

GCSE

Classical Civilisation

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J280**

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

OCR Report to Centres June 2017

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

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

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

General Comments:

It is always a pleasure to read so many scripts where a real enthusiasm and interest in the Classical world is evidenced. The credit for this, of course, should go to all the teachers who work so tirelessly to impart their enthusiasm for this fascinating subject to their candidates. It is good to see the Classical world is still very much alive in many centres cross the UK, and it is especially pleasing to see some new centres for the first time. The vast majority of candidates showed a good clear understanding of the Classical world, and the enthusiastic responses of many candidates were a delight to read. Teachers of this subject are clearly very knowledgeable and skilled in imparting their passion to their students.

Of course, a wide range of responses were read which covered all of the available mark range, but, as in previous years, the responses were overwhelmingly produced to a high standard. As usual the examiners were surprised by the range of knowledge shown by the candidates, and, once again, obscure, unexpected, interesting and sometimes amusing facts made their way into the responses. The markscheme was drawn up anticipating the information that was considered most likely to appear in the answers, but as in past years we were delighted to discover that candidates had been taught all sorts of information that we had not included in the markscheme. Candidates were, of course, credited for accurate information even if it is not listed in the markscheme. As in past years 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.

There was an approximately even number of entries for the two options, Athens and Rome. In Section B, in both papers, there was an even spread of responses to the various choices, but see comments below. It was pleasing to see that most candidates appeared familiar with the style of questions and many clearly constructed their responses based on a knowledge of the particular Assessment Objective for each question. This year's paper generally followed the convention of each Section A question being based on AO1, 2 and 3 consecutively, although there was one exception (1a and 1b, which were AO2 and AO1 respectively). It is important to remember that this structure is not a fixed pattern and could change in next year's paper.

As usual there were a small number of candidates who attempted BOTH the Athens and Rome options. Generally these tend to be weaker candidates who might have been better off sitting the Foundation paper. Only the marks from the option with the best responses were counted, not a combination of the best answers from both. A very small handful of candidates answered all three questions in Section B.

Surprisingly we came across a few candidates who produced excellent well-written responses achieving full marks, and wondered why some of these had not been entered for the Higher tier.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Option 1 Athens

Section A

1. No issues.
2. “It encouraged more people to go into the temples.” was commonly selected.
3. Several candidates ticked “Slaves were served food by their masters” in error.
4. Generally answered well.
5. The most common error was “Priests were all former slaves.”
6. No issues.

Section B

- 7a. Candidates were generally well prepared for this question and were able to list, and explain, several reasons. Some used the illustration sensibly, referring to the procession and/or the creation of the new *peplos* for Athena, but this was not essential and there were plenty of other factors that could have been explained. Many candidates were aware that the festival was an important one to the Athenians as it gave them a chance to ‘show off’ to foreigners in various ways. The importance of pleasing Athena was often stressed, too. Being an AO2 question the markers were looking for explanation.
- 7b. The vast majority of candidates were able to describe a range of events. Some just concentrated on the athletic events, others focused on the music and *rhapsodes*. The best answers referred to both sporting and musical events, with mention of the tribal contests and boat race too.
- 7c. This is a standard GCSE Classical Civilisation AO3 question format, and candidates were clearly well practised. The best answers mentioned both sexes (as this is an AO3 question). The majority of candidates believed men looked forward to the event more than women because of their ability to compete in a wide range of events, but many also mentioned women’s chance to get out and meet others, take part in the procession, and, of course, be involved in the ritual of the *peplos*.
- 8a. Of course it is almost impossible to reconstruct a ‘typical’ Athenian house, so the illustration was carefully constructed to be a composite of the most common images in a range of popular texts and internet sites. Candidates were aware of a range of uses for the Courtyard, ranging from drawing / collecting water, to cooking and weaving. Credit was given to any relevant **activity**, as required by the question. Some candidates did not progress further than a description of the courtyard and its contents; this type of response would not reach the higher bands as it did not answer the question as set.
- 8b. Most candidates were aware that the layout was directly related to the role of men and women – *andron* accessible at the front for easy access by guests to the symposium, *gynaikon* tucked away out of sight, adjacent to servants quarters and/or store room. An AO2 question like this requires the candidate to explain their points, so credit is awarded for the explanation rather than the description. Weaker candidates came up with rather more generalised descriptions of a house.
- 8c. Being an AO3 question the key here is the word ‘important’. Many candidates progressed no further than a description of the two rooms, or the activities linked to them, but to reach the higher Bands a discussion of the relative importance of each room was necessary: perhaps the *andron* for arranging *symposia* where new business deals might help the *oikos*, or the *gynaikon* because it preserved the reputation of the wife, or (commonly stated) brought cash into the *oikos* through production of cloth.

- 9a. In this AO1 question candidates were asked to describe Athena's responsibilities and powers. There were a number of candidates who thought they were answering a similar, but different, question and described how they knew that the picture showed Athena. References to the various accessories worn or carried by the goddess were not required. Perhaps a good example to use to remind next year's candidates to read the question very carefully. Some candidates described Athena's mythology and so missed the point of the question. However, most candidates were aware of her links to warfare, wisdom, Athens and so on.
- 9b. Being an AO2 question the focus is on the explanation. Candidates approached this question from a range of angles – some of the stronger responses explained how female gods were more appropriate for certain aspects of life linked to women (ie Hera and childbirth, Demeter and fertility and so on), other candidates would list the deities and their responsibilities but without much explanation of the link. Athena was cited regularly, as expected, as patron of Athens. Despite the range of responses credit was awarded where candidates explained their (relevant) ideas.
- 9c. A typical AO3 question which invites a two-sided response. The vast majority of candidates went straight for the heart of this question and would outline the importance of Zeus, and then balance it with another god who was specifically important to the Athenians – invariably Poseidon (sea for trade and travel) and/or Dionysos (wine, *symposia*, the *Dionysia*). Many candidates were able to link Zeus to guest friendship, which was pleasing to see as it is quite a sophisticated link at this level.

Option 2 Rome

Section A

10. No issues.
11. No issues.
12. Some candidates presumed the *cena* was only for men.
13. No issues.
14. No issues.
15. Some candidates mistakenly ticked that the altar was "inside the temple, at the east end."

Section B

- 16a. As expected a wide range of gladiators were mentioned here, usually the *myrmillo*, Samnite, Thracian, *retiarius* and *bestiarius*, but there were many others mentioned too. The illustration was variously identified as (usually) a Samnite or a *myrmillo*, but that was not the question. Weaker responses described the equipment in the picture.
- 16b. A wide range of ideas were demonstrated here, and, as long as they were explained, were credited. Flooding the colosseum, trapdoors, matching of gladiators, deciding whether a gladiator lived or died, exotic animals and chariots were all mentioned regularly. Inevitably some weaker candidates described scenes from Hollywood's Gladiator.
- 16c. Hollywood cropped up again here too, as Ben Hur's training as a gladiator was mentioned from time to time by weaker candidates. However there was generally a very pleasing level of knowledge demonstrated here about the role of the *lanista* and his school. The benefits of free board and lodging were weighed up against the danger of the job very carefully. Many candidates did not forget that gladiators were slaves and so their career could be seen as having certain benefits denied to their peers – the chance for fame and freedom, perhaps, but few candidates forgot that this was balanced by a very real danger of death.
- 17a. A straightforward AO1 question which required the candidate to describe using their own knowledge. This was generally answered very well, although, inevitably, we did see a

handful of careful descriptions of the set in Ben Hur from one or two of the weakest candidates.

- 17b. Inevitably some candidates just described the activities rather than explained why Romans found it a 'good day out'. But there was no shortage of very good responses which were packed full of relevant explanations.
- 17c. It is clear that candidates have been well prepared for these AO3 questions as the vast majority of them address the question sensibly. The best responses would manage to compare the experience of both men and women at the circus maximus. There were some interesting observations about which sex might have enjoyed the mixed seating arrangements the most and there was a common presumption that men enjoyed gambling more than women, which is a presumption open to debate, of course.
- 18a. The identification of this image as Diana was usual, but, surprisingly, not always the case. Juno was mentioned a number of times. Most candidates were confident in their knowledge of this god, although weaker candidates tended to describe the image, noting her bow and arrows and short dress.
- 18b. Being an AO2 question the focus is on the explanation. Candidates approached this question from a range of angles – some of the stronger responses explained how female gods were more appropriate for certain aspects of life linked to women (ie Juno and childbirth, Ceres and fertility and so on), other candidates would list the deities and their responsibilities but without much explanation of the link. Despite the range of responses credit was awarded where candidates explained their (relevant) ideas.
- 18c. A typical AO3 question which invites a two-sided response. The vast majority of candidates went straight for the heart of this question and would outline the importance of Jupiter as king of the gods, and then balance it with another god who was specifically important to the Romans – invariably Neptune (sea for trade and travel) and/or Mars (war).

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

General Comments:

It is always a pleasure to read so many scripts where a real enthusiasm and interest in the Classical world is evidenced. The credit for this, of course, should go to all the teachers who work so tirelessly to impart their enthusiasm for this fascinating subject to their candidates. It is good to see the Classical world is still very much alive in many centres cross the UK, and it is especially pleasing to see some new centres for the first time. The vast majority of candidates showed a good clear understanding of the Classical world, and the enthusiastic responses of many candidates were a delight to read. Teachers of this subject are clearly very knowledgeable and skilled in imparting their passion to their students.

Of course, a wide range of responses were read which covered all of the available mark range, but, as in previous years, the responses were overwhelmingly produced to a high standard. As usual the examiners were surprised by the range of knowledge shown by the candidates, and, once again, obscure, unexpected, interesting and sometimes amusing facts made their way into the responses. The markscheme was drawn up anticipating the information that was considered most likely to appear in the answers, but as in past years we were delighted to discover that candidates had been taught all sorts of information that we had not included in the markscheme. Candidates were, of course, credited for accurate information even if it is not listed in the markscheme. As in past years 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.

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. It was pleasing to see that most candidates appeared familiar with the style of questions and many clearly constructed their responses based on a knowledge of the particular Assessment Objective for each question. This year's paper generally followed the convention of each Section A question being based on AO1, 2 and 3 consecutively, although there was one exception (1a and 1b, which were AO2 and AO1 respectively). It is important to remember that this structure is not a fixed pattern and could change in next year's paper.

As usual there were a small number of candidates who attempted BOTH the Athens and Rome options. Generally these tend to be weaker candidates who might have been better off sitting the Foundation paper. Only the marks from the option with the best responses were counted, not a combination of the best answers from both. A very small handful of candidates answered all three questions in Section A in their chosen topic, and, inevitably, this impacted negatively on their Section B question.

Frustratingly there were a surprising number of candidates who had been given extra answer booklets by the invigilator without having used the extra pages supplied in their question paper. I have commented on this repeatedly over the last few years. This suggests that the candidates had not been made fully aware of the existence of these extra pages (pages 26-28). It would be very helpful to the markers 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. Please remind your invigilators of the existence of these extra pages within the standard OCR response booklet, and to use these in preference to the 'additional sheets'.

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.

Sadly we came across a few candidates who had struggled with the Higher tier and would have been much better suited to the Foundation tier. The markers are sometimes frustrated when marking the scripts of the weakest candidates in the Higher tier, as they can see that the candidate might have stood a better chance of an appropriate grade had they been entered for the Foundation tier. Of course I understand that there is pressure from parents, Leadership Teams and even the candidates themselves, but please consider the tiering very carefully with next year's candidates to ensure their best possible chance of a grade to reward their hard work.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Option 1 Athens

- 1a. Candidates were generally well prepared for this question and were able to list, and explain, several reasons. Some used the illustration sensibly, referring to the procession and/or the creation of the new *peplos* for Athena, but this was not essential and there were plenty of other factors that could have been explained. Many candidates were aware that the festival was an important one to the Athenians as it gave them a chance to 'show off' to foreigners in various ways. The importance of pleasing Athena was often stressed, too. Being an AO2 question the markers were looking for explanation.
- 1b. The vast majority of candidates were able to describe a range of events. Some just concentrated on the athletic events, others focused on the music and *rhapsodes*. The best answers referred to both sporting and musical events, with mention of the tribal contests and boat race too.
- 1c. This is a standard GCSE Classical Civilisation AO3 question format, and candidates were clearly well practised. The best answers mentioned both sexes (as this is an AO3 question). The majority of candidates believed men looked forward to the event more than women because of their ability to compete in a wide range of events, but many also mentioned women's chance to get out and meet others, take part in the procession, and, of course, be involved in the ritual of the *peplos*.
- 2a. Of course it is almost impossible to reconstruct a 'typical' Athenian house, so the illustration was carefully constructed to be a composite of the most common images in a range of popular texts and internet sites. Candidates were aware of a range of uses for the Courtyard, ranging from drawing / collecting water, to cooking and weaving. Credit was given to any relevant **activity**, as required by the question. Some candidates did not progress further than a description of the courtyard and its contents; this type of response would not reach the higher bands as it did not answer the question as set.
- 2b. Most candidates were aware that the layout was directly related to the role of men and women – *andron* accessible at the front for easy access by guests to the symposium, *gynaikon* tucked away out of sight, adjacent to servants quarters and/or store room. An AO2 question like this requires the candidate to explain their points, so credit is awarded for the explanation rather than the description. Weaker candidates came up with rather more generalised descriptions of a house.
- 2c. Being an AO3 question the key here is the word 'important'. Many candidates progressed no further than a description of the two rooms, or the activities linked to them, but to reach the higher Bands a discussion of the relative importance of each room was necessary:

perhaps the *andron* for arranging *symposia* where new business deals might help the *oikos*, or the *gynaikon* because it preserved the reputation of the wife, or (commonly stated) brought cash into the *oikos* through production of cloth.

- 3a. In this AO1 question candidates were asked to describe Athena's responsibilities and powers. There were a number of candidates who thought they were answering a similar, but different, question and described how they knew that the picture showed Athena. References to the various accessories worn or carried by the goddess were not required. Perhaps a good example to use to remind next year's candidates to read the question very carefully. Some candidates described Athena's mythology and so missed the point of the question. However, most candidates were aware of her links to warfare, wisdom, Athens and so on.
- 3b. Being an AO2 question the focus is on the explanation. Candidates approached this question from a range of angles – some of the stronger responses explained how female gods were more appropriate for certain aspects of life linked to women (ie Hera and childbirth, Demeter and fertility and so on), other candidates would list the deities and their responsibilities but without much explanation of the link. Athena was cited regularly, as expected, as patron of Athens. Despite the range of responses credit was awarded where candidates explained their (relevant) ideas.
- 3c. A typical AO3 question which invites a two-sided response. The vast majority of candidates went straight for the heart of this question and would outline the importance of Zeus, and then balance it with another god who was specifically important to the Athenians – invariably Poseidon (sea for trade and travel) and/or Dionysos (wine, *symposia*, the *Dionysia*). Many candidates were able to link Zeus to guest friendship, which was pleasing to see as it is quite a sophisticated link at this level.
4. This was by far the most popular of the essays this year. Candidates were generally well-prepared and showed a wide range of knowledge, and were able to address all three AO's by producing a two-sided argument. A common slip was to write about the comparative importance of the two sexes in Athens, rather than specifically the family, as stated in the question. Of course there were plenty of factors in Athenian life that are relevant to family life, but unless the link was made back to the family some candidates ran the risk of producing less relevant responses. Most candidates followed the hints of the bullet points and included slaves in their discussion.
5. A very small number of candidates opted for this question. The responses tended to list the various jobs that slaves did in Athens, but only a few candidates went further and focused on the question of status, as specifically mentioned in the question. Many of these responses were very good, linking ownership of slaves to a display of wealth and power by individual owners or the state. Weaker candidates tended to answer a slightly different question and describe the usefulness of slaves, suggesting this was the only reason that they were owned.

Option 2 Rome

- 6a. As expected a wide range of gladiators were mentioned here, usually the *myrmillo*, Samnite, Thracian, *retiarius* and *bestiarius*, but there were many others mentioned too. The illustration was variously identified as (usually) a Samnite or a *myrmillo*, but that was not the question. Weaker responses described the equipment in the picture. Stronger responses specified style of weapon (eg 'helmet with fish crest', not just 'helmet'; 'curved rectangular shield' not just 'shield' etcetera). Some weaker responses tended to mention items randomly without associating with named gladiators.

- 6b. A wide range of ideas were demonstrated here, and, as long as they were explained, were credited. Flooding the Colosseum, trapdoors, matching of gladiators, deciding whether a gladiator lived or died, exotic animals and chariots were all mentioned regularly. Inevitably some weaker candidates described scenes from Hollywood's Gladiator. Some candidates drifted away from the fights themselves to other aspects of the day at the Colosseum such as animal tricks. There were some instances of confusing the Colosseum with the Circus.
- 6c. Hollywood cropped up again here too, as Ben Hur's training as a gladiator was mentioned from time to time by weaker candidates. However there was generally a very pleasing level of knowledge demonstrated here about the role of the *lanista* and his school. The benefits of free board and lodging were weighed up against the danger of the job very carefully. Many candidates did not forget that gladiators were slaves and so their career could be seen as having certain benefits denied to their peers – the chance for fame and freedom, perhaps, but few candidates forgot that this was balanced by a very real danger of death.
- 7a. A straightforward AO1 question which required the candidate to describe using their own knowledge. This was generally answered very well, although, inevitably, we did see a handful of careful descriptions of the set in Ben Hur from one or two of the weakest candidates. Some candidates misread the question as 'what could be seen FROM there', and so included the *pulvinar* and *carceres*.
- 7b. Inevitably some candidates just described the activities rather than explained why Romans found it a 'good day out'. But there was no shortage of very good responses which were packed full of relevant explanations. A very small number of candidates wrote about things linked to a modern circus.
- 7c. It is clear that candidates have been well prepared for these AO3 questions as the vast majority of them address the question sensibly. The best responses would manage to compare the experience of both men and women at the circus maximus. There were some interesting observations about which sex might have enjoyed the mixed seating arrangements the most and there was a common presumption that men enjoyed gambling more than women, which is a presumption open to debate, of course.
- 8a. The identification of this image as Diana was usual, but, surprisingly, not always the case. Juno was mentioned a number of times, as was Ceres. Most candidates were confident in their knowledge of this god, although weaker candidates tended to describe the image, noting her bow and arrows and short dress.
- 8b. Being an AO2 question the focus is on the explanation. Candidates approached this question from a range of angles – some of the stronger responses explained how female gods were more appropriate for certain aspects of life linked to women (ie Juno and childbirth, Ceres and fertility and so on), other candidates would list the deities and their responsibilities but without much explanation of the link. Despite the range of responses credit was awarded where candidates explained their (relevant) ideas.
- 8c. A typical AO3 question which invites a two-sided response. The vast majority of candidates went straight for the heart of this question and would outline the importance of Jupiter as king of the gods, and then balance it with another god who was specifically important to the Romans – invariably Neptune (sea for trade and travel) and/or Mars (war).
9. Candidates were generally well-prepared and showed a wide range of knowledge, and were able to address all three AO's by producing a two-sided argument. A common slip was to write about the comparative importance of the two sexes in Rome, rather than specifically the family, as stated in the question. Of course there were plenty of factors in Roman life that are relevant to family life, but unless the link was made back to the family

some candidates ran the risk of producing less relevant responses. Most candidates followed the hints of the bullet points and included slaves in their discussion.

10. Weaker responses tended to list the various jobs that slaves did in Rome without really focusing on the question of status, as specifically mentioned in the question. However most candidates responded sensibly to the question and linked ownership of slaves to a display of wealth and power by individual owners, whether in the role of accompanying their owner to the baths or fighting in the arena as gladiators, and a wide range of other activities. Weaker candidates tended to answer a slightly different question and describe the usefulness of slaves, suggesting this was the only reason that they were owned. Other responses went beyond status versus usefulness and debated factors including the desire for female companionship, and the desire to have power over people and enjoy sadistic impulses (with lampreys!)

A352/01 Epic and Myth (Foundation Tier)

General Comments:

Centres and candidates are to be commended for their hard work in preparing for the examination. Many candidates were able to show excellent knowledge, with some of the answers to the five mark questions rivalling the best answers of those who did the same question on the Higher Tier. Many wrote with clarity and passion in these answers. Weaker responses often did not know the text adequately, or else gave facts that were true, but not relevant to the question. This was particularly true when answering questions about Polyphemus.

After a decrease in previous years of rubric infringements, these seemed to creep back in this year, particularly on the multiple choice questions. A significant number of candidates ticked too many responses, especially it seemed in question 8. Ticking one too many option in this question meant candidates could only score 1 out of 2, assuming that they had ticked both correct options and one wrong one in addition. Other candidates regularly crossed out answers, reticked previously crossed out boxes, or tried to turn ticks into crosses. This sometimes led to unclear answers. Candidates are advised to cross out the answer entirely and place a tick next to the boxes if they wish to make a change.

As has been the case in previous years, the multiple choices question proved easier for candidates. Many scored highly on these, only to come unstuck on the later questions by not writing much, with answers often being 3 or 4 lines. Candidates in particular found a) and c) questions challenging. They should ideally aim for at least three different points in these, backed up with evidence, but often there was only one.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.

- 1) This question was quite well answered, with a good number of candidates getting full marks. Nausicaa was the best recalled wrong answer, although Calypso did make frequent appearances. Circe and Hermes were also often muddled.
- 2) Whilst some candidates did achieve full marks, this question proved more challenging. Many candidates felt Odysseus faced Scylla for a second time and that Hermes helped him.
- 3) This question proved a very good discriminator; those doing well elsewhere on the paper nearly always got full marks, while those who found other aspects tricky often got only 1 or 0 marks. Nausicaa was the best done of the three options. It was a surprise that Odysseus was not more widely recognised, bearing in mind the extent of his sufferings.
- 4) Most candidates could recall that Odysseus loved Penelope more than Calypso, but b) was less well done, with many thinking Elpenor forgot instructions. Some felt in c) that Polyphemus had not asked for help. Most candidates got d) correct, but a) and b) received considerable support.
- 5) This was the best done question on the paper. There were very few candidates who did not achieve at least 3 marks. All the incorrect options received a small amount of support.

- 6) The quality of answers for this question varied considerably; many achieved full marks, but some achieved 0. As expected, Antiphates caused many candidates problems, but Eurylochus also proved challenging. The final three options were generally done better. Weaker responses gave male characters in response to boxes beginning “she” and vice versa, showing unfamiliarity with key characters.
- 7) This question provided fewer full mark answers than any other of the Homer questions in Section A. All the statements applied to at least one goddess, and hence attracted considerable support. The most popular wrong answers were that the goddesses lived on their own and were unwilling to let Odysseus go. This might suggest that the story about Circe was not known as well as the story about Calypso. Most did remember that he slept with both and that they offered good hospitality.
- 8) This type of question continues to cause candidates problems. The majority achieved only one mark. Odysseus was often seen as confident and a sizeable number felt he was hospitable, despite the lack of evidence in the passage.
- 9(a) Candidates offered a vast array of ideas in answer to this question. The most successful approach was to pick a phrase from the simile and state how it corresponded to Odysseus’ current predicament, such as the hunger of the lion echoing the hunger of Odysseus who had struggled for 2 days after the storm. Weaker responses simply stated that Odysseus was naked like the lion or that he and the lion both had fear in their eyes, without expressing why. Many candidates showed a lack of understanding of the context of the simile coming after the storm as they did not compare Odysseus to a weak, famished lion, but compared him to a proud, confident and regal one, seemingly reading the question as a comparison between Odysseus and “a lion” rather than “the lion”. Candidates were very reluctant to argue that certain elements did not match, such as the intentions of both, and missed the opportunity to give a more balanced answer.
- 9(b) Most candidates answered this question quite well although the vast majority gave extensive details about the storm without really looking at what the question required; the two key elements of why Odysseus was naked and why he slept in bushes were very often not discussed in enough depth. In particular, very few candidates discussed Odysseus’ sleeping in pile of leaves to avoid exposure to the cold and a sizeable number thought his clothes were ripped off by the ferocity of the storm. Some spent so long discussing Odysseus’ departure from Ogygia that how he ended up on dry land was often omitted.
- 9(c) Most candidates were able to make sensible comments with evidence on Nausicaa’s generosity and her bravery. Strong answers went even further in suggesting that while she should be credited for the latter, she had little control over her decision which was made by Athene. The best answers also talked about her desire to preserve her own reputation, or noted that her kindness was all the more commendable as the rest of her people were generally xenophobic. Her control of her maids and accomplishment of typical female activities were very rarely mentioned. Some candidates mentioned that she did not run when faced with Odysseus, but did not use this information to make a point.
- 10(a) Candidates often referred to Polyphemus’ strength in discussing the size of the door and commented on his caring nature with his animals, although some referred simply to his size. His frightening nature, organisational skills and intelligence in being able to make cheese also were common ideas. Only occasionally did candidates suggest that he is uncivilised due to drinking milk, though just as many saw it as a sign of being civilised. Weaker responses often made bland statements about him being methodical, quoting the word “methodically” in the answer, but on the whole this question was very well answered.
- 10(b) This question proved a fine discriminator of ability. Many candidates struggled to distinguish between Polyphemus and the Cyclopes, using the pronoun “he” throughout.

Others simply transferred everything that Polyphemus did to the rest of the Cyclopes; hence they all ate cheese and humans and all were excellent farmers. Such answers usually struggled to show better than limited knowledge. Better answers talked about them living in caves, being anti-social, not having assemblies and having naturally fertile land. However there were lots of errors such as the Cyclopes being friendly to each other as they were willing to help Polyphemus.

- 10(c) Many candidates criticised Odysseus for his escape plan, suggesting that he was excessively violent and cruel to take the animals and wrong to blind Polyphemus. Others criticised him for lying about his name. These were all felt to be unfair criticisms as Odysseus had little other option. Others also were felt overly harsh in criticising him for not escaping sooner or for giving a false name. All these answers show a lack of understanding of the predicament. Most answers did focus on the key moments of arrival and departure, but many fixated on the actual plan. The best answers discussed the ignoring of his own gut feelings at the start and wishes of his men both on arrival and on departure.
- 11(a) This question was reasonably well answered, but many candidates struggled to do more than pick out a few phrases which they said indicated excitement or used vague phrases like “vivid imagery”. Many responses mentioned either the size or strength of the Laestrygonians, with appropriate references to the passage. The simile of the fish, when discussed, was usually handled well, but there was otherwise limited discussion of literary techniques, although a few raised an interesting point about personification in “frowning cliffs” reflecting the severity of the situation. Few discussed the introduction of Circe at the end, but there were some very perceptive comments on it giving a taste of things to come.
- 11(b) Weaker responses muddled up the chronology of events or Odysseus’ experiences with those of the first party to visit Circe in this question: there were repeated mentions of Odysseus seeing wild animals at Circe’s palace or hearing her singing, while others talked of Odysseus’ argument with Eurylochus. Other errors centred on a DVD that candidates had seen, and as a result Odysseus was sometimes described as climbing a cliff. Most candidates talked about Hermes and moly, although often there was far too much detail of Hermes’ advice as the question asked what Odysseus saw and did rather than what he heard. Pleasingly, many referred to Odysseus seeing smoke, and some gave very impressive accounts of the killing and carrying of the stag.
- 11(c) There were some excellent responses seen to this question, characterised by a very good understanding of what made the Circe story interesting. The use of magic and the development of character were often discussed. Most comments on the Laestrygonians discussed the brevity of the story and Odysseus’ flight. Many noted the lack of characterisation and direct speech in the Laestrygonian passage. In weaker responses candidates argued needlessly that the Laestrygonian story was interesting or else said little or nothing about the episode. If asked to compare two things, candidates should devote roughly equal space to both and not simply narrate events.

Questions 12-19

Too few responses were seen to be able to give comments.

- 20(a) This question was generally answered well. Most candidates wrote about Apollo’s desperation and lust for Daphne, although weaker responses simply suggested that he loved her. Many saw the mention of his powers as a sign of arrogance. Most felt that he was genuine throughout and had no ulterior motive in the request for her to slow down. There was good discussion of the phrase “impetuous girl”, with candidates sometimes sensing a note of frustration or anger.
- 20(b) Virtually all candidates were able to show at least some knowledge of the story. There was widespread discussion of Cupid’s role and very good recall of his argument with Apollo,

although many missed out the fact that the quarrel arose out of the killing of Python. The best answers correctly identified the materials for both arrows; Cupid's lead arrow was commonly omitted. There was also an error in that many candidates talked about this arrow causing hatred rather than rejection.

- 20(c) The key to answering this question well was to consider the outcome from a wide perspective, and to reflect on what happiness and sadness meant in this context. Most were able to answer the question well and talked of the ending of Daphne's life, but preservation of her virginity. Apollo also was discussed, with most realising that he did possess Daphne in her new form at the end. Some felt she would not have been happy at this, forgetting that she did give her consent. There was some knowledge of Apollo's connection with the laurel, but often there were errors in what the laurel was used for. An interesting approach of some candidates was to consider the episode from Peneus' point of view; this usually led to discussion of the breaking of a close bond and the lack of grandchildren.
- 21(a) There were some fine responses to this question. The best of these referred appropriately to literary techniques such as the use of rhetorical questions or the epic catalogue, although weaker responses did not show this depth of understanding. Such responses typically quoted a word or two and said that this suggested speed or excitement, or that the passage was tense as we wondered what would happen next. A reasonable proportion of candidates discussed the naming of the dogs, mentioning the violence of the name or the creation of a list, although many seemed to misread the passage and felt Actaeon called out their names.
- 21(b) Virtually all candidates knew that Actaeon had seen Diana naked and gave good detail of the events leading up to the encounter, although a common omission was the fact that Actaeon had been hunting with his friends. The location of the encounter was variously described as a lake, stream, or even bath. Candidates often struggled to recall what happened after he saw her: some recalled that her maids tried to obscure her, but did not mention how; most forgot that she flung water at him and cursed him and then did not describe the actual transformation beyond the fact he turned into a stag. A few candidates incorrectly named the animal into which he turned.
- 21(c) Most candidates discussed both stories, but weaker responses either gave no mention of the Calydonian Boar, or else muddled up the myth. When discussing this, the best answers recalled that Diana alone had been left out of the worship, with weaker ones just writing that she had not been worshipped. Most candidates talked about the humiliation in being seen naked by Actaeon, but many omitted the fact that she was the goddess of virginity and how she in particular would have been offended. The best answers recalled that she changed him into a deer so that he couldn't tell what he had seen.
- 22(a) This question proved quite challenging for some candidates. There was mention of the simile of the pan pipes by many, but candidates found they had little to say about it. As ever, there were references to detailed description and how the simile helped build a picture in the mind. The characterisation of Icarus and his ominous meddling with the wax proved more fruitful for discussion.
- 22(b) This question was generally well answered, but there were several recurrent factual errors or omissions. Most candidates knew that Daedalus was jealous of his nephew and why, and many correctly identified at least one of his inventions. However things then proved a little more challenging. Many answers talked about him being thrown off a cliff or mountain, and several did not mention which goddess changed him, or else chose the wrong goddess. The reason he was changed into a partridge was very often missed out.

22(c) Many candidates were able to recall stories where young people suffered and showed detailed knowledge, but were unable to link the suffering with aspects of their youth which was often ignored. The commonest characters under the microscope were Daphne and Icarus, perhaps as other questions on the paper referred to them. Icarus was often discussed and some candidates talked about him ignoring instructions, but did not reflect that young people often ignore their parents or at least seem to have selective hearing! The objects of lust of the gods were also discussed, but very few candidates thought to say younger people are often regarded as more beautiful. In short, many candidates answered this as if the question were “describe how young people suffered”.

A352/02 Epic and Myth (Higher Tier)

General Comments:

It was again a pleasure to have read so many scripts of candidates who had really engaged with the text that they had studied. Most candidates had a strong grasp of both the events of the text and the values of the classical world. They were usually able to put forward their views clearly and back them up with suitable references to the text. This could only have been possible thanks to the knowledge and industry of their teachers. Many candidates were able to write at considerable length, showing a tremendous eye for detail and excellent analytical skills.

Homer was again the more popular choice of topic, but a considerable number of centres chose to answer questions on Ovid. There was no discernible difference in the standard of answers seen for each topic. Virtually every candidate followed the rubric and there seemed to be very few unfinished questions.

Many candidates are still failing to realise that an extra page is provided for answers at the back of the booklet. Over half of such candidates had not used the extra page before asking for a booklet. Often this contained just a few words. Other candidates did not indicate in the main booklet that the answer continued in an extra space, and some wrote extra information for Homer answers in the Ovid essay space. Examiners will always look through the whole booklet to check for extra answers, but candidates should clearly complete answers in the most suitable place. As ever some candidates squashed in extra information below the lines, which often made answers harder to read.

There were very few legibility issues in scripts as such candidates often type answers now. Many candidates clearly found typing difficult to judge by the number of wrong letters pressed and did not check over their work. In general, the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar seems to have improved a little over the years, although the words “veil” and “moly” as well as the names of Polyphemus and Ithaca caused many problems.

Candidates found the Section A questions more straightforward than Section B. In (a) questions, those questions asking for opinions on a character were generally answered a little better than those asking about literary style. The latter answers were sometimes generalised or repetitive. Most candidates gave precise references to the passages to back up ideas. The (b) questions were generally very well done, although 2b caused lots of problems with candidates basing their answer on Polyphemus alone; questions do need to be read very carefully. A similar issue occurred in 3b, where examiners were looking principally for what Odysseus said and did, rather than what he was told. In (c) questions, the most successful answers were ones that used knowledge to answer the question set; some responses argued against the statement, suggesting for example in 2(c) that Odysseus should be praised; again, a more careful reading of the question should eliminate such errors.

Some of the essays that were marked were a joy to read, showing a depth of understanding and very precise recall of the text. Many essays were still over-narrating the plot, or tended to have a rather repetitive argument. This was particularly evident in q5, where candidates often spent too long stating what the gods did, and much less time on why they are interesting. In some essays candidates were reluctant to give a two sided essay. This was especially true of q5 and q1. A strong conclusion, and one which does not merely repeat ideas, is also key to good AO3 marks.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Question No.

- 1(a) Candidates offered a vast array of ideas in answer to this question. The most successful approach was to pick a phrase from the simile and state how it corresponded to Odysseus' current predicament, such as the hunger of the lion echoing the hunger of Odysseus who had struggled for 2 days after the storm. Weaker responses simply stated that Odysseus was naked like the lion or that he and the lion both had fear in their eyes, without expressing why. Many candidates showed a lack of understanding of the context of the simile coming after the storm as they did not compare Odysseus to a weak, famished lion, but compared him to a proud, confident and regal one, seemingly reading the question as a comparison between Odysseus and "a lion" rather than "the lion". Candidates were very reluctant to argue that certain elements did not match, such as the intentions of both, and missed the opportunity to give a more balanced answer.
- 1(b) Most candidates answered this question quite well although the vast majority gave extensive details about the storm without really looking at what the question required; the two key elements of why Odysseus was naked and why he slept in bushes were very often not discussed in enough depth. In particular, very few candidates discussed Odysseus' sleeping in pile of leaves to avoid exposure to the cold and a sizeable number thought his clothes were ripped off by the ferocity of the storm. Some spent so long discussing Odysseus' departure from Ogygia that how he ended up on dry land was often omitted.
- 1(c) Most candidates were able to make sensible comments with evidence on Nausicaa's generosity and her bravery. Strong answers went even further in suggesting that while she should be credited for the latter, she had little control over her decision which was made by Athene. The best answers also talked about her desire to preserve her own reputation, or noted that her kindness was all the more commendable as the rest of her people were generally xenophobic. Her control of her maids and accomplishment of typical female activities were very rarely mentioned. Some candidates mentioned that she did not run when faced with Odysseus, but did not use this information to make a point.
- 2(a) Candidates often referred to Polyphemus' strength in discussing the size of the door and commented on his caring nature with his animals, although some referred simply to his size. His frightening nature, organisational skills and intelligence in being able to make cheese also were common ideas. Only occasionally did candidates suggest that he is uncivilised due to drinking milk, though just as many saw it as a sign of being civilised. Weaker responses often made bland statements about him being methodical, quoting the word "methodically" in the answer, but on the whole this question was very well answered.
- 2(b) This question proved a fine discriminator of ability. Many candidates struggled to distinguish between Polyphemus and the Cyclopes, using the pronoun "he" throughout. Others simply transferred everything that Polyphemus did to the rest of the Cyclopes; hence they all ate cheese and humans and all were excellent farmers. Such answers usually struggled to show better than limited knowledge. Better answers talked about them living in caves, being anti-social, not having assemblies and having naturally fertile land. However there were lots of errors such as the Cyclops being friendly to each other as they were willing to help Polyphemus.
- 2(c) Many candidates criticised Odysseus for his escape plan, suggesting that he was excessively violent and cruel to take the animals and wrong to blind Polyphemus. Others criticised him for lying about his name. These were all felt to be unfair criticisms as Odysseus had little other option. Others also were felt overly harsh in criticising him for not escaping sooner or for giving a false name. All these answers show a lack of understanding of the predicament. Most answers did focus on the key moments of arrival

and departure, but many fixated on the actual plan. The best answers discussed the ignoring of his own gut feelings at the start and wishes of his men both on arrival and on departure.

- 3(a) This question was reasonably well answered, but many candidates struggled to do more than pick out a few phrases which they said indicated excitement or used vague phrases like “vivid imagery”. Many responses mentioned either the size or strength of the Laestrygonians, with appropriate references to the passage. The simile of the fish, when discussed, was usually handled well, but there was otherwise limited discussion of literary techniques, although a few raised an interesting point about personification in “frowning cliffs” reflecting the severity of the situation. Few discussed the introduction of Circe at the end, but there were some very perceptive comments on it giving a taste of things to come.
- 3(b) Weaker responses muddled up the chronology of events or Odysseus’ experiences with those of the first party to visit Circe in this question: there were repeated mentions of Odysseus seeing wild animals at Circe’s palace or hearing her singing, while others talked of Odysseus’ argument with Eurylochus. Other errors centred on a DVD that candidates had seen, and as a result Odysseus was sometimes described as climbing a cliff. Most candidates talked about Hermes and moly, although often there was far too much detail of Hermes’ advice as the question asked what Odysseus saw and did rather than what he heard. Pleasingly, many referred to Odysseus seeing smoke, and some gave very impressive accounts of the killing and carrying of the stag.
- 3(c) There were some excellent responses seen to this question, characterised by a very good understanding of what made the Circe story interesting. The use of magic and the development of character were often discussed. Most comments on the Laestrygonians discussed the brevity of the story and Odysseus’ flight. Many noted the lack of characterisation and direct speech in the Laestrygonian passage. In weaker responses candidates argued needlessly that the Laestrygonian story was interesting or else said little or nothing about the episode. If asked to compare two things, candidates should devote roughly equal space to both and not simply narrate events.
- 4) There were some excellent answers seen to this question. Candidates used a wide variety of stories to highlight Odysseus’ plans, although certain stories provided rich pickings. However many considered anything Odysseus did to have been a plan with no real thought about what was instinct and what carefully thought out.

The story of Polyphemus appeared in virtually all answers, with many candidates giving superb detail to show how the different elements of the plan fitted together. The decision to moor separately at the harbour of the Laestrygonians was also commonly discussed.

Many candidates twisted the question in using these and other stories to show how Odysseus made unwise plans. These included occasions when he did not listen to his men or did not share information with them. However this was not felt to be a valid approach to the question, and many candidates spent far too long arguing that his planning was faulty. Some candidates also made heavy use of the comprehension passages; using other pieces of evidence was more likely to show a sound or thorough knowledge.

After discussing Odysseus’ plans, most candidates discussed the help he received from the gods. There was some excellent detail here, although often the evaluation became rather repetitive in stating that he would have died numerous times without this help. Many candidates then went on to discuss the help he got from other people like the Phaeacians. Quite a number of essays at this stage turned into a help/hinder answer, with candidates seemingly regurgitating a planned essay.

Most responses listed characters and discussed each in turn. A more original, and often more successful, approach was to look at themes that ran across stories. Some referred to Odysseus' luck on finding a fig tree near Charybdis. There was also some discussion of how the concept of *xenia* aided him in several stories or occasions where his looks or story-telling helped him. Some candidates were perceptive in stating that Odysseus seemed fated to survive, but such ideas were relatively rare.

- 5) Many responses to this question followed the same approach, examining each divine figure separately, before moving on to human characters, monsters or both. This often led to rather disjointed essays. It seemed as if examiners were at times reading answers to the question "What interests you about each character of the Odyssey?" In such responses evaluation tended to be rather simplistic, such as saying that Athene was interesting as she helped Odysseus survive, whereas Poseidon wanted to kill him, or that the gods were interesting as they could change the course of the plot. Whilst such statements are true, they did not show a depth of understanding.

The knowledge of what the gods did and what characters did was impressive. Many responses scored very highly on AO1. A few struggled to remember that Calypso and Circe were divine, and that Charybdis was not. In AO2, those who tried to discuss themes such as the use of magic, fate, complex characters often showed very good understanding

Often the AO3 comparative nature of the question got rather overlooked, at least until the final few concluding lines. Candidates are strongly advised not only to show knowledge and understanding in the main body of the essay, but also evaluation. Very often the evaluation amounted to little more than "the gods are interesting, but so are other characters."

Few candidates chose to try to suggest that some characters were not interesting. This was a real pity as those that did had excellent ideas. Some candidates felt the gods were too predictable, with Athene often assisting Odysseus in particular. Whilst the majority thought Ino was interesting as she helped Odysseus, a few felt her appearance was so brief that she was rather forgettable and undeveloped. Others felt that some of Odysseus' adversaries, such as the Laestrygonians were rather dull, especially after Polyphemus. It was always a pleasure to see candidates arguing such ideas strongly.

- 6(a) This question was generally answered well. Most candidates wrote about Apollo's desperation and lust for Daphne, although weaker responses simply suggested that he loved her. Many saw the mention of his powers as a sign of arrogance. Most felt that he was genuine throughout and had no ulterior motive in the request for her to slow down. There was good discussion of the phrase "impetuous girl", with candidates sometimes sensing a note of frustration or anger.
- 6(b) Virtually all candidates were able to show at least some knowledge of the story. There was widespread discussion of Cupid's role and very good recall of his argument with Apollo, although many missed out the fact that the quarrel arose out of the killing of Python. The best answers correctly identified the materials for both arrows; Cupid's lead arrow was commonly omitted. There was also an error in that many candidates talked about this arrow causing hatred rather than rejection.
- 6(c) The key to answering this question well was to consider the outcome from a wide perspective, and to reflect on what happiness and sadness meant in this context. Most were able to answer the question well and talked of the ending of Daphne's life, but preservation of her virginity. Apollo also was discussed, with most realising that he did possess Daphne in her new form at the end. Some felt she would not have been happy at this, forgetting that she did give her consent. There was some knowledge of Apollo's connection with the laurel, but often there were errors in what the laurel was used for. An

interesting approach of some candidates was to consider the episode from Peneus' point of view; this usually led to discussion of the breaking of a close bond and the lack of grand-children.

- 7(a) There were some fine responses to this question. The best of these referred appropriately to literary techniques such as the use of rhetorical questions or the epic catalogue, although weaker responses did not show this depth of understanding. Such responses typically quoted a word or two and said that this suggested speed or excitement, or that the passage was tense as we wondered what would happen next. A reasonable proportion of candidates discussed the naming of the dogs, mentioning the violence of the name or the creation of a list, although many seemed to misread the passage and felt Actaeon called out their names.
- 7(b) Virtually all candidates knew that Actaeon had seen Diana naked and gave good detail of the events leading up to the encounter, although a common omission was the fact that Actaeon had been hunting with his friends. The location of the encounter was variously described as a lake, stream, or even bath. Candidates often struggled to recall what happened after he saw her: some recalled that her maids tried to obscure her, but did not mention how; most forgot that she flung water at him and cursed him and then did not describe the actual transformation beyond the fact he turned into a stag. A few candidates incorrectly named the animal into which he turned.
- 7(c) Most candidates discussed both stories, but weaker responses either gave no mention of the Calydonian Boar, or else muddled up the myth. When discussing this, the best answers recalled that Diana alone had been left out of the worship, with weaker ones just writing that she had not been worshipped. Most candidates talked about the humiliation in being seen naked by Actaeon, but many omitted the fact that she was the goddess of virginity and how she in particular would have been offended. The best answers recalled that she changed him into a deer so that he couldn't tell what he had seen.
- 8(a) This question proved quite challenging for some candidates. There was mention of the simile of the pan pipes by many, but candidates found they had little to say about it. As ever, there were references to detailed description and how the simile helped build a picture in the mind. The characterisation of Icarus and his ominous meddling with the wax proved more fruitful for discussion.
- 8(b) This question was generally well answered, but there were several recurrent factual errors or omissions. Most candidates knew that Daedalus was jealous of his nephew and why, and many correctly identified at least one of his inventions. However things then proved a little more challenging. Many answers talked about him being thrown off a cliff or mountain, and several did not mention which goddess changed him, or else chose the wrong goddess. The reason he was changed into a partridge was very often missed out.
- 8(c) Many candidates were able to recall stories where young people suffered and showed detailed knowledge, but were unable to link the suffering with aspects of their youth which was often ignored. The commonest characters under the microscope were Daphne and Icarus, perhaps as other questions on the paper referred to them. Icarus was often discussed and some candidates talked about him ignoring instructions, but did not reflect that young people often ignore their parents or at least seem to have selective hearing! The objects of lust of the gods were also discussed, but very few candidates thought to say younger people are often regarded as more beautiful. In short, many candidates answered this as if the question were "describe how young people suffered".
- 9 This question evoked strong arguments with candidates arguing convincingly for one side or the other, usually seeing women as victims. There was a range of examples used for both sides but most focussed on women being the objects of desire from the gods, and as

such Io, Daphne and Semele featured heavily. Many candidates used the same arguments about all three, but stronger responses did mention that Semele was having an affair with a married man and saw this as culpable. The strongest responses examined episodes in great detail; for example they often did not just consider Io's physical change, but her being guarded, tormented by a demon and being separated from her father. However, candidates do need to be wary of over-narrating a story without analysing it in relation to the title.

The strongest responses used a much greater range of female characters, and some of these, such as Althaea and Agave (whose name was often unknown) provided a wealth of arguments for and against. Agave was seen as a victim of mind control, as well as a villain for her killing her son.

Some perceptive responses disagreed with the statement, arguing that some women, such Baucis and Pyrrha, did not fall into either category. This was a perfectly reasonable idea.

- 10) This essay provided plenty of well-argued answers. Most candidates made a good attempt to see the links in the stories, and it was clear that although this has not been asked before, most were well prepared for this question. Common ideas revolved around the temporal structure of book 1, the Theban cycle in book 3 and the introduction of some myths within myths (such as Pan and Syrinx coming in the Io story). Some did struggle for ideas, but usually were at least able to say that many stories had similar storylines. These essays tended to be a little too vague. Examiners were really looking for how stories that followed each other were connected.

Many candidates struggled with the idea of "unappealing". Some saw this as referring to the subject matter rather than story-telling technique, thereby listing stories that were violent or involved criminal behaviour. Such an approach did not show a rather basic understanding. Other responses were a little vague, talking about excitement or interesting characters. Candidates seemed as reluctant as in previous years to discuss literary features such as the description of settings (although one or two candidates did even use the term "ecphrasis"), similes, personification or use of speeches. There were also few mentions of the colourful transformations or the twists in the plot.

There was some good evaluation in most essays. It was pleasing to see many candidates try to argue passionately that there were connections to the stories and that they had enjoyed reading them

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 appropriate to their ability. There was little evidence of candidates being unable to complete the paper within the allotted time and the majority were clearly well prepared for the examination, with almost all following the rubric correctly. There were few examples of candidates ticking the wrong number of responses on the multiple choice questions.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Option 1 – Sparta

Section A

Tasks were generally completed successfully and caused few difficulties for candidates who had revised well.

Task 2 was usually done satisfactorily, although a common mistake was to include the option that there was a huge lake near Sparta.

For Task 5b quite a few candidates mistakenly ticked answer B, thinking that it was the old men who got drunk and for 5d some failed to notice the word 'young' in the question and ticked A the *gerousia*.

Section B

- 7a) Many candidates were able to identify the *perioikoi* and some could name their other jobs such as traders, ship builders, fishermen, helping the army, making weapons, preventing the escape of *helots*.
- 7b) Some candidates showed understanding of the equality in Spartan culture discouraging decorative or luxury items, the lack of money to pay for such items and the focus rather on warfare and practicality.
- 7c) A few candidates were able to discuss the fact that the Spartan 'families' did not live in their houses as the men were at the barracks/*syssitia* and the boys were at the *agoge*. The 'Spartan' nature of Spartan houses was often discussed as well as the fact that the women may have enjoyed the fact that the *helots* did all the work.
- 8a) Successful answers referred to women shaving their hair and wearing men's clothes, the men's stealthy entrance/exit, sex and not living together until the men were 30. The 'symbolic' rape featured occasionally, as well as different men sleeping with them woman if 'necessary' for impregnation.
- 8b) Candidates were able to show understanding of the women's management of the farming estates and supervision of the *helots* to provide food (for the *syssitia*); exercising in order to give birth to strong children was a common feature as well as toughening up the babies/young children.

- 8c) Thorough evaluations often included reference to the men upholding Spartan ideals by fighting, participating in/running the *agoge*, and being in the *syssitia*, with women contributing by their treatment of babies and of cowards.
- 9a) In addition to the marriages of heiresses and adoption, many answers mentioned leading the army, religious leaders in charge of sacrifices, maintenance of roads and being members of the *gerousia*.
- 9b) Explanations usually focused on the *ephors* supervising the kings and their option to depose the king if they thought he was not performing properly. Some candidates referred to there being two kings so that they would check on one another. Being a part of the *gerousia* and subject to the vote of the *ecclesia* were also popular answers.
- 9c) Evaluations often mentioned the lack of equality if the king did not go through the *agoge*. Upholding royal status was considered important and the idea that any descendant of Heracles would need no army training. Exposure of the king as a weakling was mentioned frequently as was the possibility that he might be killed in the *agoge*. The importance of the *syssitia* for bonding was often overlooked with candidates being of the opinion that the king would be completely unable to bond with the men if he did not go through the *agoge*.

Option 2 – Pompeii

Section A

In the main all tasks were completed agreeably and caused little difficulty for candidates who had revised well.

In Task 11 a common error was to choose ‘hot springs to heat baths’.

In Task 13, the temple of the Lares was almost always answered correctly but there was some confusion between the uses of the other four buildings.

Section B

- 16a) Some candidates demonstrated thorough understanding by detailing that the large, open *palaestra* was designed to create a space for exercise with the surrounding colonnade for shade. Understanding that the hotter rooms were positioned nearest to the furnace and that there were separate areas for men and women were also among the commonly credited responses.
- 16b) The heating system was often badly described including a lot of confusion with modern heating systems involving hot water pipes and steam. Successful descriptions included a furnace tended by slaves, floors suspended on pillars, flues in walls and the hot air circulating to heat the rooms.
- 16c) Some candidates were able to evaluate this question well with many referring to the *palaestra* being used for exercise, business taking place as well as political advancement and the fact that women attended the baths as well as men.
- 17a) Candidates were able to identify the weights and measures table being used to check that trade was fair, *macellum* for selling meat and fish, *Eumachia* as the building of the guild of clothmakers, granary to store grain and area for stalls.
- 17b) Candidates were able to show understanding of people worshipping / sacrificing to the king of the gods at the temple of Jupiter, encouraging the town’s protection at the temple of the Lares and showing reverence to the emperor at the temple of Vespasian.

- 17c) Efficiently evaluated answers showed comprehension of the difference between the activities of free men, women and slaves. Very few made a distinction between free men and freedmen. Women and slaves shopping and 'worshipping' were commonly discussed as well as free men voting, deciding who to vote for or working as a part of the government.
- 18a) Successful answers made reference to the earthquake of 62, earth tremors, silent birds, howling dogs, dried up wells and springs, cloud.
- 18b) Some answers showed good understanding of the people fleeing from the town at the start of the eruption, bodies encased in ash leaving cavities to be filled using the Fiorelli process and the heat of the pyroclastic flow 'incinerating' bodies. There was quite a lot of unfortunate misunderstanding involving lava.
- 18c) Responses analysed Pliny as an eye witness describing the human reactions to the eruption as well as the warning signs and date. There was also discussion of the effects of the eruption reflected in the analysis of archaeological remains and the Fiorelli process.

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

General Comments:

This unit gave candidates the chance to show their acquaintance with the facts and understanding of a chosen topic at a level suitable for their level of ability and the questions differentiated well between stronger and weaker candidates. There were some examples of candidates crafting splendid answers which surpassed considerably the level expected at GCSE and were a delight to mark. Some candidates displayed an in-depth knowledge of the Spartan system and whether it was cruel and unusual or whether the Spartan army was founded on loyalty and patriotism, while others analysed in discriminating detail the entertainment on offer in Pompeii and its merits relative to those of the theatre or the importance of the inns and thermopolia to the everyday lives of the people in Pompeii. In the main, examination technique was proficient 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 not many instances of candidates running out of time and some wrote at great length in response to the essay titles. Many candidates in need of extra space made good use of the additional pages at the back of the answer book, although some candidates wrote in the white space between the questions and in the margins and writing in these areas is very difficult for examiners to read.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Option 1 – Sparta

Section A

- 1a) Well answered with most candidates being able to identify the *perioikoi* and their other jobs such as traders, ship builders, fishermen, helping the army, making weapons, preventing the escape of *helots*.
- 1b) The majority of candidates showed understanding of the equality in Spartan culture discouraging decorative or luxury items, the lack of money to pay for such items and the focus rather on warfare and practicality.
- 1c) The majority of candidates were able to discuss the fact that the Spartan 'families' did not live in their houses as the men were at the barracks/*syssitia* and the boys were at the *agoge*. The 'Spartan' nature of Spartan houses was often discussed as well as the fact that the women may have enjoyed the fact that the *helots* did all the work.
- 2a) Successful answers referred to women shaving their hair and wearing men's clothes, the men's stealthy entrance/exit, sex and not living together until the men were 30. The 'symbolic' rape also featured as well as different men sleeping with them woman if 'necessary' for impregnation.
- 2b) Candidates were able to show understanding of the women's management of the farming estates and supervision of the *helots* to provide food (for the *syssitia*); exercising in order to give birth to strong children was a common feature as well as toughening up the babies/young children.

- 2c) Thorough evaluations often included reference to the men upholding Spartan ideals by fighting, participating in/running the *agoge*, and being in the *syssitia*, with women contributing by their treatment of babies and of cowards.
- 3a) In addition to the marriages of heiresses and adoption, many answers mentioned leading the army, religious leaders in charge of sacrifices, maintenance of roads and being members of the *gerousia*.
- 3b) Explanations usually focused on the *ephors* supervising the kings and their option to depose the king if they thought he was not performing properly. Many candidates referred to there being two kings so that they would check on one another. Being a part of the *gerousia* and subject to the vote of the *ecclesia* were also popular answers.
- 3c) Evaluations often mentioned the lack of equality if the king did not go through the *agoge*. Upholding royal status was considered important and the idea that any descendant of Heracles would need no army training. Exposure of the king as a weakling was mentioned frequently as was the possibility that he might be killed in the *agoge*. The importance of the *syssitia* for bonding was sometimes overlooked with candidates being of the opinion that the king would be completely unable to bond with the men if he did not go through the *agoge*.

Section B

- 4) For thorough AO1 marks, answers identified aspects of Spartan society which may have been considered cruel or unusual, including the treatment of babies, the *agoge*, *krypteia* women and the treatment of helots; many candidates were able to do this successfully. Understanding of why the Spartans behaved in these seemingly cruel or unusual ways was important for AO2 marks; successful answers discussed the need for babies/children to be strong in order to survive the next stage, the harshness of the *agoge* producing superb soldiers, *helots* had to be kept under control etc. For a thorough AO3 mark, candidates evaluated whether each of the cruel/unusual features was or was not cruel/unusual compared to other ancient Greek societies or modern society.
- 5) Thorough AO1 marks were attained by describing in detail the different aspects of the foundations of the Spartan army which may have instilled patriotism and loyalty such as, indoctrination by mothers, activities in the *agoge*, *Tyrtaios*, the *syssitia* etc. AO2 marks were gained successfully by showing understanding of the effect of the features on the soldiers and how they contributed to the army's success. AO3 marks required evaluation of the extent to which the army was actually built upon patriotism and loyalty or was built on a foundation of fear, humiliation, brainwashing etc.

Option 2 – Pompeii

Section A

- 6a) Thorough understanding was demonstrated by detailing that the large, open *palaestra* was designed to create a space for exercise with the surrounding colonnade for shade. Understanding that the hotter rooms were positioned nearest to the furnace and that there were separate areas for men and women were also among the commonly credited responses.
- 6b) The heating system was often badly described including a lot of confusion with modern heating systems involving hot water pipes and steam. Successful descriptions included a furnace tended by slaves, floors suspended on pillars, flues in walls and the hot air circulating to heat the rooms.

- 6c) Many candidates were able to evaluate this question well with most referring to the *palaestra* being used for exercise, business taking place as well as political advancement and the fact that women attended the baths as well as men.
- 7a) Candidates were often able to identify the weights and measures table being used to check that trade was fair, *macellum* for selling meat and fish, *Eumachia* as the building of the guild of clothmakers, granary to store grain and area for stalls.
- 7b) The majority of candidates were able to show understanding of people worshipping / sacrificing to the king of the gods at the temple of Jupiter, encouraging the town's protection at the temple of the Lares and showing reverence to the emperor at the temple of Vespasian.
- 7c) Efficiently evaluated answers showed comprehension of the difference between the activities of free men, women and slaves. Very few made a distinction between free men and freedmen. Women and slaves shopping and 'worshipping' were commonly discussed as well as free men voting, deciding who to vote for or working as a part of the government.
- 8a) Many successful answers made reference to the earthquake of 62, earth tremors, silent birds, howling dogs, dried up wells and springs, cloud.
- 8b) Answers often showed good understanding of the people fleeing from the town at the start of the eruption, bodies encased in ash leaving cavities to be filled using the Fiorelli process and the heat of the pyroclastic flow 'incinerating' bodies. There was quite a lot of unfortunate misunderstanding involving lava.
- 8c) Many responses analysed Pliny as an eye witness describing the human reactions to the eruption as well as the warning signs and date. There was also discussion of the effects of the eruption reflected in the analysis of archaeological remains and the Fiorelli process.

Section B

- 9) For AO1, many candidates showed superb knowledge of the large theatre in Pompeii and the sorts of plays which took place inside it. Knowledge of other leisure activities in Pompeii was also required for thorough AO1 on this question and candidates discussed the baths and amphitheatre with confidence; *thermopolia* were also a popular choice and there was some discussion of entertainment at home for the rich and people enjoying themselves in the forum. AO2 marks were gained by showing understanding of how or why people might or might not enjoy different aspects of the leisure activities. For AO3, candidates compared the levels of enjoyment and why one form of entertainment might be more enjoyable than another. The most insightful responses included the idea that some forms of leisure activity were on offer on a daily basis while the theatre and amphitheatre were used on certain occasions.
- 10) For AO1 factual knowledge was frequently very good with many candidates detailing eating, drinking gambling and prostitution among the activities taking place in the inns / *thermopolia*. Thorough factual knowledge also required discussion of other important aspects of daily life in Pompeii such as the baths and forum. AO2 marks were gained by showing understanding of how *thermopolia* may or may not be vital to the daily life of a person in Pompeii e.g. someone with no kitchen/cooking facilities or a traveller. Candidates were also required to explain the importance of the baths and forum to daily life. For a successful AO3 score, candidates discussed the comparative importance of each aspect to different people in Pompeii. The most astute answers recognised that many people would not have any vital need for a *thermopolium*.

A354 Culture and Society in the Classical World

General comments

In this penultimate year of the specification the team saw no drop in the usual high standard. The teachers in the various centres demonstrated that they understood the demands of the questions and the markscheme and were able to pass this understanding on to their candidates very effectively. It was, as usual, an absolute pleasure to read the sample scripts as the candidates had generally completed the tasks well and their enthusiasm was apparent in the work.

As usual the Olympic Games option was the most popular, with Sophocles in second place. At the other end of the scale we saw very few Aristophanes scripts, and Pliny was even rarer.

Candidates had generally been prepared well for this task, as was evident in their understanding and knowledge of the historical context of the issue. But there were some centres where it appeared as if the candidates had just been given the question and 'left to it'. This tended to impact on all three AO's.

The vast majority of candidates engaged fully with the question as set which, again, showed good preparation by the schools. There were one or two instances where candidates' answers were similar in overall plan, and centres are reminded that the planning process should be independent (attested by the signing of the Centre Authentication Sheet).

There are still some candidates who believe that the 2,000 word limit means '2,000 plus 10%'. This is not the case, and any responses over, or under, the word limit risk impacting their AO1 mark.

Nearly all scripts arrived with the sheets joined with treasury tags or staples – thank you. Those clear plastic A4 punched pockets are not helpful to the moderators who have to sift through large numbers of scripts. Some centres sent all their scripts instead of just the sample requested. This is not a problem at all and actually can speed up the process in some cases as schools can send their scripts without having to wait for the OCR email. However it is NOT necessary to send exercise books unless specifically requested by the moderator.

The paperwork has changed slightly – there is no longer any need to send either the CCS160 or the MS1 forms, but centres are expected to send the new IMS1 form instead.

An annual problem is centres that enter their candidates for A354_01 instead of A354_02. The former is for centres uploading scripts via the OCR repository, the latter is for postal moderation. This is not a massive issue, but it causes some extra bureaucracy at this end.

Option 1: Sophocles *Antigone*

Essays for both Antigone questions noticeably lacked line references when quoting the play, and these quotations were rarely any longer than a line. The responses to both questions are mostly mature and independent.

1. How important are the characters other than Antigone and Creon in Sophocles' *Antigone*?

This was the more popular of the two questions about the play. The vast majority of candidates responded well to this question, suggesting that they had been appropriately introduced to the topic by their teachers. Ismene was cited as a contrast to Antigone's irrational, or passionate,

behaviour, or even a 'mirror' to reflect Antigone's emotions. Her change of mind was shown to emphasize Creon's error. Many candidates referred to the role of Tiresias, and likened him to a symbol of the gods' power. Haemon was mentioned regularly, too. Some candidates argued that his support for Antigone was shown to emphasize the harshness of Creon's judgement, while others pointed out the power that a father/son argument would have had on a contemporary audience. His love for Antigone was identified as a powerful tool to emphasize the tragedy of her death. The character of Eurydice was mentioned too – her suffering being used to emphasize the tragedy of the family falling apart. Even the Guard was used as a reflection of the fear of the population. The chorus is also discussed as a minor character influencing the play.

2. What values are important in Sophocles' *Antigone*? To what extent are these values still important in today's society?

The basis for most arguments was the debate between 'natural' laws, or ethics, and man-made laws, both in the context of the play and in contemporary society. Most responses developed this idea throughout the essay and demonstrated how this aspect of the play is just as effective today. On the other hand religion was identified as an area that has changed – in particular the fear of the gods as expressed in the play. Some answers descended into a discussion of the play's themes rather than the values it demonstrated. Some candidates compared the social pressures of Athenian society with others including Nazi Germany, the USA and even North Korea. As with all comparison questions, the "modern" half of it was rather neglected by some candidates, with only brief references to today's society.

Option 2: Aristophanes *Lysistrata*

3. 'A serious call for change in Athenian society.' How far do you agree with this assessment of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*?

Most candidates who answered this question carefully investigated Aristophanes' satire and understood the context of the Peloponnesian War well. There was ample evidence that candidates understood the role of women and how this differed in Sparta and Athens – there was also some interesting analyses of ancient attitudes to sexuality which were both searching and mature. Many candidates assumed that a satire could not be serious – this was an assumption that needed examination and challenging rather than acceptance. Candidates used a wide range of sources, but it would be helpful if the Harvard referencing system and a proper use of footnotes was used to show how these references were being used in the body of the essay.

4. To what extent are the types of comedy found in *Lysistrata* evident in modern comedy?

Lysistrata is a challenging play and the candidates more than rose to the task. The attention to detail was excellent and the very wide range of modern comedies cited as a means of comparison was impressive and highlighted how well the candidates had understood the brief. It is always very important to place the play in its proper historical context and this was lacking in some scripts, as was proper referencing of the text.

Option 3: The Olympic Games

5. 'Sport, culture and politics don't mix.' To what extent is this true of the ancient Olympic Games?

Candidates responded to this question in a variety of ways, picking examples ranging from the procession to Elis, to the construction of the Philippeion, and everything in-between. The Olympic truce was often cited as an example under the 'politics' heading, and various religious buildings or rites were mentioned too. Politics was represented generally by buildings. As in

former years the text by Swaddling was (understandably) heavily used, and the stronger candidates were able to extract a wide range of sources from this text and use them appropriately. The responses were mostly well balanced between the three different areas. However, this was far less popular than the other Olympics question.

6. ‘The ancient competitors’ experiences of the Olympic Games were completely different from those of the modern day competitor.’ How far do you agree with this statement?

Obvious differences identified included the countries involved and the inclusion of women and, more recently, the Paralympics. Candidates also mentioned all sorts of aspects ranging from the events, to diet, to publicity and fame, finding all sorts of parallels. The scale of the opening ceremony was often identified as a difference, too, as well as drug testing and the use of sophisticated timing devices and the concept of ‘holders of world records’ as opposed to the original ‘first past the post’ system. This question was often quite problematic, producing responses that did not answer the question, and therefore the most difficult to moderate. If there was a comparison drawn, it was most often a general one between the modern and ancient Olympics which did not consider the athletes’ experiences. Sometimes it was just a general discussion of the ancient games. Some candidates drifted off from the title with a discussion of the different sports in the ancient and modern games rather than outlining the differences in the competitor experience, as required.

Option 4: Virgil *The Aeneid*

7. What is Aeneas’ mission? How effectively does he carry it out in the *Aeneid*?

This essay was well done by many. Once Aeneas’ mission had been identified (not something every candidate found straightforward), there was good use of most of *The Aeneid* and many candidates were able to show how Aeneas was able to stick to his task, albeit being distracted in several situations along the way. The best essays identified Aeneas’ essential pietas and showed how he maintained this despite the temptations of Dido, Creusa, revenge for Pallas’ death, and so on. It should be noted that candidates whose work was mainly on the first half of the book were unlikely obtain the highest marks.

8. ‘The *Aeneid* fully deserves its high reputation.’ How far do you agree?

There were not sufficient responses to this question to comment on this question in a meaningful way.

Option 5: Pliny *Letters*

9. ‘The wider society was more important to Pliny than his personal life.’ To what extent do you agree?

Very few were seen, but these were well answered with excellent reference to the text. Candidates who answered this question showed a wealth of background reading, and this was evidenced by a wide range of source material. A good understanding of Pliny’s world and how his letters reflected this world was clearly evidenced. Most candidates analysed Pliny’s letters in some depth, some could have used inferential skills more actively – a lot of what Pliny wrote made assumptions that the audience would understand social norms surrounding women and slavery which would not be shared or grasped by a contemporary audience. One area that many candidates could have improved was the concluding paragraph which often simply restated comments made in the body of the essay – a good conclusion should always return to the question and show how it has been answered.

10. ‘Pliny wrote and published his *Letters* solely to make himself look important.’ How far do you agree?

There were some excellent answers to this question. A number of candidates had read an impressive amount of Pliny’s letters; this enabled them to identify successfully the balance suggested by the question between Pliny’s desire to boost his own reputation, and his natural humanity as shown in letters, for example, regarding his wife, his family, and his slaves. It was pleasing to see that candidates had read some of the Trajan letters, and that they were able to show how these too reflected the mixed motivation of the letters in general.

Option 6: Roman Britain

11. ‘Life was easy for a soldier in the Roman army stationed on Hadrian’s Wall.’ How far do you agree?

Besides archaeological evidence from sites like Housesteads, the Vindolanda tablets were used as evidence in responses to this question. The use of the Vindolanda tablets raised some eyebrows with the moderators as they pre-date the main building phase of the wall. However, in these cases, the term ‘Hadrian’s Wall’ was taken to refer to the entire barrier rather than specifically the wall built by Hadrian. Various issues were looked at including the amount of time spent in military activities compared with times of peace, the differences between a soldier’s life and that of other citizens, the evidence of lifestyle on the wall, and the differences depending on rank and wealth. The general consensus was that life was not too bad for the soldiers, although the weather was often cited as a negative!

12. How far do you think that Boudiccaa should be viewed as a heroine?

This question provoked some very interesting arguments for both sides of the debate. In some cases she was viewed as a modern ‘Nelson Mandela’ campaigning for her rights against an oppressive system, and in others she was viewed as a misguided violent terrorist. Of course the stronger essays argued both sides to reach a personal conclusion. Tacitus was the main ancient source referred to, understandably, and some candidates included archaeological evidence as well. We saw some very good answers for this with excellent comparison of Tacitus and Dio Cassius. There was lots on the reception of Boudicca from Elizabeth I to Victoria and Albert, and even some references to Denis Healy’s comment about Margaret Thatcher as ‘bargain-basement Boadicea.’ As in former years the Roman Britain questions often inspire some of the most interesting, well researched, and personal responses.

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