates demonstrated a good amount of detailed knowledge of the House of Octavius Quartio, whilst others wrote about a different house or some kind of hybrid or generic house.

Stronger answers provided detail about the wall-paintings from the house, the Egyptian style 'canal', the summer *biclinium*, the *nymphaeum* and the four columned pavilion. Many candidates would have benefited from addressing the 'how impressed' element of the question with greater focus.

Question 8

There were very few responses to this question about the designs of amphitheatres and theatres. Candidates were able to refer to the Colosseum and the amphitheatre at Pompeii. The amphitheatre element was answered more successfully than the theatre element, with candidates able to refer to details about specific amphitheatres.

Question 9

Candidates found this question on the development of the basic arch challenging. Responses tended to agree with the statement and were able to describe some buildings or structures which employed arches. Knowledge of the development of the arch or the materials used to construct arches was often lacking in detail. Candidates needed to offer more explanation of the different types of arches used in particular buildings.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/23 Written Paper 23

Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to:

- read the instructions and questions carefully
- take account of the mark allocation for each question to ensure they fully address the requirements of the question
- recognise the importance of dates and the sequence of events in the Augustus topic
- plan before beginning to write their answers to essay questions
- make more use of the passage or image for 20 mark questions
- offer detail from the sources studied.

General comments

The most popular topic was Virgil's *Aeneid*, followed by Augustus, with fewer candidates responding to Architecture of the Roman City.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Augustus

Question 1

- (a) (i) There were few candidates who were able to give 17BCE as the date for the Secular Games.
- (ii) A range of different deities was offered, but only a few candidates gave a correct answer of either Apollo or Diana.
- (iii) The majority of candidates gave a suitable response about Romulus.
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CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/31 Classical History
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Key messages

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- Only a minority of candidates introduced sources to support a specific example, opting instead to group them together in a vague and generalised way as part of their conclusion. Candidates are encouraged to introduce a source, where appropriate and possible, to support a particular point during the main body of their answer. Relevant evidence backed by a source will gain more credit for AO1 than an unattested fact and allows more opportunity for candidates to gain marks for evaluation and engagement with sources under AO2.
- When literary sources are referenced, there remains a tendency amongst candidates to assume that they are all of equal value in terms of accuracy and truth. Whilst the histories of Thucydides or Tacitus may be generally more reliable than a comedy by Aristophanes or a satire by Juvenal, all, to a greater or lesser degree, have their own particular agenda and can be distorted by bias or exaggeration. When evaluating a particular piece of evidence, it is important for candidates to consider its reliability, rather than merely to accept it unequivocally as fact. Candidates who do this successfully score higher marks for AO2.
- The compulsory source passage should, as the question required, be used as a 'starting-point': it is usually most appropriate, therefore, to start with a brief analysis of the passage in the context of the question, before discussing other evidence and sources. In general, the majority of the answer should be based on evidence outside the passage rather than from within it. The best answers do both successfully.

General comments

The optional essay questions were generally answered better than the compulsory source questions (**Questions 1 and 4**). Some source questions answers demonstrated a lack of understanding of the context and content of the source itself or did not include sufficient evidence and examples from beyond the passage.

In **Section A, Question 2** was more popular than **Question 3**; likewise, in **Section B, Question 5** was significantly more popular than **Question 6**, though there were strong answers on both.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The passage is a story added to the narrative of the Battle of Marathon by Herodotus to explain the Plataeans' support of Athens. Though this incident relates to events prior to the 5th century, the Spartan king involved, Cleomenes, is relevant to the question as the king who refused to help the Ionians in their revolt against the Persians. The key points indicated by the passage about Spartan foreign policy are its reluctance to get involved in disputes or campaigns outside the Peloponnese and its rivalry with Athens. Stronger answers focused on Sparta's isolationist policy, citing examples of its refusal to get involved in the Ionian revolt, delay in responding to the Persian invasion in 490 BC and reluctance to commit troops outside the Peloponnese during Xerxes' invasion. A few answers argued that concern with possible Helot unrest guided Sparta's foreign policy. Counter arguments used were that Sparta's failure to respond to the Persian threat at Marathon was due to a religious festival and the bravery displayed by Leonidas and the 300 at Thermopylae. Answers were generally less successful in dealing with Sparta's response to the second invasion of the

Persians, under Xerxes, though its preference to defend the isthmus (under Eurybiades) and its slowness to commit 5,000 infantry to Plataea (under Pausanias) were occasionally mentioned. In general, candidates did not discuss adequately the growing rivalry between Sparta and Athens over the leadership of the Greeks, with Sparta at the head of the Hellenic League and Athens with its superior fleet. A few answers focused on Sparta's general attitude to military training without any reference to the time period specified by the question. Weak answers reworded information in the passage itself and included only one or two examples of events from the Persian Wars, most frequently the battles at Marathon and Thermopylae.

Question 2

Stronger answers understood that, in order to answer this question well, it was necessary to include a brief explanation of the democratic system that developed in 5th century Athens and how it theoretically limited the powers of any individual in a number of ways: appointment by lot or annual elections, the voting powers of the Assembly and the use of ostracism. It was not required or even desired that candidates outline the development of democracy under Solon or Cleisthenes prior to the 5th century, though several did. A number of candidates took the approach of focussing on individual leaders such as Themistocles, Pericles, Cleon and Nicias: whilst specific examples needed to be discussed, in general it would have been more appropriate to focus on powers of the Assembly rather than the actions of the individual politicians. The most commonly discussed method of control was ostracism: stronger answers gave specific and accurate examples, though several confused Alcibiades' self-imposed exile with ostracism. The strongest answers highlighted the power of the Assembly to vote against a popular leader, such as when debating the fate of the Mytileneans or whether to send the Sicilian Expedition. Several candidates recognised that certain individuals, such as Pericles and Cleon, effectively controlled the Assembly through their rhetoric and popularity. Overall, however, only a few answers tackled the question directly, showing detailed knowledge of the democratic institutions of the 5th century and how they limited powers of individual leaders.

Question 3

In assessing Sparta's system, the majority of answers acknowledged that our sources are non-Spartan and mostly Athenian, and, therefore, likely to present a negative view, with the notable exception of Xenophon. Candidates generally focused on Sparta's military system and its reputation for courage, with many using Leonidas' bravery at the battle of Thermopylae as an example, as well as a number of *Sayings of the Spartans* attributed to Plutarch. The tendency of this approach was to focus on positive views rather than negative and ignore other aspects of Sparta's system, for example its mixed political system or xenophobia.

Question 4

This question was generally answered with limited success. Most candidates did not explain the context of this letter, one of several exchanged between Pliny and Trajan recorded in Book X of Pliny's *Letters*, or any background to Pliny's role as governor of Bithynia. Only a few added information from other letters from Bithynia. Many misinterpreted Trajan's response to Pliny. A large number of answers quoted from the passage without analysing the key issues involved: the deployment of soldiers, the use of slaves and the governor's duty to maintain peace and security were all often ignored. Few candidates discussed a 'range of issues' beyond the passage, with most only focussing on revolts and resistance rather than the kind of administrative or financial issues with which governors in a more peaceful province like Bithynia had to deal. A few candidates seemed confused as to what a governor was, either believing him to be a provincial or even the emperor himself. Some discussed events in provinces which caused issues for the emperor in Rome, such as Scribonianus' revolt: this was not what the question required. The most common examples of other issues discussed were Boudicca's revolt and Jewish revolts; details, however, were often vague and inaccurate. The few better answers discussed how the imposition of Roman culture and religion caused resentment and resistance in Britain and Judaea and how governors appeased provincials with building projects, opportunities to join the Roman army as auxiliaries, and education. Candidates should be reminded that the administration of provinces is one of four major areas covered by this Topic.

Question 5

The majority of candidates chose to answer this question and most of them tended to discuss three or four emperors rather than only two. The drawback of including all four emperors was that detail and analysis tended to be limited. Source material was only rarely used and, if evaluation of Suetonius or Tacitus was included, it was typically generalised. Better answers focused on 'living conditions' such as food and water supplies, housing, infrastructure, employment and hygiene; the frequent references to public entertainment were also credited. The inclusion of rumours of Nero's night muggings in Rome were less relevant. Though several detailed pieces of evidence were included, assessment of success tended to be assumed rather than

argued. Stronger answers compared the relative success of the various emperors in different areas. Candidates typically argued that Claudius and Trajan were more successful than Nero and Domitian in improving living conditions; candidates often treated Nero's involvement in the Great Fire as fact and were over-critical of his handling of the aftermath, often ignoring his efforts to rebuild Rome with stricter building rules and restrictions, whilst criticising his building of the Domus Aurea; likewise, Domitian was not credited for improvements of the infrastructure. Stronger answers were more balanced in their approach. A few very good answers included reference to Juvenal *Satire* 3 which highlights many of the perils ordinary citizens faced and suggests that living conditions for the poor remained challenging despite the efforts of the emperors.

Question 6

Only a minority of candidates answered this question. The question intended candidates to discuss opposition to the emperors' rule from within Rome (i.e. from his own imperial family and court, senators and other classes) not from the provinces; an event occurring in the provinces, such as Scribonianus' revolt against Claudius, could be argued to be relevant but not, for example, Boudicca's revolt against Roman rule in Britain. The most common opposition in Rome cited was senatorial; only a few candidates mentioned emperors' wives such as Messalina, Agrippina the Elder or Agrippina the Younger. Senatorial opposition at Claudius' accession was balanced by the support of the Praetorian Guard; opposition to Nero tended to be limited to the end of his reign with only rare mentions of Piso's conspiracy or Galba's mutiny; opposition to Domitian was argued as being due to his strict laws and cruelty; Trajan was generally seen as being loved by all and having no opposition whatsoever. Only a few candidates attempted to show how emperors acted to avoid opposition via public entertainment, gifts and building programmes. Overall, answers tended to be too narrowly focused on senatorial opposition, ignoring family, freedmen and other classes. Opportunities to evaluate Tacitus and Suetonius' pro-senatorial bias were generally missed.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/31 Classical History
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Paper 9274/33 Classical History
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Key messages

- It is strongly recommended that candidates know key dates to help ensure that their argument is more cogent and consistent. Candidates often included a large amount of information without showing an accurate knowledge of dates or a clear understanding of relative chronology. It is worth reminding candidates that the AO1 mark is judged on both factual content and an understanding of context.
- Only a minority of candidates introduced sources to support a specific example, opting instead to group them together in a vague and generalised way as part of their conclusion. Candidates are encouraged to introduce a source, where appropriate and possible, to support a particular point during the main body of their answer. Relevant evidence backed by a source will gain more credit for AO1 than an unattested fact and allows more opportunity for candidates to gain marks for evaluation and engagement with sources under AO2.
- When literary sources are referenced, there remains a tendency amongst candidates to assume that they are all of equal value in terms of accuracy and truth. Whilst the histories of Thucydides or Tacitus may be generally more reliable than a comedy by Aristophanes or a satire by Juvenal, all, to a greater or lesser degree, have their own particular agenda and can be distorted by bias or exaggeration. When evaluating a particular piece of evidence, it is important for candidates to consider its reliability, rather than to accept it unequivocally as fact. Candidates who do this successfully score higher marks for AO2.

General comments

There were some very good answers on the compulsory source questions (**Questions 1 and 4**). The use of sources was good, especially in **Questions 1, 3, 4 and 6**. There was a fairly equal split between candidates' choice of **Questions 2 or 3**; **Question 6** was more popular than **Question 5**.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Stronger answers analysed the passage from Thucydides well and placed it correctly at the end of Pericles' career, understanding that the author used it as a means to praise Pericles and contrast him with his successors. Most realised that the term 'first citizen' is not an official position but a way of emphasising the power and influence which Pericles held. Many understood that he gained power primarily via the elected position of *strategos* which, in addition to its military role, gave him the right to speak first at an Assembly. Sources referenced included Plutarch's *Life of Pericles* and Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, as well as other passages in Thucydides, typically from the start of the 2nd Peloponnesian War. A common failing was to omit details from Pericles' earlier career, after his support of Ephialtes' reforms, notably his military role during the 1st Peloponnesian War. Instead, candidates tended to focus on his building programme and role in the ostracism of his rival Thucydides. Details of his influence at the outbreak of the 2nd Peloponnesian War and temporary loss of power due to his unpopular war policy were generally discussed well. Weaker answers devoted too much attention to Pericles' successors, Cleon, Nicias and Alcibiades, whilst ignoring Pericles' own career. The bias of the historian Thucydides towards Pericles could have been evaluated further, particularly in relation to the printed source.

Question 2

Responses were often detailed and accurate in explaining the origins of the Delian League after the Persian Wars and how it gradually turned into an Athenian Empire. A number of revolts and attempts to leave the league by Athens' allies were well-documented, though chronology was not always accurate. The impact of Athenian imperialism on other non-league Greek states such as Sparta was less successfully explained, with a frequent and notable omission being the 1st Peloponnesian War. Answers naturally tended to focus on reasons for the outbreak of the 2nd Peloponnesian War caused by disputes with Corinth and Megara. Only a few answers strayed beyond the question's timeframe, with the later revolt of Melos (416 BC) and Sicilian Expedition the events most commonly cited irrelevantly.

Question 3

Candidates typically agreed with the statement that Spartan women had greater status and influence than Athenian women, though often for the wrong reasons: several candidates incorrectly stated that Spartan women had the ability to vote or that Athenian women could never leave the house or gain employment. In general, candidates exaggerated the influence of Spartan women, over-relying on Plutarch's *Sayings of Spartan Women* and Aristophanes' caricatures, such as Lampito in *Lysistrata*, treating both as undeniably historical, rather than anecdotal or satirical respectively. A subtler evaluation of the sources was required here. Overall, however, there was fuller evidence provided on Spartan women. A number of answers spent undue time focussing on Aspasia, a metic woman: though her unique status as Pericles' mistress was relevant and significant, more information on the lives of the ordinary wives of Athenian citizen men was required. Many cited Pericles' famous comment in the Funeral Speech that 'the greatest glory of a woman is to be least talked about by men', using it as a basis for the argument that Athenian women were less prominent in society than their Spartan counterparts. Answers which acknowledged the limitations of our sources and made the most of what we do know tended to be the most successful.

Question 4

Most answers used the passage well, analysing Nero's character and motives for attempting to murder his mother. Most understood that this particular attempt failed and went on to explain how Agrippina was eventually murdered. Nero's cruelty, deception, manipulation and paranoia were all discussed. All responses provided information about other family members, though some were limited to Nero's wives Octavia and Poppaea; stronger answers also included Claudius and Britannicus and a few mentioned Domitia Lepida. It was not expected for candidates to mention all family members and answers which offered reasons for Nero's treatment of them were generally more successful. Weaker answers omitted Octavia altogether and several did not mention Nero's treatment of Claudius after his death; a more serious omission was Nero's involvement in the death of Britannicus shortly after his accession.

Question 5

This essay was less popular than **Question 6**. The majority of answers included the reigns of all four emperors. The events most commonly discussed were Boudicca's revolt in Britain and the Jewish revolt of 66 AD; a few mentioned Scribonianus' short-lived revolt against Claudius' rule and a later Jewish revolt during Trajan's reign. A number of candidates assumed that Nero had no interest in the provinces and that Domitian was unsuccessful in dealing with Dacian resistance, whilst praising Claudius for his conquest of Britain and Trajan's military success in Dacia. Stronger answers made reference to attempts at Romanisation by Agricola and the use of client kings, such as Cogidubnus in Britain. Claudius' friendship with Herod and admittance of Gauls into the Senate were also mentioned as ways used to reduce resistance to Roman rule. Apart from a tendency to be over negative about Nero and Domitian and a vagueness about the dates and causes of the Jewish rebellions, the question was generally tackled well.

Question 6

Most candidates approached the question chronologically, emperor by emperor, rather than topically; Claudius and Trajan were generally praised for their efforts to improve the lives of ordinary citizens more than Nero and Domitian. Stronger answers accepted that public entertainment was put on in large measure by all emperors, not least Nero, who was a keen performer himself, and Domitian, who extended the Colosseum. Nero tended to be vilified for his actions after the Great Fire of 64; more balanced answers recognised that his stricter building regulations after the fire were aimed at safer living conditions for ordinary citizens. The unfairness of the patron-client system, the influx of foreigners, dangers at night and the noisy, overcrowded streets were all regularly mentioned as disadvantages of living in Rome; stronger answers additionally acknowledge the likely use of exaggeration by a satirist such as Juvenal. Sources tended only to

be used to highlight the disadvantages for an ordinary Roman citizen living in Rome, most typically Juvenal's *Satire* 3 and Martial's *Epigrams*, rather than the advantages. The ancient historical sources do not typically focus directly on the lives of ordinary citizens, though accounts of the Great Fire of 64 and its aftermath in both Tacitus and Suetonius could have been included.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/42 Greek Literature

Key messages

Candidates should:

- Read the question carefully.
- Answer the question being asked.
- Give specific, detailed examples from the texts.
- Answer questions in an analytical rather than descriptive manner.

General comments

For Greek tragedy, candidates need to be familiar with the chronology of the play to give strong answers on the passage question. Some candidates needed a more secure understanding of the choral odes. There was a good understanding of the themes in the plays.

Candidates generally demonstrated strong recall of key events and themes in the Homeric epics. The strongest responses were analytical and fully focused on the wording of the questions.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Some good analysis of the passage but candidates did not always display detailed knowledge of the rest of the play. In particular, very few seemed to know the choral odes in any depth. Candidates mostly correctly identified this scene as Agamemnon's initial refusal to walk on the tapestries. However, a few seemed to think this was an entirely separate occasion from when he does walk on them. The most successful candidates were those who were confident with the timeline of the play. Candidates mostly argued that the passage is not a typical presentation, bringing up Cassandra and Iphigenia's sacrifice as arguments for his pride, selfishness and immorality. However, some candidates perceptively argued that Iphigenia's sacrifice could show respect for the gods. There was some confusion by candidates about both why and when Iphigenia was sacrificed, with most seeming to think that she had been sacrificed just before Agamemnon returned from the war. In general, candidates did better when they could separate what is actually in the play's 'action' and what is reported as part of the context by the chorus. Very few candidates discussed the presentation of Agamemnon from the choral odes, as so much of the characterisation of Agamemnon is built by the chorus, candidates needed this knowledge to access the top mark bands.

Question 2

This question about hatred as a motivator was a popular one that was answered well by candidates. Most candidates knew the plot of several plays and were able to discuss the downfall of characters in tragedy where hate was a possible motive. Lots of candidates used 'revenge', 'justice' and 'hatred' interchangeably, without considering that a desire for revenge might be a separate motivation. Most used Antigone as a counter example. The best answers were those that interrogated multiple 'causes' and motivations for each tragedy. For example, although Medea clearly hates Jason, his downfall could be caused by his desire for wealth and power through marriage to Glauce. Better answers distinguished between the 'back-story' and the actual play. There was a tendency for these answers to become rather narrative with candidates simply retelling the whole plot. The best answers were those that thoroughly examined the themes.

Question 3

Answered by too few candidates to comment.

Question 4

This question received a range of responses. Most candidates had an awareness of the times that Athene appeared in the poem and were able to give specific examples of the help that she had given to Odysseus. The strongest candidates analysed in depth the help that Athene gives in the passage, for example, mentioning her use of disguise and her use of another person to help Odysseus. The strongest candidates mentioned that this is one of the few examples where Athene sends another human to help him and only a very small number realised that this was only one of two dreams that is sent by Athene. Some candidates did not know the passage and thought that Athene's main motivation was to help Nausicaa get married which tended to misdirect their answers. The range of knowledge was, overall, good: Mentor/ Mentos, the girl offering directions, the mist in Phaeacia, transforming Odysseus into a beggar, helping defeat the suitors, appearing as a swallow and resolving the conflict in Book 24 were all frequently mentioned. Candidates should, however, be careful to stick to the question – some wrote several paragraphs on other gods' involvement or discussed places where Athene does not help but could have (counter-factuals do not make strong points). A few candidates hadn't read the question thoroughly and were trying to bring in a comparison between Athene in the *Odyssey* and in the *Iliad* whereas the question specifically asked only about the *Odyssey*. Similarly, a number of candidates were trying to argue about whether this was a positive or negative portrayal. Reading the question and being analytical were key to success here.

Question 5

This was the less popular essay question. Overall candidates showed a good knowledge of the *Iliad*. Some candidates confused a character being sympathetic with them showing sympathy towards other characters. Despite this, there was a good range of knowledge shown, with a number of characters (men and women) on both sides discussed, and some good details included. A large number of candidates made excellent points about the character of Priam and his portrayal during the end of the poem. Candidates generally contrasted Hector and Achilles and there was some thoughtful discussion about the cost of war. The best answers were those that were analytical rather than simply describing the actions of various Trojans.

Question 6

This question asked candidates to consider the relevance of the themes of Homer's epics to the modern world and was answered with a range of success. Stronger candidates considered a variety of themes, briefly establishing their relevance/ non-relevance to the modern day, and discussed how these themes were explored in the poem. Weaker answers essentially listed themes with very oblique textual references or used adequate textual references but did not discuss the question of whether the themes were still relevant today. Some candidates confused relevant with exciting, which meant their analysis was not as strong as it could have been.

Stronger answers came from candidates who had considered which themes might still be relevant, rather than listing all of the themes that they could. Candidates who considered themes such as family relationships, love, loss and friendship tended to have a stronger argument than those who were arguing that *xenia*, for example, was still important in the modern world.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/42 Greek Literature

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CLASSICAL STUDIES

Paper 9274/43 Greek Literature

Key messages

Candidates should:

- Answer the given question.
- Take time to plan their answer
- Give specific, detailed examples from the texts.

General comments

This report focuses solely on **Questions 4, 5 and 6** as there were too few answers to **Section A** to comment on.

Overall, candidates showed a strong grasp of the factual content within the Homeric Epics. Candidates performed strongly in the essay questions **5** and **6** when they had thought carefully about how they would answer the question and also when they avoided writing a 'checklist' of characters and what they did. There was sound analysis, particularly of characterisation.

Comments on specific questions

Question 4

This was a well answered question with candidates knowing the range of appearances that Helen makes in the *Iliad*. Most candidates used the passage well and spoke about Helen's longing for her old husband and some explored the idea of this representing her *nostos*. Many candidates also discussed the image of Helen as a dutiful woman at work on the loom and looked at how that fitted with her depiction in the wider *Iliad*. Stronger answers also picked up on the details of her weaving showing the consequences of the Trojan war and discussed how this might affect our interpretation.

Few candidates discussed Helen's view of the Greeks from the wall with Priam. Most were aware of her damning view of herself and brought in the discussion that occurs in Book 6 between herself and Hector. Stronger answers looked at the idea of Helen as a character who lacks agency but yet is not content with her fate. Most candidates were able to remember and sensibly discuss the scene with Aphrodite after the duel – with some candidates perceptively discussing how although Helen obeys she does not do so meekly. Some candidates also looked at how she fitted in with the wider portrayal of women in the *Iliad*. This tended to lead candidates away from the question they were being asked.

Question 5

This question asked candidates to examine the importance of *xenia* to mortal and immortal characters. Most candidates showed a good knowledge of the poem and selected a range of relevant examples of *xenia* from the *Odyssey*. Nearly all candidates included the suitors, the Phaeacians, Calypso, Circe and the Cyclops as their primary examples. What distinguished very good or excellent answers was how candidates used those examples to assess the importance of the *xenia* being shown. There was some excellent discussion about the consequences for mortals of not obeying the laws of *xenia* such as the justice of Odysseus' revenge on the suitors. Whereas this was of less importance to the immortal characters, for example there are no consequences for Calypso's imprisonment of Odysseus beyond having to let him go. Weaker answers tended to simply list examples of *xenia* without thinking about the importance of these examples. Candidates should aim to remember in 30 marks essay more marks come from the analysis of the question than the factual content.

Question 6

This question examined whether the human characters in Homer's epics are believable as real people. This was a less popular question. Stronger answers were ones that set out at the beginning what qualities they thought made a character convincing as a real person. There was some excellent discussion about how Homer's depiction of flaws made characters such as Achilles and Agamemnon convincing as people. Some answers, however, tended to become side tracked into exploring what made a person a hero rather than answering the question being asked.