

GCSE

Classical Civilisation

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J280**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) **J080**

OCR Report to Centres June 2014

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

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A351/01 City Life in the Classical World (Foundation Tier)

General Comments:

As in previous years there was an approximately even number of entries for the two options, Athens and Rome.

As usual, a wide range of responses were produced by the candidates, and once again the vast majority demonstrated, through accurate application of subject knowledge, that they had been accurately guided and well prepared for the exam. Most candidates were familiar with the style of the questions and the vast majority followed the instructions in the rubric carefully. Once again a very small number of candidates were apparently unsure of which topic they had been prepared for (or perhaps were overconfident) and answered questions from both topics. A few candidates muddled Athens and Rome in their answers, particularly in questions 9 and 18 about the role of the *kyria*/Roman wife.

Most candidates followed the instructions carefully and put 'ticks' in the appropriate boxes, and so on. Where candidates had made a mistake and then crossed out their initial response and added another, it was invariably done in a clear enough way for the examiner to deduce the intended response.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Option 1: Athens

Question No.

1. Most candidates knew all of these symbols and could link them to the appropriate gods. The most common error was Hera, who cropped up linked to all of the symbols.
2. Again most candidates responded well to these questions. The most common error here was the positions of the *skene* and *proskene*.
3. Mostly this was accurately answered throughout, although there were some inevitable errors. Q3D saw the *kyrios* indulging in a range of games, although very few candidates opted for (d) 'throwing cushions'. Q3E produced the most common wrong answer, as some candidates apparently had not studied the wording of the option carefully enough and suggested that "... introduces his wife and daughter to his friends" was correct.
4. Question 4 gave a chance for candidates who knew about the City Dionysia to demonstrate their knowledge. Conversely, it was very difficult for candidates with little or no knowledge of this festival to score marks. The City Dionysia is clearly indicated in the specification.
5. On the whole this was answered very well although 5A contained quite a few errors, with candidates often opting for 'sound effects'. Owing to ongoing debate about theatrical masks, the Examiner decided that both (a) Leather and (b) Linen were acceptable responses to Q5B. Many candidates, however, opted for (d) Resin.
6. Positive responses to this question demonstrated that most candidates knew the main roles of the *kyrios*. The most common error was to opt for "Kept the whole house decorated" – perhaps a reflection of modern society rather than Classical Athens?

For Section B see Report on A351/02 Higher Tier.

Option 2: Rome

Question No.

10. Many candidates were clearly well prepared and there were few errors. The owl and the bow and arrows caused the largest number of slips, and Juno made a regular appearance here.
11. On the whole this was answered well. Candidates either knew all five, or, in a very small number of cases, only one or two.
12. Responses were generally accurate. It was clear that candidates had been well-taught about Roman dinner parties.
13. The most common errors here were: “Improved the skills of the soldiers who took part in the shows” and “Slowed the rise in the population of Rome”. Having said that, most candidates were able to select the five correct options.
14. Answers were mostly accurate, but all four options for how ink was made were popular.
15. Again the vast majority of students were overwhelmingly accurate here, but a number suggested that slaves “Only did dangerous jobs”, and that they “Were always treated badly by their masters”.

For Section B see Report on A351/02 Higher Tier.

A351/02 City Life in the Classical World (Higher Tier)

General Comments:

As in previous years, a wide range of responses were produced by the candidates, covering the whole grade range. The vast majority demonstrated that they had been accurately guided and well prepared for the exam. The wide range of facts offered in the various answers once again highlighted the huge range of source material for the ancient world that is available for teachers and students. Although the examiners do their best to construct a markscheme which includes the most likely indicative answers, candidates once again excelled in adding interesting and sometimes very obscure pieces of factual information from the classical world. Where this was accurate/relevant it was, of course, credited. The vast majority of candidates demonstrated knowledge apparently drawn from the OCR Classical Civilisation text book, but examiners were instructed to credit any other relevant and accurate information. Overall, candidates demonstrated strong knowledge of the topics, and most were clearly familiar with the style of the questions. There was an approximately even number of entries for the two options, Athens and Rome. In Section A, in both papers, there was an even spread of responses to the various choices, but see comments below.

A very small number of candidates answered questions from BOTH the Athens and Rome options. Only the marks from the option with the best responses were counted, not a combination of the best answers from both. A tiny number of candidates answered all three questions in Section A in their chosen topic (and, in at least one case, all six Section A questions), and it was noted that this invariably impacted on their Section B question. Inevitably, there were a few candidates who started the Athens topic, then crossed out their answers and restarted the Rome topic, although the vast majority of candidates were clearly aware of the correct option. There were also a few candidates who only answered one Section A question instead of two – perhaps this was down to the preparation, or it may have been ‘exam nerves’.

As noted last year, a surprising number of candidates used extra answer booklets without using the extra pages supplied in their original one. This suggests that they had not been made fully aware of the existence of these extra pages (pages 30-32). Some candidates squeezed extra lines onto the end of their answers for Section A questions, although, generally, the extra lines would rarely add more marks but be repetition of what had already been stated. It would be helpful if candidates used the ‘extra pages’ in their answer book rather than write outside the lines provided for each answer. It is essential that any answers on the ‘extra pages’ MUST indicate the question to which they refer. It is good practice for candidates to indicate that they have used the extra pages by use of a note, arrow or asterisk: although this is not an official requirement it can speed up the marking process for the examiner.

There were some candidates who had been entered for the Higher tier when the Foundation would have been much more suitable and it was sometimes rather sad to mark a script of a candidate who was clearly struggling with essay writing, when this could so easily have been avoided by being entered for the Foundation tier.

Timing was apparently handled competently by the vast majority of the candidates as only a few appeared to have run out of time on the Section B question.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Option 1: Athens

Question No.

1. This was generally answered well.
 - a) Candidates were able to cite various aspects of the Panathenaic procession. The *peplos* was invariably included, as were the sacrificial animals, or *hecatomb*. The best answers included more obscure details such as the maidens with baskets on their heads and *metics* carrying honeycombs. Factual knowledge was all that was needed as this question addressed AO1. Responses that were produced in the form of a list or bullet points were unlikely to achieve the 'Thorough' level.
 - b) This AO2 question assessed the candidates' understanding of Classical Athens. So a basic description of Athenian education would not reach the higher levels. Candidates were, on the whole, able to link the skills taught by the *kitharistes*, the *paidotribes* and the *grammatistes* to the relevant events of the Panathenaia.
 - c) Each AO3 question requires some form of evaluation. The best answers to this question provided a two-sided response, backed, of course, with relevant detail. Typically, many candidates answered this by focusing on one or other of the two options, but the stronger ones were able to balance the two factors, with support. Candidates responded well, with many picking up the importance of the festival to both the city (displaying tribute money, role of *metics*, income from visitors, gaining Athene's favour etc.) and the individual (glory from winning prizes, holiday/feasting, showing off skills in competitions/procession etc.).
2. This was the most commonly selected question in the Athens section.
 - a) Almost invariably, candidates were able to supply a whole range of relevant facts to answer this question including the flute player, the maiden with the knife, decorating the animal and so on; choosing/buying an animal was credited as it was considered to be part of the process by so many candidates. Some less well-substantiated facts were also credited, despite academic debate as to their accuracy, as this was clearly what the candidates had been taught (for example, cutting off a piece of the animal's hair and burning it; running the knife down the back of the animal prior to killing it). Responses that were produced in the form of a list or bullet points were unlikely to achieve the 'Thorough' level.
 - b) Candidates were, on the whole, less certain about this question. As an AO2 question it was assessing their understanding, so the factors suggested had to link to a demonstration of their understanding of the issues. Many candidates suggested that the sacrifice would make a mess in the temple, but did not go on to explain how this would offend the god(s). However, the majority of candidates identified the link between the 'mess' and polluting the god's 'house'. Some also explained how the smoke from the sacrifice could ascend to heaven for the god's pleasure, and how the whole affair was a public event, and therefore needed to be performed in front of an assembled audience.
 - c) As stated above, AO3 questions suggest a two-sided answer. The best responses were able to debate both sides of this statement, perhaps balancing the need for the smoke to rise to nourish or please the god, with the importance of the ritual of the procession. The reading of the animal's liver was often mentioned here, too.

3. This was generally answered well.
- a) Most candidates were able to supply a range of information to describe the role of the *kyria*. Generic comments about ‘cooking and cleaning’ were not credited unless linked to Classical Athens. Having said that, most candidates were able to supply a good range of roles and duties ranging from providing an heir, to managing the storeroom. Responses that were produced in the form of a list or bullet points were unlikely to achieve the ‘Thorough’ level.
 - b) As an AO2 question, this demanded that the candidate demonstrated an understanding of how the layout of a house affected the *kyria*. Basic descriptions of the house were unlikely to reach the higher levels. Most candidates identified the impact of the *gynaikon*, and many also commented on the *kyria*’s exclusion from the *andron*. Some also went on to discuss the storeroom and/or the courtyard. There were some nice links made about the position of the front door and how the *andron* acted as a ‘guardroom’ to prevent the *kyria* from leaving the house, and also how the proximity of the slaves’ quarters to the *gynaikon* helped the *kyria* look after sick slaves.
 - c) Again, this question required a two-sided answer to reach the higher levels. Some candidates were able to make good balanced responses to this question, balancing the lack of freedom and legal status against the importance of providing an heir, raising the daughter appropriately and behaving in a suitably modest way to help boost the family’s status.
4. Generally this question was answered well. Candidates covered a range of the responsibilities of the *kyrios*, usually including attending the Assembly, running the farm, organising successful *symposia*, arranging marriage of daughter, and so on. The stronger candidates evaluated throughout, discussing the various demands and rewards of the role. Some candidates discussed other aspects of the *kyrios*’ responsibilities, such as military duty and/or religious roles (athletic events in the Panathenaia etc.) and others discussed their role in specific jobs in Athens, such as, for example, *choregos*. Many candidates produced responses that suggested they had practiced similar, but subtly different questions before, perhaps comparing the role of a *kyrios* with that of a *kyria*, or with the slaves.

A handful of candidates went down a digressive route and compared the role of a *kyrios* with modern society; this, of course, rather limited their chances of reaching the higher levels.

As marks were awarded for all three AOs, it was important for candidates to provide plenty of factual evidence and answer the question as well. Typically, many candidates scored higher on AO1 than AO3 as they would tend to focus on describing as much as they could about the role of a *kyrios*, rather than linking their knowledge back to the question.

5. In contrast to Question 4, this was generally not answered quite so well. Although it was an equally popular choice, some candidates’ knowledge of the City Dionysia was fairly patchy. Some confused it with the Panathenaia (perhaps understandable to an extent) but some – luckily a small minority – evidently believed that ‘Dionysia’ was the name of a city (which is less understandable). This echoes the comment in the Report on the Foundation tier paper: the City Dionysia is in the specification and so should be adequately covered in schemes of work. Some candidates were clearly unprepared for a question on the City Dionysia.

However, the vast majority of candidates offered strong responses to this question – again attempting to balance a description of the event with an evaluative answer.

Option 2: Rome

Question No.

6. Of the three Section A questions, the first question was the least popular.
- a) The candidates who opted for this question generally answered it very well. Candidates managed to get plenty of information down – reading and writing, wax tablets, repetitive teaching, rooms in the back of shops, etc.. Responses that were produced in the form of a list or bullet points were unlikely to achieve the ‘Thorough’ level.
 - b) Compared with Q6(a), candidates apparently struggled a little here – some were able to provide strong answers citing specific authors (Homer and Virgil being the most common, of course, but Plutarch, Strabo and many other made an appearance), and they demonstrated how the second stage built on the basic skills of the first to explore History, Geography and other subjects. The differentiation between girls and boys, and rich and poor, was also mentioned. Some candidates dwelt on the progression from wax-tablet to papyrus, which was one aspect of the question.
 - c) Most candidates offered strong responses which demonstrated clear knowledge of what the *rhetor* taught, and how those skills were applied to Roman life, especially a career in law, the senate or the army (‘making rousing speeches to the soldiers’ was a common response). Stronger candidates pointed out that this only applied to rich Roman boys. The most common way of producing a two-sided argument here was to suggest that the skills taught be a *rhetor* might be of no value to, say, a farmer. On the other hand, there were some candidates who struggled here, making generalised statements about making speeches in Rome, with no mention of politics, law, or, indeed, the Senate.
- 7.
- a) This question was answered very well, with full descriptions of the events including some more obscure facts like running a knife down the back of the animal, and cutting off a lock of hair to be burnt before the death of the animal all credited, as this was clearly what many candidates had been taught. A few candidates misread the question and described events following the death of the animal. It was nice to see the Roman names for some of the more obscure officials (for example, the *popa*) regularly appearing, as well as mention of *mola salsa*. Responses that were produced in the form of a list or bullet points were unlikely to achieve the ‘Thorough’ level.
 - b) Lots of good answers were seen here too. The vast majority of candidates spotted that temples were seen as the homes of the gods, so a death within its walls was seen as wrong, but not so many pin-pointed the pollution caused by death. The second most popular response was that the god would be able to see the sacrifice (some nice mentions of the doors being open so the cult statue could watch the proceedings), and/or be able to receive the offering via the smoke. Thirdly, many candidates also identified that the event was a public one, and would need space for an assembled crowd to watch. Some candidates mentioned the need for the blood to flow into the ground – a few even mentioning chthonic gods at this point!
- Inevitably, weaker candidates worried about the mess caused to the temple and how difficult it would be to clear up the blood and ‘animal poo’.
- c) Again, as an A03 question, this was likely to require some form of a two-sided response to reach the highest levels. Many candidates got straight to the point on this one and argued for or against the statement, adding a final sentence arguing for the other point of view. At this stage many candidates were able to use their knowledge of the *haruspex*, and, if they

had not mentioned it before, this was where the ‘smoke nourishing the gods’ came in. The importance of the ritual of the procession was often emphasised here too.

8. This was a popular question, and generally well answered.
- a) Candidates were able to supply a range of relevant tasks and responsibilities – many cited managing slaves, having children and educating the daughter. Some commented on their involvement in dinner parties. Some weaker candidates simply recycled the information in the source. There was a little confusion over the weaving process; some candidates had women ‘spinning clothes’, and so on, but they are not expected to be experts in the terminology of cloth manufacture. A surprising number relied on a list of generic stereotypical ‘traditional female’ tasks, which perhaps bore more relation to the modern world than the classical one (‘cooking, cleaning, paying bills’). Such responses were unlikely to gain much credit as the exam is on ancient Rome, after all.
- b) This type of question assesses AO2 – understanding. So answers that relied on a list of jobs would be unlikely to score very many marks. Successful answers really had to revolve around “...because...” or similar terms. A number of candidates simply carried on, or even repeated, what they had already written in 8(a), but this did not meet the criteria expected for AO2. The best answers looked at the Roman wife’s role in context, perhaps discussing their role in dinner parties or at the baths to help extend her husband’s client base. Many candidates explained the important role they had in educating their daughters.
- c) This was one of several questions in the paper where candidates could differentiate between rich and poor. Again, as an AO3 question, this demanded a discussion and evaluation of the comment provided, and the strongest candidates were able to offer a two-sided response. These could be based on the various roles of women, or how the roles themselves varied depending on the family’s status. Candidates were quick to spot factors that indicated that the lifestyle was ‘limited’, such as being under the control of a *paterfamilias*, age difference to husband, lack of legal status (‘same as children’), could not own property, and so on. Stronger answers were also able to point out that women attended the baths and the circus, even if they were separated at the Colosseum. There was a little confusion with Athens, and some candidates had Roman women stuck indoors all day like the Athenian *kyria*.
9. The two Section B questions in the Rome topic were equally popular choices. Q9 was generally tackled successfully, with candidates looking at the various roles of slaves, both male and female, and very often balancing their roles with the status of their owner to identify that a slave owned by a rich owner might be better off than one owned by a less well-off owner. It was particularly pleasing to see some stronger candidates using precise examples and naming famous slaves, or slave owners, or indeed, citing the source where the information originated (Suetonius’ story of Vedius Pollio, the man who fed his slaves to his lamprey eels appeared from time to time).

Section B questions assess all three AOs, so candidates need to be fully aware of this to score high marks across all three areas. On the whole, candidates were clearly fully informed about this and made a real effort to pack in as much factual information as they could and also to produce a solid two-sided answer. Typically, candidates would start by writing everything they knew about slaves’ jobs and conditions, usually including household slaves, farm slaves, those in mines, public slaves and gladiators. Candidates were generally well-informed about the range of slaves’ roles. Stronger candidates evaluated throughout, but the typical answer would shift at some stage from description to evaluation. The weaker candidates tended to leave this to the last minute, and perhaps only add a line at the end of the description to start to answer the question.

Good knowledge was demonstrated about the roles of slaves, the differences between male and female slaves, and different types of owners. Candidates showed that the experience of being a slave could vary massively, depending on job, sex and owner. Some candidates also compared the slaves' previous lives with their lives as slaves. Manumission and freedmen/women were mentioned too.

Evaluation could sometimes be quite basic, maybe even just linking it to the modern world, but generally it was of a good standard, and some candidates produced outstanding arguments.

10. Most candidates responded to this question by describing a day's events in the Colosseum (for AO1) linking to the 'entertainment' part of the question, and then starting a new paragraph and discussing whether there were other aspects than entertainment – 'On the other hand it was to increase the power of the emperor/demonstrate Rome's power' etc.. Stronger candidates produced more sophisticated answers which evaluated as they went along, for example, discussing the beast hunts and pointing out that not only were they entertaining but they also demonstrated to visitors the power and extent of the empire. A whole range of factual support was encountered in the scripts, and as long as it was relevant, was credited under AO1. Gaining the higher levels in AO3 was, of course, more demanding, and many candidates came in at a lower level in AO3 than AO1 (as is typical in many Section B answers).

A352/01 Epic and Myth (Foundation Tier)

General Comments:

Most candidates were able to show a good knowledge of the text they had studied this year. There was strong evidence of fine teaching and candidates had been well prepared for the examination.

Some candidates had problems in following the rubric; this was especially apparent in Section A, where candidates ticked one too few or one too many responses at times. A few candidates did not answer the correct numbers of Section B questions, although this seemed to have been less of a problem than in previous years. There was little evidence that candidates did not have enough time to complete the paper.

Section A questions were generally answered very well and it was clear that candidates knew the events in the texts. Section B proved more challenging: a significant number of candidates were only able to make general statements, or only wrote a sentence or two. The key to achieving higher marks in this section is to produce a range of ideas for each question, backing these up with detailed references to the text.

The opening question in each comprehension passage produced a very wide range of responses. As in the past, candidates showed good reference to the passages, but when asked about literary style, gave general responses that could have referred to virtually any passage in the text. This was especially evident in vague comments about similes or vivid descriptions.

In Part b) questions, candidates often only knew the basic outlines of stories, and sometimes not even this much. Higher marks could have been achieved by knowing more of the precise details.

In Part c) questions, some candidates could have achieved higher marks by answering the question set, rather than simply describing what happened. Credit is given for knowledge, but answers need to show understanding to achieve the highest marks.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.

- 1 This question was done well by most candidates. Some got Ino and Calypso mixed up. Hermes was known by virtually all candidates.
- 2 Part c) caused more problems than the other parts. All the incorrect options attracted good support, although the correct one was the most popular choice.
- 3 This question was very pleasingly done, with virtually all candidates scoring at least 3 marks. This was a significant improvement on how similar questions have been handled in previous years. Nearly all candidates got options 2 and 6 correct, and even if the number was incorrect, candidates still attained marks by having two options in the right sequence.
- 4 Most candidates did very well on this question. The correct option that was most often missed was the Cicones.
- 5 Nearly all candidates were able to score at least 3 marks. The wrong answers attracted similar levels of support, with the best known detail being the eating of the cattle.

- 6 This question proved a little more problematic for many candidates. In particular, the facts that Polyphemus lived in a cave and got drunk were felt to be valid reasons as to why he was a dangerous enemy. Most candidates still managed to achieve 3 marks or more.
- 7 This question was quite well done. Many candidates showed a good knowledge of Circe. The correct detail which was least well known was that Circe was a good singer, with many candidates preferring instead that she could always be trusted, despite the false hospitality that she offered.
- 8 Many candidates only scored one mark. Odysseus was seen as boastful in the passage by a lot of candidates.

9

- a) Candidates had plenty to say about this passage. There was some excellent discussion of the epithet “long-suffering” and how it reminded us of Odysseus’ past toils. Many also made fine points on the involvement of Athene at the end creating a mystical quality, whilst some realised this was the end of the book and thoughtfully talked of a calm ending or being a cliff-hanger, both of which were acceptable. A few candidates spoke about the description of a blanket suggesting security and warmth.

Candidates could have achieved more marks by discussing the simile better. Discussion on the isolation of Odysseus or the care he took in making his bed, using the simile, would have gained more marks for many candidates than comments about how vivid this made the scene. Comments about detailed descriptions occurred regularly, but often added little to the answer. A small number of candidates misread “copse” for “corpse”, leading to some strange ideas.

- b) There was a very pleasing level of knowledge of the storm. Nearly all candidates knew of Ino’s help, and examiners were prepared to accept various pieces of clothing for “veil” and what Odysseus was to do with it. Athene’s role was well known. Some did import to her things she did not do such as give Odysseus the idea to pray to the river god. Whilst candidates did not lose marks for it, many wasted words by describing the help that Calypso gave and the harm that Poseidon did.
- c) Once again, Ino was discussed very well. Many candidates wrote intelligently on Odysseus’ initial scepticism, but later sensible acceptance of her help. Many talked about his mental and physical strength, and his despair was also frequently cited. Many candidates could have gained a higher mark by being more specific. Weaker responses tended to use terms like determination, but not provide examples. Many responses also only referred only to the storm in Book 5, missing out opportunities for further ideas.

10

- a) Candidates gave many sensible ideas on Odysseus. Many focused on his self-pity and hunger, backing up ideas with relevant quotations. The key to a thorough answer was making a range of points as some over-concentrated on one idea. The strongest answers also saw him as cunning or arrogant in mentioning his status to impress Alcinous and he was also seen as rude for demanding to be allowed to eat and be sent home.
- b) Almost all candidates had a fine knowledge of what happened after he entered the palace. The mist was widely known as was the supplication. Many went on to discuss the *xenia* that was offered, with varying amounts of detail. Some candidates even went on to discuss what happened in Book 8. This was credited, although candidates are not expected to go beyond the prescribed books.

Many candidates wasted time and space by describing what Odysseus saw as he approached the palace. There were also mistakes regularly made, including Odysseus supplicating Arete and Alcinous asking questions about Odysseus too early.

- c) This question was well done and produced many thoughtful ideas. Many talked about the concept of *xenia*, with some enhancing the idea with reference to fear of punishment from Zeus. Points about his looks, his heroism and his oratory were also popular. Some candidates could have improved their answer by giving examples of these points, rather than just making the points. Athene was regularly mentioned. The best candidates went on to discuss her pivotal roles in freeing Odysseus from Calypso and getting Nausicaa to help him. Some simply stated that he was Athene's favourite and gave examples, without really saying why she liked him so much.

11

- a) Most candidates produced a series of good ideas for this question. Many used the opening lines well to discuss his care for his crew, and his politeness in waiting by the threshold. His comments on what was to blame were usually seen as being cunning for blaming others, calling Aeolus and his family "my friends", and using placatory words. Many thought he was cheeky for asking for help. The best answers had a range of these ideas.
- b) This part of the text was very well known. Virtually all candidates knew about the bag of winds and why it was opened. Some candidates needed a little more detail to be worthy of full marks, such as the length of time Odysseus had been sailing, or the fires on Ithaca being visible. A common misconception was that Odysseus had decided to have a sleep.
- c) This question provided responses of varying quality. The best candidates talked about the unusual aspects of his home and family, and the idea of a bag of winds and ruler of the winds. Many candidates lacked knowledge about the incest in the family, the bronze wall and the floating island. In the absence of the correct knowledge, many guessed at what their home looked like, borrowing ideas from the palace of Alcinous. Weaker responses tended only to focus on the story of the bag of winds.

12 Some candidates answered this question well. In general it caused more problems than any other on the paper, with a number of candidates seeming to guess the answers. Nisus and Meleager were frequently mixed up, and Daedalus was often not associated with the maze.

13 Part c) caused more problems than the other parts. All the incorrect options attracted good support, although the correct one was the most popular choice.

14 This question was very pleasingly done, with virtually all candidates scoring at least 3 marks. This was a significant improvement on how similar questions have been handled in previous years. Nearly all candidates got the ages in the correct order, and the only notable problem was the occasional muddling of the order of 2 and 3.

15 This question was done well, with many candidates achieving full marks.

16 Most answers showed a good knowledge of the story. The most regularly seen errors were that the story did not contain a moral and that it contained a prophecy.

17 This question was very well done with most candidates achieving full marks.

18 This was another question where candidates showed good knowledge. Several candidates did not realise that Daedalus was from Athens.

19 Most candidates scored full marks in this question. A few thought Althaea was powerless.

20

- a) There were some good answers to this question. Some candidates were able to discuss the humour effectively in this passage, and the ridiculous nature of Apollo's statements and the desperation of the god were often effectively discussed. There was some fine discussion also of simile and the comparison to an animal chase. Many candidates did not make much use of the lines following this, and should be advised to use all of a passage for discussion. Only a few candidates commented on the voyeuristic nature of the writing, but those that did made excellent comments.
- b) Virtually all candidates knew the outlines of what happened to Daphne after the passage. The appeal to her father was almost universally known, with some candidates further impressing by knowing the name of her father. Candidates knew she became a tree, but some could have improved their answer by knowing which sort of tree this was; few candidates talked of the actual stages of transformation and which parts of Daphne turned into which parts of the tree. A number of candidates talked of Apollo 'groping' the tree, which could perhaps have been expressed rather better and some candidates wrongly stated that Apollo decreed that winners of the Pythian games should be crowned with laurel.
- c) Most candidates found a number of reasons for sympathising with Daphne. There was frequent discussion of her being a pawn in the quarrel between Cupid and Apollo, and her desire to remain a virgin. Many candidates used their imagination and sympathised with her fear at being chased by a god, or wrote effectively about her separation from her father. Some candidates forgot to make explicit that her life as a tree might be less than appealing to her.

21

- a) Most candidates had few problems in finding some horrific descriptions in the passage. The fangs and the foam were frequently mentioned, as was the foul black breath and hellish mouth. Weaker responses were only able to quote the lines and say they were horrific, whereas stronger ones made points about the amount of poison that dribbled from the fangs or the fact that its breath was so strong that it even polluted the air. The best responses made use of the end of the passage and the contrast between the deep red gore and rich green grass which highlight the injury of the dragon, although this was not seen very often. The simile of the treetop posed few problems, as did the rampaging river for those that chose to discuss it.
- b) Most candidates knew the major details of the story. The transformation into soldiers was almost wholly known as was the fact that they fought each other. Better responses were that Cadmus was prevented from intervening, and that the five men remaining helped Cadmus found Thebes. There was some confusion in weaker responses about the name of the city founded, or how many soldiers were left.
- c) The key to answering this question was producing evidence from the range of myths about Cadmus. There was fine discussion of his bravery in killing the dragon, and many knew of his desire to avenge the deaths of his friends. Weaker responses could not recall any of the other myths about him, but some knew of his quest to find his sister Europa and spoke of family loyalty. Fewer could remember his wisdom in encouraging Pentheus to worship Bacchus, but those that did provided excellent analysis.

22

- a) This question was answered reasonably well. Many candidates discussed the extent of Erysichthon's hunger well, with the comparisons to the ocean and fire featuring in many responses. Some made very lucid points about how all of nature could not satisfy Erysichthon. Individual words were often picked out, with varying degrees of success. The best responses often discussed how the word "abyss" showed the bottomless pit of his

stomach. Weaker responses quoted a series of single words and then made a statement that they showed how hungry he was. A small number of candidates noticed the paradox of eating leading to an empty stomach and the direct speech in the passage and made excellent points on them.

- b) The myth of Erysichthon's daughter was very well known. Many candidates were able to name her, and gave a detailed explanation as to how she gained her power. A few candidates knew she had been given the power by Neptune, but did not say why. Most knew that she was sold multiple times by her father and could change her identity, with the best answers giving examples of what she was changed into.
- c) Candidates were able to show both good knowledge and understanding in their answers. Virtually all candidates discussed the selling of Mestra and discussed his misuse of her talent for his own selfish desires. Many gave thorough details of Erysichthon's crimes before he was possessed by Hunger. Some omitted the beheading of a slave. Virtually no candidate mentioned the negative terms Ovid uses to describe him. If candidates had been able to recall Ovid's own opinions of characters, they would have been very well rewarded.

A352/02 Epic and Myth (Higher Tier)

General Comments:

Most candidates were able to show a good knowledge of the text they had studied this year. There was strong evidence of fine teaching and candidates had been well prepared for the examination.

It was very pleasing to see candidates write at length on both the comprehension questions and the essays. When doing so, candidates should write in the main body of the answer if they have used extra space at the back or extra booklets.

Most candidates were able to show a very detailed knowledge and a mature understanding of the text. As ever, some candidates struggled as they did not have a grasp of the details of the texts. Candidates should answer the precise question set, and not try to turn it into something they are more comfortable answering.

In the (a) comprehension passages, there were many very perceptive answers. Candidates who made 3 different points, backing each up with a reference to the text, scored most highly. When the question asked about how a passage was exciting or vivid, some candidates wrote about literary techniques impressively, and discussed characterisation where appropriate.

Many candidates did not handle similes well, especially the one in the opening question. It is not enough to say that it helps make the passage more vivid or more real by comparing it to an everyday situation. Candidates must show that they understand exactly what the points of comparison are. Equally, many responses talked about vivid descriptions, without really amplifying their idea.

Candidates often had very impressive knowledge in the (b) questions. Some wasted time in discussing too much of a story, rather than the specific part required.

Part (c) questions produced some very impressive evaluation. Weaker responses often only treated the question as “describe” and simply gave a list of events. Sometimes a lack of knowledge meant evaluation was patchy, but candidates did generally try to answer the questions.

As ever, the essays produced a wide variety of ideas and quality. It was very pleasing to see how engaged candidates were with the texts. Some concentrated on a few very detailed examples, whilst others had lots of brief references. A number of answers used the comprehension passages excessively for evidence in essays.

Some candidates were clearly hoping that the essays would be how characters helped and hindered, and wrote a pre-planned essay. Such an approach can score highly for AO1, but is unlikely to have the breadth of understanding and evaluation needed for AO2 and AO3. Many essays had conclusions that were too brief and introductions that were too long. Some made excellent use of their final lines to show perceptive evaluation.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.

1

- a) This question provided responses of variable quality. There was some good discussion of the epithet “long-suffering” and how it reminded us of Odysseus’ past toils. Many referred to the way Homer emphasises the tight knit structure of the olive bushes. Few recalled this was the end of the book and talked of the idea of closure. A few candidates spoke about the description of a blanket suggesting security and warmth.

Candidates could have achieved more marks by discussing the simile better. Discussion on the care Odysseus took in making his bed, using the simile, would have gained more marks for many candidates than comments about how vivid this made the scene. Comments about detailed descriptions occurred regularly, but often added little to the answer. A small number of candidates misread “copse” for “corpse”, leading to some strange ideas.

- b) There was a very pleasing level of knowledge of the storm. Nearly all candidates knew of Ino’s help, and examiners were prepared to accept various pieces of clothing for “veil” and what Odysseus was to do with it. Athene’s role was well known. Some did import to her things she did not do such as give Odysseus the idea to pray to the river god. Whilst candidates did not lose marks for it, many wasted words by describing the help that Calypso gave and the harm that Poseidon did. Candidates need to read the question very carefully to decide what is relevant.
- c) Once again, Ino was discussed very well. Many candidates wrote intelligently on Odysseus’ initial scepticism, but later sensible acceptance of her help. Many talked about his mental and physical strength, and his despair was also frequently cited. Many candidates could have gained a higher mark by referring to his examples of his actual behaviour rather than character traits. Weaker responses tended to use terms like determination and bravery, but not provide examples. Many responses also referred only to the storm in Book 5, missing out opportunities for further ideas.

2

- a) Candidates gave many sensible ideas on Odysseus. Many focused on his self-pity and hunger, backing up ideas with relevant quotations. The key to a thorough answer was making a range of points as some over concentrated on one idea. The strongest answers also saw him as cunning or arrogant in mentioning his status to impress Alcinous, and he was also seen by some as rude for demanding to be allowed to eat and be sent home.
- b) Almost all candidates had a fine knowledge of what happened after he entered the palace. The mist was widely known as was the supplication. Many went on to discuss the *xenia* that was offered, with varying amounts of detail. Some candidates even went on to discuss what happened in Book 8. This was credited, although candidates are not expected to go beyond the prescribed books.

Many candidates wasted time and space by describing what Odysseus saw as he approached the palace. There were also mistakes sometimes made in confusing what Arete and Alcinous did, or in what happened that night compared to the following day.

- c) This question was well done and produced many thoughtful ideas. Many talked about the concept of *xenia*, with some enhancing the idea with reference to fear of punishment from Zeus. Points about his looks, his heroism and his oratory were also popular. Some candidates could have improved their answers by citing examples of these points, rather than just making the points. Athene was regularly mentioned. The best candidates went on

to discuss her pivotal roles in freeing Odysseus from Calypso and getting Nausicaa to help him. Some simply stated that he was Athene's favourite and gave examples, without really saying why she liked him so much.

3

- a) Most candidates produced a series of good ideas for this question. Strong responses used the opening lines well to discuss his care for his crew, and his politeness in waiting by the threshold. His comments on what was to blame were usually seen as being cunning as were using "placatory words" and calling them "my friends". Many thought he was cheeky for asking for help and keen to shift the blame away from himself. The best answers had a range of these ideas.
- b) This part of the text was very well known. Virtually all candidates knew about the bag of winds and why it was opened. Some candidates needed a little more detail to be worthy of full marks, such as the length of time Odysseus had been sailing, or the fires on Ithaca being visible. A common misconception was that Odysseus had decided to have a sleep.
- c) This question provided responses of varying quality. The best candidates talked about the unusual aspects of his home and family, and the idea of a bag of winds and ruler of the winds. Many candidates lacked knowledge about the incest in the family, the bronze wall and the floating island. In the absence of the correct knowledge, many guessed at what their home looked like, borrowing ideas from the palace of Alcinoos. Weaker responses tended only to focus on the story of the bag of winds. Some were able to make good points on this part, such as it shows up Odysseus' leadership or that it created tension.

- 4** This essay produced some excellent responses. As expected, candidates tended to argue that not all characters were uncivilised barbarians, but only some, and were able to give a range of characters to back up their views. Virtually all characters were examined. Some were able to discuss how certain characters could be seen as both barbaric and civilised, such as Circe and Calypso, while some raised the valid idea that Calypso was civilised and not barbaric, but rather simply possessive. Others discussed how the Phaeacians and Polyphemus were perhaps not as civilised and barbaric respectively as might be seen at first glance. The best answers were able to see civilisation in unexpected areas, such as the society of the Laestrygonians and the Cicones.

Many candidates struggled to make a range of points. *Xenia* was usually the main idea, but often answers failed to go beyond this, with the essay being a list of who helps and hinders Odysseus. In having such a narrow focus, areas such as buildings, government, worship of the gods and the role of women were overlooked by many.

Some candidates talked about Odysseus' own behaviour being barbaric, for example in sacking Ismarus. This was an interesting point, but was not really within the question set.

Most candidates approached the question character by character. Those that looked at it thematically tended to give better structured essays.

- 5** Candidates found plenty to say in answering this essay. Stories where Odysseus and his crew had differing ideas were frequently and impressively cited, with varying amounts of blame apportioned to Odysseus for his lack of leadership and his crew for insubordination. The Polyphemus story was frequently discussed in detail, but there were also good references to Aeolus, the cattle of the Sun god and the Cicones. Some candidates spent so long on the story of Polyphemus, that there was little time for much else. Candidates should be reminded to pick out only information from a story relevant to the essay set.

Some essays ran out of steam after leadership, and indeed seemed to actually be answering “was Odysseus a good leader”. Stronger answers looked at a range of threats, such as those presented by monsters, the gods and women. The latter was often seen as a threat that Odysseus could not control, as women kept falling at his feet.

A number of candidates also examined the essay from the perspective that Odysseus improved his chances of getting home through his behaviour. His oratory, decisive leadership and cunning plans were all discussed well. This approach was always credited, although it was not essential in achieving full marks. Candidates should be reminded to approach the essays from different perspectives if possible. In doing this, they should not get diverted into irrelevant areas. Whilst the threats of gods were relevant, the help of gods was not. Many listed how the gods helped him, although a more careful reading of the title should have shown that this was not relevant.

6

- a) There were some good answers to this question. Some candidates were able to discuss the humour effectively in this passage, and the desperation of the god was often effectively discussed. There was also discussion of the simile which was at times detailed. Many candidates did not make much use of the lines towards the end, and should be advised to use all of a passage for discussion.
- b) Virtually all candidates knew the outlines of what happened to Daphne after the passage. The appeal to her father was almost universally known, with some candidates further impressing by knowing his name. Candidates knew she became a tree, but the type of tree was not always named. Few candidates talked of the actual stages of transformation and which parts of Daphne turned into which parts of the tree. Some candidates wrongly stated that Apollo decreed that winners of the Pythian games should be crowned with laurel, confusing it with a statement in another story.
- c) Most candidates found a number of reasons for sympathising with Daphne. There was frequent discussion of her being a pawn in the quarrel between Cupid and Apollo, and her desire to remain a virgin. Many candidates used their imagination and sympathised with her fear at being chased by a god, or wrote effectively about her separation from her father. Some candidates forgot to make explicit that her life as a tree might be less than appealing to her. Few responses noted that her actual escape only enflamed Apollo more.

7

- a) Most candidates had few problems in finding some horrific descriptions in the passage. The fangs and the foam were frequently mentioned, as was the foul black breath and hellish mouth. Weaker responses were only able to quote the lines and say they were horrific, whereas stronger ones made points about the amount of poison that dribbled from the fangs or the fact that its breath was so strong that it even polluted the air. The best responses made use of the end of the passage and the contrast between the deep red gore and rich green grass highlighting the injury of the dragon, although this was not seen very often. The simile of the treetop posed few problems, as did the rampaging river for those that chose to discuss it.
- b) Most candidates knew the major details of the story. The transformation into soldiers was almost wholly known as was the fact that they fought each other. Better responses were that Cadmus was prevented from intervening, and that the five men remaining helped Cadmus found Thebes. Some could even name Echion. There was some confusion in weaker responses about how many soldiers were left.

- c) The key to answering this question was producing evidence from the range of myths about Cadmus. There was fine discussion of his bravery in killing the dragon, and some knew of his desire to avenge the deaths of his friends. Weaker responses could not recall any of the other myths about him, but some knew of his quest to find his sister Europa and spoke of family loyalty. Fewer could remember his wisdom in encouraging Pentheus to worship Bacchus, but those that did provided excellent analysis.

8

- a) This question was answered well. Many candidates discussed the extent of Erysichthon's hunger in detail, with the comparisons to the ocean and fire. Some made very lucid points about how all of nature could not satisfy Erysichthon. Individual words were often picked out, with varying degrees of success. The best responses often discussed how the word "abyss" showed the bottomless pit of his stomach. Weaker responses quoted a series of single words and then made a statement that they showed how hungry he was. A small number of candidates noticed the paradox of eating leading to an empty stomach and the direct speech in the passage and made excellent points on them.
- b) The myth of Erysichthon's daughter was very well known. Most candidates were able to give a detailed explanation as to how she gained her power, and some were able to name her. A few candidates knew she had been given the power by Neptune, but did not say why. Most knew that she was sold multiple times by her father and could change her identity, with the best answers giving examples of what she was changed into.
- c) Candidates were able to show both good knowledge and understanding in their answers. Virtually all candidates discussed the selling of Mestra and discussed his misuse of her talent for his own selfish desires. Many gave thorough details of Erysichthon's crimes before he was possessed by Hunger. Virtually no candidate mentioned the negative terms Ovid uses to describe him. If candidates could recall Ovid's own opinions of characters, they would be very well rewarded.

- 9** There were some excellent responses to this question. Candidates generally had very good balance, spending similar time on the actions of gods and goddesses. They were usually able to analyse behaviour correctly and had a range of examples. Jupiter's affairs and Juno's reaction to them came in for regular discussion, as did the characters of Ceres and Apollo, perhaps as they featured in comprehension passages.

Candidates tended to focus on negative character traits. Some candidates would have achieved a more balanced essay and better evaluation by considering those whom the immortals spared or rewarded.

The main area where essays fell short was in the direct comparisons between the genders. Candidates often made a series of points on the gods and then gave separate ideas on the goddesses, and said they were both as bad as each other, without really directly trying to compare them. More perceptive candidates talked about Jupiter inflicting punishments on the whole human race, unlike goddesses, or the fact that goddesses did not force themselves sexually on mortal men as gods did on mortal women. It is essential for candidates to directly compare in this type of essay if they wish to attain the highest marks for AO3.

- 10** This essay produced some very well argued responses. Most candidates produced a good range of examples of stories and were able to pick out the morals in them. Some of the morals discussed were rather simplistic and generalised and did not really show knowledge of what Roman life was like. Some candidates however did try hard to examine them in their historical setting. Stories which showed respect for the gods were regularly discussed, and the best answers often referred to stories which showed hospitality in action, saying that this was important to the Romans

Some essays were imbalanced. Whilst most stories perhaps did contain some kind of moral, some candidates said that every story had a moral purpose, and so were unable to provide a balanced evaluation. Better responses spoke of the lack of morals in the creation of the world or focused on stories that were more trivial, such as the metamorphosis of Teiresias. The story of Actaeon was also used to show that not every story had a moral as this was simply due to an unfortunate accident.

A353/01 Community Life in the Classical World (Foundation Tier)

General Comments:

In this unit, candidates had the opportunity to display their knowledge and understanding of the unit at a level suited to their ability. There was little evidence of candidates being unable to complete the paper within the allotted time and the majority had clearly practiced well for the examination, with almost all following the rubric correctly.

Very few candidates wrote answers outside the designated area which was a pleasing improvement since 2013; they made good use of the extra pages at the back of the booklet and indicated this clearly.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Option 1 - Sparta

Section A

Generally all tasks were completed well and caused few difficulties for candidates who had revised thoroughly.

In Task 1 the most common omission was the marshy coastline.

For Task 2 quite a few candidates mistakenly ticked the answer that the women cleaned the houses.

In Task 4a 'spike it up' was ticked instead of 'comb it'.

Task 6 was done pleasingly well by the majority of candidates.

Section B

Question No.

7

- a) Knowledgeable answers discussed training for the army, fighting and dying for Sparta and taking part in the assembly among other things. Some candidates did not know what *Spartiatai* were.
- b) The majority of candidates could describe what the *perioikoi* did although less successful answers failed to link this to why they were less valued i.e. because being a Spartan soldier was much more highly valued.
- c) Candidates tended to have knowledge of what the *helots* did although in order to gain higher marks it was necessary to frame this in the context of why the *Spartiatai* needed the *helots* i.e. because they were full time soldiers but needed someone to grow their food.

8

- a) The best answers gave instances of what the *eirenes* did and explained how this furthered the boys' education e.g. punished the boys with whips to instil obedience. Good use was made of the passage by some candidates.
- b) Many candidates were able to identify a range of activities which went on in the *agoge*, such as fighting, stealing, climbing and running as well as basic literacy.
- c) Some interesting personal responses were produced in answer to this question with thorough answers identifying several aspects of the education system and discussing whether or not these would be enjoyed by the boys.

9

- a) A good many thorough and enthusiastic descriptions of Spartan soldiers were produced in response to this stimulus.
- b) The use of the phalanx was the most popular response with varying levels of detail although weaker answers failed to link it to Thermopylae. There were also interesting discussions of the narrow pass and musical signals.
- c) Personal responses were delivered with pleasing vigour especially regarding the pride that Spartan men may have felt when they joined the Spartan army and fought for Sparta. Membership of the *syssitia* and relationships with wives were also discussed to good effect.

Option 2 - Pompeii

Section A

Generally all tasks were completed well and caused few difficulties for candidates who had revised thoroughly.

Task 10 was completed pleasingly well with few candidates being misled by the painting of the cupids.

In Task 11, a popular misconception was that a lava flow covered Pompeii.

Task 15 was generally done well by most candidates except that some failed to 'identify wooden' shoes and used 'felt slippers' instead.

Section B

Question No.

16

- a) The most successful answers focused on the natural features that would have encouraged the original settlers to build the town where it was. Fertile soil and the sea and river were the most popular items under discussion although for an answer to be thorough the candidate had to elucidate what these might be used for i.e. growing crops, fishing, drinking/irrigation.
- b) The harbour, sea and river were the most commonly discussed features while some more thoughtful responses discussed access to the *forum* and *macellum* or *thermopolia* and inns.

- c) Many candidates were able to identify the theatre, amphitheatre and baths as attractive features of the town although less successful responses focused mainly on the scenery which is not really a feature of the town. The forum, temples and *thermopolia* were popular choices too.

17

- a) Efficient answers identified that the officials were elected and the most thorough outlined how people gained supporters such as by graffiti and paying for shows or bribery.
- b) Candidates were able to list the main buildings used: *curia*, *comitium* and *basilica* as well as saying what each was used for.
- c) Some interesting personal responses were given to this question which provoked a very varied selection of answers. Some showed an understanding of the benefits of democracy and also the unfairness of the system which was in place.

18

- a) Many answers made reference to the tiered seating and the oval shape of the arena. The high wall to keep the spectators safe and the access ways to the seats were also popular choices.
- b) Answers were often very good with most candidates able to describe the riot and its consequences with confidence.
- c) A wealth of opinions as to why the Pompeians may have enjoyed a day at the amphitheatre was produced in response to this question with many referring to sponsors paying for the entertainment and why, as well as discussion of the merits of gladiator and animal fights.

A353/02 Community Life in the Classical World (Higher Tier)

General Comments:

Candidates had the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the selected topic at a level reflecting their ability and this unit differentiated well. There were examples of candidates producing superlative answers going significantly beyond the level expected for GCSE which were a joy to read. Some candidates displayed extraordinarily comprehensive acquaintance with the features of the Stabian Baths or the destruction of Pompeii while others examined in acute detail Lykourgos' reforms of Sparta or the reliability of the evidence about Sparta. There were occasional cases where candidates with observable knowledge failed to gain marks by not answering the specific question asked. In the main, examination technique was competent and in general, it was evident that the candidates had been well prepared for the examination.

In Section A, most candidates answered two questions in accordance with the instructions. In Section B there were very few instances of candidates running out of time and some wrote extensively in response to the essay titles. Candidates in need of extra space to write made good use of the additional pages at the back of the answer book and usually indicated this to the examiner which was a pleasing improvement since 2013.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Option 1 - Sparta

Section A

Question No.

1

- a) This was well answered with most candidates being able to identify what was expected of the *Spartiatas*. Knowledgeable answers discussed training for the army, fighting and dying for Sparta and taking part in the assembly, among other things.
- b) The majority of candidates could describe what the *perioikoi* did although less successful answers failed to link this to why they were less valued i.e. because being a Spartan soldier was much more highly valued.
- c) Candidates tended to have thorough knowledge of what the *helots* did although in order to gain full marks it was necessary to frame this in the context of why the *Spartiatas* needed the *helots* i.e. because they were full time soldiers but needed someone to grow their food.

2

- a) The best answers gave instances of what the *eirenes* did and explained how this furthered the boys' education e.g. punished the boys with whips to instil obedience. Good use was made of the passage by some candidates.
- b) The majority of candidates were able to identify a thorough range of activities which went on in the *agoge*, such as fighting, stealing, climbing and running as well as basic literacy.

- c) Some really interesting personal responses were produced in answer to this question with the most thorough answers identifying several aspects of the education system and discussing whether or not these would be enjoyed by the boys.

3

- a) A plethora of thorough and enthusiastic descriptions of Spartan soldiers was produced in response to this stimulus.
- b) The use of the phalanx was the most popular response with varying levels of detail although weaker answers failed to link it to Thermopylae. There were also interesting discussions of the narrow pass and musical signals.
- d) Personal responses were delivered with pleasing vigour especially regarding the pride that Spartan men may have felt when they joined the Spartan army and fought for Sparta. Membership of the *syssitia* and relationships with wives were also discussed to good effect.

Section B

Question No.

- 4 The nature of the evidence left behind about Sparta by Spartans and other Greeks was well evidenced and discussed. A good many candidates showed extensive knowledge of the ancient writers about Sparta such as Aristophanes, Xenophon, Plutarch and Aristotle. Many discussed Tyrtaios. Some answers included archaeological finds to good effect. Weaker responses tended not to include enough factual information, especially literary sources, for higher level AO1 marks and did not answer as to whether we can gain a reliable understanding, to score highly on AO3 marks. Some candidates had a secure knowledge of facts/sources for a thorough AO1 mark, a grasp of their limitations for AO2 and were able to discuss whether our understanding of the Spartans is reliable for AO3. The best answers repeatedly referred back to the question in order to maintain the focus of the essay.
- 5 The majority of answers identified the main aspects of Lykourgos' contribution to Spartan society. Generally, candidates knew what he is supposed to have achieved for AO1 and a few revealed an in-depth knowledge of the topic with a significant number of candidates accessing the top level for AO1. Some essays described the Spartan system giving a wealth of factual detail but were unable to differentiate what Lykourgos' contribution was for AO2 and therefore whether he contributed to the success of the state, for AO3. The best essays, which scored highly on AOs 1, 2 and 3 gave a thorough analysis of how each aspect of the reforms of Lykourgos contributed to the success of the Spartan state and also suggested some other non Lykourgan aspects and discussed whether or not these contributed more to the success of the Spartans.

Option 2 - Pompeii

Section A

Question No.

6

- a) The most successful answers focused on the natural features that would have encouraged the original settlers to build the town where it was. Fertile soil and the sea and river were the most popular items under discussion although for an answer to be thorough the candidate had to elucidate what these might be used for i.e. growing crops, fishing, drinking/irrigation.

- b) The harbour, sea and river were the most commonly discussed features while some more thoughtful responses discussed access to the *forum* and *macellum* or *thermopolia* and inns.
- c) Many candidates were able to identify the theatre, amphitheatre and baths as attractive features of the town although less successful responses focused mainly on the scenery which is not really a feature of the town. The forum, temples and *thermopolia* were popular choices too.

7

- a) Efficient answers identified that the officials were elected and the most thorough outlined how people gained supporters such as by graffiti and paying for shows or bribery.
- b) Candidates were able to list the main buildings used: *curia*, *comitium* and *basilica* as well as saying what each was used for.
- c) Some interesting personal responses were given to this question which provoked a very varied selection of responses. Many showed an understanding of the benefits of democracy and also the unfairness of the system which was in place.

8

- a) Many answers made reference to the tiered seating and the oval shape of the arena. The high wall to keep the spectators safe and the access ways to the seats were also popular choices.
- b) Answers were often very good with most candidates able to describe the riot and its consequences with confidence.
- c) A wealth of opinions as to why the Pompeians may have enjoyed a day at the amphitheatre was produced in response to this question with many referring to sponsors paying for the entertainment and why, as well as discussion of the merits of gladiator and animal fights.

Section B

Question No.

- 9 There was a broad range in the quality of answers for this question. For AO1, some candidates showed thorough knowledge of the lead up to and the stages of the destruction of Pompeii. AO2 marks were gained by showing understanding of the results of each occurrence with candidates displaying a varying degree of understanding. For AO3, strong candidates were able to discuss the extent to which each feature of the destruction could be interpreted as causing it to be sudden, fast or deadly. Factual knowledge was frequently very good although some candidates simply described the eruption without including the warning signs beforehand.
- 10 For AO1, many candidates showed really extensive knowledge of the Stabian baths in Pompeii. AO2 marks were gained by showing understanding of how the features were used/worked. For AO3, candidates discussed whether or not the feature and its use amounted to a luxury or a practicality. Most answers included the different rooms in the baths and how they were used, the hypocaust system and how it worked and the use of the baths for business purposes. More detailed answers included references to the differences between the men's and women's sections, the decoration inside the baths and the swimming pool.

A354 Culture and Society in the Classical World

General Comments

Once again it was a pleasure to read the vast majority of the scripts. Across a range of topics the candidates had generally engaged very effectively with the subject matter and the questions. Again, a range of topics were studied, the most popular being the Olympic Games, although a noticeable decline in the number of centres offering this has been in evidence as London 2012 fades into memory. The majority of centres once again opted for all their students taking one title, though some continued to allow their students a choice of topic. There seemed to be very little difference in outcome for these two routes.

The administration of the Controlled Assessment went well this year, but centres should be reminded of the need for a word-count to be included with all work. This is essential for ensuring that the marks under AO1 have been appropriately awarded, as the word-limit features in the descriptors for awarding marks. Sources, or quotes from the set text, should not be included in the word-count. There were one or two instances of clerical errors, where the wrong marks had been sent to OCR, as well as a handful of scripts with no candidate or centre number, or no date or total mark included. It was pleasing to note that there were only a very small number of cases where centres had entered for the wrong option: A354/01 means that work should be submitted by the repository (online), whilst A354/02 means that the work will be submitted by post to the moderator.

The standard of marking was generally very high, and it was pleasing to see how many centres fully understood the markscheme, and how carefully it was applied. It is particularly helpful when the comments on the cover-sheet (CCS 336) are clear and detailed, and explain why the marks have been awarded. Likewise, annotations throughout the scripts indicating AO1, AO2 and AO3 are most helpful in enabling us to ensure consistency of standard – some centres have been reminded of the importance of this on their reports.

Candidates had generally planned their work well. Centres should be reminded, however, that the prescribed conditions for control must be applied rigorously. There was at least one centre where the students' work all seemed to follow a very similar plan. They have been notified in the report.

It is always a pleasure to read the work submitted for this unit as so many of the candidates produce high quality work. It is especially pleasing to note when they have had access to a wide range of support materials.

Question Specific Comments

Question No.

1. How important are the gods and fate in Sophocles' *Antigone*? [60]

The work submitted for this question was generally of a very high standard. The themes of gods and fate in *Antigone* are complex ones for GCSE-age students to grasp, and so it was reassuring to see that the candidates had been carefully guided through the play by their teachers. The responses tended to be individual in style, and made good use of the text. There was, generally, secure knowledge of the play. The importance of burial was identified and explained clearly, and most candidates explained the role of the gods although, understandably, not all really got to grips with the 'fate' part of the question.

2. How relevant is Sophocles' *Antigone* for a modern-day audience?

Those who answered this question were mostly able to do so successfully, with a number of apposite parallels being chosen for comment. Sometimes it was felt that these were a little far-fetched, and it took a very good candidate to make the relevant connections in a properly critical manner. One interesting way that was used to approach this question was by studying a range of 20th century stagings of the play, and comparing the relevance of the play in context of the socio-economic events of the time. Overall it was interesting to note that girls' responses tended to focus on gender issues and death, while those of the boys on tyranny and dictatorship.

3. 'No real Athenian woman would ever have behaved as Lysistrata does.' How far do you agree with this statement? [60]

Candidates produced some strong responses to this question. The key was to balance the text from the play with other knowledge of 5th century Athens and particularly the role of the *kyria*. Many ideas expressed in these responses could be traced back, understandably, to Paul Cartledge's *Aristophanes and his Theatre of the Absurd*. Candidates generally successfully balanced a range of factors that agreed with the statement, such as leaving the house, disobeying men, occupying the Acropolis etc., with those which disagreed, for example managing the *oikos*, taking part in a religious ritual, wool-work and so on.

4. 'A modern-day audience has a lot to learn from Aristophanes' play *Lysistrata*.' How far do you agree?

Gender issues such as feminism and sexism were tactfully addressed with some centres drawing examples from a wider cultural perspective than Britain alone. It was lovely to see instances of contemporary media sources used effectively in candidates' work to support their arguments in favour and in opposition of the play's relevance, demonstrating relevant independent research on the part of the candidates and broadening their awareness of contemporary events.

5. 'The success of the ancient Olympic Games depended on organisation and planning.' How far do you agree with this statement? [60]

The questions on the Olympic Games were, once again, the most popular. Answers revolved around the preparation of the site, with some bringing in other factors, too, such as using archaeological evidence to examine the importance of the buildings. Unsurprisingly, many candidates cited Judith Swaddling's book as a source in both the questions on the Olympic Games. In contrast to Question 6, sources tended to be used to a more limited extent, resulting in some generous credit awarded in AO3.

6. 'The Olympic Games were more of a political event than a sporting contest.' How far do you agree with this statement?

A wide range of responses was produced for this question, based on a range of sources including Pindar, Thucydides, Pausanias and Plutarch. Some centres encouraged their candidates to study a wide range of sources ranging from archaeology of the site at Olympia to written evidence from a selection of authors. This resulted in some pleasing work which made terrific use of the sources. Candidates made links between the events and military skills, the sacred treasuries and the finances of the *polis*, and also examined the role of individuals, such as Alcibiades, who used the Olympics as a way of promoting his personal political power.

7. 'Aeneas is too weak-willed to be a real hero.' How far do you agree with this statement?

There were some very good answers to this question, with the best ones being able to understand Virgil's portrayal of a hero and the way this develops from that of Homer. The question proved to be something of a challenge for less able candidates who sometimes lost focus on the question. Once again, it was apparent that centres offering Sophocles and Virgil were able to allow the candidates access to a wide range of sources, although some of the 'Virgil centres' had apparently not studied the text in context.

8. How important are Juno and Venus in Virgil's *Aeneid*?

Candidates generally answered this question well, demonstrating an excellent command of the text, and using the structure of the epic as a structure for their assessment. The goddesses' roles as plot devices were explored fully and their impact evaluated across the two halves of the epic on the whole, although some candidates restricted themselves to the first half. Essays on this question were generally of a very high standard. Candidates had clearly been taught the text well, and drew their evidence from a wide range of incidents from the whole of the *Aeneid* involving Juno and Venus. Many also showed how despite their strong influence on events, their power to effect change is limited, and there was a good understanding of how these episodes related to Fate and the role of Jupiter in the *Aeneid*.

9. How useful are the letters of Pliny in teaching us about Roman households?

Very few centres opted for the Pliny questions.

These were generally of a very high standard, and even the weaker students had a good understanding of what Roman society was like. They all used PSM well (as opposed to some of the other questions, which are sometimes based more on textbooks), e.g. they quoted from Juvenal for comparison. The candidates covered various themes including women, slaves, patron-client relationships, villas and dinner parties. The topics and authors they studied were sometimes similar to the 'Sources for Latin' paper for Latin GCSE.

10. 'Pliny was a weak and unsuccessful governor.' Explain how far you agree with this statement.

None seen

11. How useful are villas as evidence for our understanding of life in Roman Britain?

The Roman Britain questions tended to be answered very well, and quite enthusiastically, one moderator commenting that they were "by far the best pieces of work" that they saw this year.

There were some very good answers to this particular question, often with the use of more than one villa and a proper understanding of how much we can find out about Roman life. Most of the candidates who answered this question had visited at least one villa, and this came through strongly in what they wrote.

12. In your opinion, whose rebellion was the more successful – Boudicca's or Caratacus'?

This was quite a challenging question, such that those who made a genuine effort to look at original sources and come to valid opinions were credited, sometimes more by the moderator than by the teacher. All these essays avoided simply recounting what happened during each rebellion, and this was good to see.

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