

Classics - Classical Civilisation

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS H041

Report on the Units

June 2009

HX-CLAS/MS/R/09

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

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Chief Examiner's Report

In this first year of the new specification, it is pleasing to report that the Principal Examiners were encouraged by candidates' performance on their units. It is clear that candidates found much to enjoy in the topics they studied, whether it was life in a Pompeian house or Mycenaean metal work or the machinations of Medea and Clytemnestra. They wrote with enthusiasm and personal insight about such topics, with some lively and vigorous responses noted at all levels of achievement.

Homer's *Odyssey* and Society and Greek Tragedy in its Context were inevitably the most popular units, but there were also very healthy entries for Archaeology: Mycenae and the Classical World, Roman Society and Thought, and City Life in Roman Italy. We hope that interest in these units will continue to grow as centres become more used to what is expected of candidates in these units. INSET meetings in the autumn of 2009 will have sessions on learning and teaching relevant to individual units.

Performance was much as one might expect from a new specification and the raw marks required for a particular grade reflect that. Raw marks ranged from 100 to 0 and this is indicative of the varied range of performance. At the top end of the mark range were candidates who were clearly very well-prepared and had revised in great detail and were able to answer questions with a degree of sophistication. At the bottom end of the mark range there were some candidates who seemed not to have attended many lessons.

To improve the overall performance, candidates need to be advised of the following points:

- careful reading of the question is required;
- answers should be backed up by detail and supporting evidence;
- arguments should be balanced where appropriate;
- the bullet points in the essay questions should be used as a general guide or starting point and are not designed to limit the scope of an answer.

There were different approaches to tackling the papers: some attempted the essay first, followed by the commentary question. This may not be a good use of candidates' time as the commentary question is worth more marks than the essay. More of a concern, however, was the large number of candidates who answered the commentary question in reverse order. These questions are structured in such a way as to take candidates through the material in a logical way, starting with the factual content and leading up to the more analytical questions.

Despite the instruction at the beginning of Section B, few candidates actually started their answers on a new page of the answer booklet. Some did not leave lines between any of their answers, or even number them, thus making it difficult to tell where one answer ended and the next began. Other technical issues included poor handwriting, which led to several scripts being referred to Principal Examiners (or the Chief Examiner in two cases) for deciphering.

F381 Archaeology: Mycenae and the classical world

General Comments

The overlying feeling that Examiners gained from marking these scripts was one of extreme interest and enthusiasm. It is evident that candidates have embraced this unit with pleasure and excitement, even if they did not always apply academic rigour to it. The candidature fell into two clear groups – those who had revised carefully and those who were relying on native wit. There was a trend not to cover the whole syllabus, which affected some candidates' performances. Some answers made no mention of Classical/non-Mycenaean sites, and in other cases students seemed to be well versed on the Mycenaean material and not on archaeological practices – or vice versa. Written communication left a lot to be desired in some answers, with 'Mycenaeans', 'archaeology' and 'Schliemann' most commonly misspelt, even though the first two were on the question paper. There were far fewer rubric errors than was common in the legacy papers.

Comments on Individual Questions

- 1 This was the more popular of the two picture questions by quite a long way. It appeared to be the more straightforward of the two also, as almost every candidate understood what it was asking and could come up with some material.
 - (a) Everyone identified it correctly as a frog! Guesses at what it was used for varied widely, although a pleasing number suggested a brooch, and I suspect that those who did not get the right answer were understandably thrown off course by not knowing its actual size. However, candidates were able to score full marks without being able to identify the frog. There were a few intriguing, if unfounded, answers that went on at length about frogs' religious significance to the Mycenaean. It was generally identified correctly as metal, although actual techniques of metalworking proved much more difficult.
 - (b) This proved a rewarding answer to mark, as there were some very thoughtful interpretations given, and even the weaker answers could usually come up with one or two valid points. The biggest faults were not knowing enough material (particularly not coming up with any Classical examples), bringing in Minoan examples as major pieces of evidence, and going on at length in a very vague way about 'the Mycenaean were religious' or 'the Mycenaean were warfaring'. However, there were also some very thoughtful answers where trade was discussed sensibly and in detail, and even where Linear B was used to show the inner workings of Mycenaean society (on a side-note though, Linear B was repeatedly said to show 'trade' – it seems that the administrative nature of the system has been misunderstood by several candidates). Candidates were almost universally successful at restricting themselves to small objects.

- (c) Again, this proved successful at drawing out the best of all levels of the candidature. Everyone knew at least two methods (generally field-walking and aerial photography), and some showed a highly impressive knowledge of the finer details of the more scientific methods – even all the different types of magnetometers, correctly spelt! Factual accuracy was also surprisingly strong. The biggest downfalls were not giving enough (or indeed any) supporting examples and letting themselves be carried away by listing facts so that evaluation was skimmed upon.
- 2 As mentioned, this proved to be much the less popular of the two questions. It was also in general not particularly well answered, especially when taken as a whole question.
- (a) Only a couple of candidates correctly identified both figures as female, and this led to erroneous conclusions about its being a family portrait or a religious symbol of family life. The material and method of manufacture did not cause too many problems. As for its use, a number of candidates also seemed to struggle. About half fell into the traditional archaeological trap of calling it ‘ritual’! Those who suggested that it was an ornament were generally those who gave a more knowledgeable answer to the whole sub-question.
- (b) This was either answered very vaguely or very thoughtfully. As with part (b) of A1, almost everyone was able to make one or two points. Some answers described the Akrotiri frescoes at great length, without showing that they realised that Akrotiri evidence can only hint at the Mycenaean period, as it is not wholly contemporaneous or simply by producing fluffy evaluation that wasn’t particularly connected to any archaeological material. However, the stronger answers managed to come up with some good points, looking at both the subject matter *and* the methods of manufacture to see what they could tell us. While warfare and religion again proved popular, stronger answers looked at such topics as trade and mythology. Again, the non-use of Classical material proved a problem for some, as they just concentrated on Mycenaean art.
- (c) There were candidates who misunderstood this question, although this was taken into account when marking it. Some who misunderstood simply repeated their points to (b). However, those who correctly approached the question produced some very good answers. Examiners were pleasantly surprised at the wide range of uses that were employed, looking beyond the obvious maps and house plans to consider such topics as artefact drawings as a way of allowing access to objects across the globe, and the use of reconstructions to reach a wider public.

All questions received an almost equal number of answers; it is impossible to pick one out as being the dominant question this year.

- 3 This question was generally answered at least adequately, as candidates did not tend to attempt it unless they already knew quite a lot about the subject. There was some confusion about what classed as techniques, especially under relative dating (where *terminus post/ante quem* was apparently a full technique in its own right, alongside coin use and stratigraphy). There were also some factual errors, particularly surrounding carbon-14 (including a peculiar idea that carbon was used to mould the entire town of Thera, from which a date was then obtained). However, on the other hand, there were candidates who knew a good number of detailed facts about the various techniques. Evaluation fell into two groups: those who forgot it in their eagerness to list the facts, and those who carefully went through each technique and knew all the pros and cons well. Providing examples of sites on which the techniques were used was the biggest downfall except in the very top-scoring scripts.
- 4 This was a fairly successful question in drawing out something from all levels of the candidature. Almost everyone could list at least a couple of types of trenches, and a good number knew the full variety in (often) accurate detail. Basic evaluation (why a certain trench was good/bad) was also seen throughout the range. Carrying the question to its full extent proved a lot harder however – few gave satisfactory examples (when they did give examples, it was often the first excavation that came to their mind; Schliemann at Troy apparently used every style of trench going!), and few really got to grips with the question as a whole and how it was asking for appropriateness in different scenarios. Those who did gave some well thought out, subtle analyses that were pleasing to read. A small minority did not understand what excavation meant, and gave analyses of different surveying techniques (as per A1 c)).
- 5 This certainly attracted the weakest responses, in which candidates thought that they could get away without listing any factual details. Several answers to this were very vague, either raising a couple of points without any evidence, or relying wholly upon Schliemann. It allowed for these candidates to scrape some evaluative marks, as almost everyone recognised the basic points of how archaeology has improved (apart from some who said that it had not improved, because it had no sense of adventure now!), but the weaker end of the spectrum floundered rather, as they could not come up with anything to support their arguments. The sense of progression was almost universally ignored, with a dichotomy between Schliemann (often mistakenly 18th century) and today, without anything in-between. However, on the positive side, the handful of candidates who scored well in this question produced a great range of thoughtful points, looking at not only the obvious techniques and aims, but also considering health and safety, land use, funding, and archaeology's professional criteria. Not listing examples was certainly a weakness across the whole range.

F382 Homer's *Odyssey* and Society

General Comments

Candidates seemed to have enjoyed the new specification. The additional time devoted to the study of the *Odyssey* enabled them to have a better overview of the epic, not just the books set for comment. There were a few candidates who appeared unfamiliar with the rubric, and left too little time for the essay question or omitted it altogether. The essay is worth 45%, so it is unlikely that a candidate will achieve a good mark in 30 minutes or less: 40 minutes would be a sensible time to allocate.

The quality of writing was generally acceptable, with good spelling of Classical names and sensible use of paragraph division. However, a significant number of candidates used an inappropriate register: 'mum', 'nasty piece of work', 'Od', etc. Some Greek terms (eg *xenia*) can be useful, but there is no requirement that candidates should use them, and many seemed to be hampered rather than helped in their thinking by the use of words such as 'kleos'.

In Section A, candidates were split fairly evenly between the two questions (Book 4 Telemachus and the suitors and Book 11 Odysseus and Anticleia). Answers to the part (a) questions were good when candidates both knew the text and selected relevant information; some candidates who scored well on (b) and (c) struggled to produce sufficient facts to answer (a). The (b) questions posed difficulties to the candidates who did not refer closely to the text or quoted long passages without detailed comment. There were some excellent answers to the (c) questions, with detailed, varied and relevant references to the *Odyssey* used to support a balanced argument and an independently reasoned conclusion. Some candidates invented quotations that bore no resemblance to the text. Direct quotation is not necessary, and paraphrase is far preferable to false quotation.

Essay 4 ('Like father, like son') was the most popular, though sizeable minorities answered both. In Essay 3 (disguise) and Essay 5 (slaves) most candidates engaged with the questions and were able to provide a wide range of examples. Marks were lost largely through poor time management or lack of focus on the question. Some candidates seemed to be recalling an essay they had previously written rather than engaging with the question printed on the examination paper.

Comments on Individual Questions

- 1 (a) The best candidates recalled the stories of Odysseus entering Troy in disguise and of his stopping the men in the horse from calling out in response to Helen imitating the voices of their wives. Some candidates should have offered more detail, writing for example only 'Menelaus told Telemachus about Odysseus in the wooden horse and Helen outside,' without explaining how she imitated the men's wives. While it seems likely that such a candidate knew the story, he/she cannot gain a high mark without further explanation. Candidates should remember that there are 10 marks awarded to this question. Many candidates claimed incorrectly that Menelaus or Helen said that Odysseus had designed the horse. Surprisingly few mentioned Proteus' information that Odysseus was on Calypso's island, but most mentioned the similarity noticed between Odysseus and Telemachus.

- (b) The best answers here commented both on Antinous and on the other suitors, and considered the whole of the passage including the final paragraph. Detailed comments on individual words or short phrases were the most effective. For example, candidates who quoted 'his heart was seething with passion and his eyes were like points of flame' rarely analysed as effectively as those who discussed the heart seething with passion separately from the simile describing the eyes. Vague comments about the sentence showing that Antinous was like a devil are given little credit.
- (c) There were plenty of references in the passage to the wrong-doing of the suitors. Candidates should note that close analysis of the language of the passage was needed in part (b), but the passage was only a starting point in part (c). Therefore they needed to include plenty of evidence from beyond the passage (detail about the way the suitors treated the disguised Odysseus, for example) to add to the facts given in the passage. Good answers showed some balance: not all the suitors were equally bad; it could be argued that Penelope had deceived and encouraged the suitors using the shroud trick.
- 2 (a) Most candidates remembered something of the rituals in the underworld and the prophecies of Teiresias. A disappointing number gave details from a film version of the *Odyssey* rather than Homer's: clearly these could not be credited.
- (b) As in 1(b), the best answers selected individual words or short phrases from the whole of the passage and commented on them with precision. Weaker answers included superficial comments about Odysseus seeming to be a sad little boy and sometimes showed misunderstanding, referring to murder and suicide. Some candidates discussed Odysseus' feelings of guilt, but these could not be supported by the text or its cultural context. Surprisingly few noted the repetition of the phrase 'three times'.
- (c) Most candidates managed to use both the passage (including the final phrase, 'one day you can tell your wife') and the rest of the poem, but not many referred to Laertes as well as Anticleia, Telemachus and Penelope. Many noted that Odysseus spent time with Circe and Calypso; better answers developed their argument to discuss Odysseus as the cold lover with the ardent lady and the fact that it was the crew who asked him to leave Ogygia. Some candidates digressed to discuss the importance of Odysseus to his family, or made vague, sentimental claims that Odysseus loved the baby he had left behind, without any support from the text. Most candidates came to the conclusion that the family was important, but some of the more thoughtful answers claimed that it was not supremely so, citing that Ithaca and glory were equally significant. A few of the best answers used the bed as a symbol of the importance to Odysseus of his family.
- 3 On the whole, this essay on the importance of Odysseus' disguise as a beggar to the success of the *Odyssey* was well answered. Most explained how the disguise kept Odysseus safe and allowed him to test the suitors, the servants and Penelope. Stronger candidates discussed the contribution of disguise to the success of the poem, not just to the success of Odysseus: tension that the disguise could be penetrated, a succession of emotional recognition scenes etc. Candidates should remember that throughout the paper a wide range of examples from the text is needed to score highly under AO1.

Report on the units taken in June 2009

- 4** The best essays here considered heroic and non-heroic aspects of Telemachus' behaviour, with specific examples to support the argument. Precise parallels with Odysseus were often given as useful illustrations. Some candidates showed a good knowledge of what Telemachus did, but spent too long discussing how he came of age during the epic rather than addressing the question directly. Some candidates ignored the bullet point 'include an analysis of the way a hero should behave' and relied instead on rather circular arguments along the lines of 'Telemachus did this, therefore Odysseus would have been proud of him, therefore he was a worthy son.' Incidents which were particularly well analysed included Telemachus leaving the store-room door open in Book 22 and Laertes' comment in Book 24 about his son and grandson competing in valour.

- 5** Almost all candidates knew the basic details about Eumaeus and Eurycleia, and many mentioned Melantho and Melanthius too. Not all were able to go beyond a character analysis to look at the structure of society as Homer describes it. Better answers included slaves from outside Ithaca, such as those belonging to Helen or Nausicaa. A few candidates failed to achieve higher levels because they discussed loyal or valued rather than both.

F383 Roman Society and Thought

General Comments

Centres had prepared their candidates well as regards the literary aspect of the unit. However, it was felt by Examiners that some more attention needed to be paid to the society requirements of the specification in general.

Comments on Individual Questions

- 1
- (a) The event was a dinner party. Candidates were asked to describe briefly what happened. There are 10 marks available for this question so responses of one sentence did not give sufficient detail. Some candidates misread the question and talked about dinner parties in general. Good answers included detail on the food, guests and events. Some had very detailed knowledge of the Satire.
 - (b) Candidates picked out most of the examples, but were not always sure what effect the language had. A common error was to talk about exclamation *marks*. Some made very good comments about the host's egocentricity – 'pioneered the practice'.
 - (c) Most were able to write confidently about Horace's preference for 'simple living', as told in 2.2 through Ofellus (spelled in a variety of ways). Many were confused over Stoic and Epicurean philosophies. Many also used city vs. country arguments using the mice story. The best answers featured *balance* which included discussion that Horace might have been sorry to miss the event. He wanted to be seen with Maecenas as one candidate explained: *as he was in his book club*.
- 2
- Question 2 was a type of question which required knowledge from the candidate of Roman Society. It was less focused on literature.
- (a) Whereas most candidates could identify Trajan as Emperor few were able to 'explain briefly' any further. Most candidates appreciated that Pliny was writing to Trajan from a province but very few knew it was Bithynia. The site of the province ranged from Spain to Southern Italy. One candidate was convinced that Pliny had trouble with Christians camping on his estate. Most knew the purpose of the letter, but many repeated information from the passage.
 - (b) Most candidates knew Trajan's reply well, and spoke intelligently about the choice of emotive words. Better answers featured discussion of Pliny's use of the tricolon (not ... nor ... nor); the selection of the two public buildings; the reference to the Temple of Isis and the religious impact on the citizens.
 - (c) The term 'relied on' was interpreted in different ways. Credit was given to discussion on Pliny in his role as governor and the Romanisation policy; Pliny as Patron; Pliny the rich man and Pliny's morals. Credit was also given to references regarding 'people such as Pliny' although Pliny formed the main focus of most arguments. Too many answers lacked specific examples to back up more general analysis.

- 3 As a society question this answer was popular. A good introduction to this essay would have been to define the term freedman and to give some detail as to how a slave became free. This was suggested in the prompt on the paper but a few candidates started directly with the advantages and disadvantages.

In general there was a clear understanding of how a slave became freed, though the manumission ceremony was not understood in detail. Many students were unaware of the rights of freedmen with respect to being able to vote. Balance was easy to create, though some conclusions were absent. Trimalchio was a favourite subject, though the other freedmen at the dinner were rarely discussed at any length. Better answers used Zosimus and Pliny's Dinner Party for treatment of freedmen.

- 4 Details from Juvenal's Satire 3 were well known but in general what life in Rome was like was covered in less detail. A general overview of life in Rome, in particular the Subura, would have made a suitable introduction and be credited as 'social and contextual awareness'.

Dangers were well known overall. Better answers spoke about informers and incorporated Satires 1 and 4 as well as 3. Some candidates compared Juvenal's accounts with those of Pliny to generally successful ends, while the best candidates understood the use of exaggeration for comic and satirical effect.

Some appreciation of Satire such as exaggeration would have covered the aspect of 'telling the truth'.

- 5 This was also a popular question. There were some very fine answers but also some answers which were very general and lacked sufficient detail. A suitable introduction for this essay might have covered the property qualifications for specific classes – one million sesterces for the senatorial class and 400,000 sesterces for those of equestrian rank (or as many candidates labelled them 'equine class' and 'equatorial class'). Some answers did include discussion of the dole. Latin terms are credited when offered correctly.

This was an opportunity for candidates to use detail from a range of authors. Better answers offered specific details. Candidates often referred to Trimalchio's ostentatious food without specific examples. There was also the opportunity to offer details covering 'social and contextual awareness'.

Students focused on dinner parties, most notably Trimalchio's. Better answers included Umbricius/Juvenal, Pliny and Horace/Ofellus on greed and suggested another view which achieved *balance*. 'Money equals power' was also a successful line of argument.

F384 Greek Tragedy in its context

General Comments

The first session of the new specification showed that Greek Tragedy has maintained its popularity amongst students of Classical Civilisation. The obvious enjoyment and appreciation of the plays was clearly shown in the responses of the candidates, who also exhibited a good knowledge of all the plays studied, as well as the social and cultural aspects which influenced the playwrights. It was pleasing to see that the vast majority of the candidates dealt with the plays, rather than the myth, although some did ignore the starting point for the part (a) of the commentary questions and narrated the whole story; others wasted time by going beyond the passage. Although most candidates did treat the plays as pieces of drama, a significant minority referred to 'the book' and 'the reader' rather than the play and the audience, ignoring the overall dramatic effect of the play or the scene.

Some factors continued from the legacy specification. These included the misspelling of names, with the usual suspects (Euripides, Laius, Dionysus), misspelling and misuse of technical terms (*anagnoresis*, *peripeteia*), and using sympathy and empathy without distinction.

Comments on Individual Questions

Of the two commentary questions, Question 1 from *Oedipus the King* was more popular than Question 2 from *Medea*.

- 1 **(a)** Candidates were generally secure on the details of events leading up to the passage, although some did go back to the original prophecy given to Laius.
- (b)** In part (b), most candidates understood the nature of dramatic irony, but were not specific about its effect. They could pick out examples from the passage, in varying numbers and amounts of detail, but in many cases were not able to analyse their effectiveness. They often stated that 'Oedipus having blood-bonds with Laius' was ironic, but that was the limit of their analysis.
- (c)** In part (c), candidates were able to discuss how Oedipus behaved in the passage, and in the rest of the play, but did not always compare the two directly. There was not always a balance between the passage and the rest of the play; many candidates did not mention Oedipus' treatment of Teiresias and Creon, and fewer still dealt with the final scene in the play. There was still the confusion, common in previous years, over the difference between the prophecy given to Laius, and that given to Oedipus. Better answers were able to look at the reasons for Oedipus' behaviour, and explain the consistent characteristics behind the varied ways he acts throughout the play.

- 2 **(a)** Candidates generally knew the main details of the play leading up to the passage, but were not fully secure on the order of events. A significant number thought that Medea's doubts over killing her children happened after she heard about the deaths of Glauce and Creon. Many also left out the meeting between Medea and Jason, in which she persuaded him to allow the children to take the gifts to Glauce.

- (b)** In part (b), there were a large number of candidates who discussed the language and imagery in the passage very effectively. They also dealt with the emotions of pity created in the audience for Jason. However, very few dealt with the situation in the passage, ignoring the presence of Medea and the dead children in the chariot.
- (c)** Part (c) produced a full range of answers. Better answers were able to deal with Jason's open hatred in the passage, and contrast it with his defence in the first meeting with Medea, and his acceptance of Medea's feigned submission in their second meeting. Many candidates neglected either one or the other of the two scenes. Poorer answers did not consider Jason's opinions of Medea, but seemed to use a pre-prepared answer on Jason's character.

Of the three essay questions, Question 3 and Question 5 proved to be equally popular options, while Question 4 was attempted by fewer candidates. Candidates were able to produce a good range of detail, and some sound arguments. However, many candidates failed to realise that the bullet points are there as a guide and a help to answering the question, rather than a strict essay plan

- 3** Candidates were able to tackle this question with confidence. Most were able to produce reasons for both possible titles to the play by looking at the play itself. Good answers contrasted Clytaemnestra as the main character with Agamemnon as the tragic figure, and considered the background to the play as well. Poorer answers failed to produce a balanced answer, concentrating on Clytaemnestra without considering Agamemnon's role in the play. The range of detail varied, with many candidates attributing the description on Clytaemnestra 'manoeuvring like a man' to the Chorus, rather than the Watchman. Many candidates also failed to appreciate that 'protagonist' is a specific technical term when applied to Greek Tragedy.
- 4** Although relatively unpopular, this question was generally answered well. Candidates were able to list the other characters in the play, and assess their contribution to the play. Cadmus was on the whole dealt with well, although there were a number of answers which neglected his role in the final scene. Agave was sometimes not mentioned. Most answers discussed the part played by the two messengers, although a significant number of candidates did not appreciate that the two messengers are separate characters, and treated them as a single entity. Some candidates analysed the role of the Chorus, with a few dealing with its contribution not just to the plot, but also to the whole dramatic effect of the play, including the visual spectacle. Also mentioned were the women on Mt. Cithaeron, but some candidates did not distinguish between them and the Chorus.

- 5** Candidates found plenty of material to work with in this question. A large number of candidates tried to deal with all four plays, which limited the detail they could use. In many cases, only writing about two plays may have benefited the candidates. There were a large number of answers which simply summarised the plots of the plays, without giving specific textual reference to back up their discussion. Often, candidates discussed the structures of the various families, without considering personal relationships. While the majority of candidates agreed with the statement in the question, there were those who found examples to contradict it. Oedipus was often stated to have had a normal relationship with his family, both wife and daughters, despite the abnormality of the family structure. Other examples quoted against the question were the relationship between Creon and his daughter, and Cadmus' treatment of both Pentheus and Agave. Although some concept of what is a 'normal' family might be expected, too many candidates spent too much time on vague discussion of normality without much pertinent argument.

F385 Greek Historians

General Comments

This replacement to 2738 has proven pleasing popular, with many candidates clearly relishing the chance to study ancient historians not just as primary sources, but as items of literary interest. The introduction of Plutarch with his very different approach to historiography may take a while to settle in, as very few candidates attempted Question 5, although those that did tended to succeed.

Teachers may wish to remind candidates to refer to the works of Herodotus, Thucydides and Plutarch and not to 'Hdt', 'Thuc' and 'Plut'.

Comments on Individual Questions

- 1 This question was substantially more popular than Question 2.
- (a) Although most candidates knew the general story, specific details were lacking from several accounts.
 - (b) Several candidates tried to discuss something like 'how is this an exciting piece of narrative?' rather than discussing the presentation of Herodotus' interests. However, most candidates managed to give a good account of his interests in the passage and how they compared to his work as a whole.
 - (c) This essay allowed candidates to show enthusiasm and interest in Herodotus' work. On the whole, they showed great familiarity with the work, but there was a tendency in weaker answers to rely on generalities without recall of specific incidents or characters.
- 2 This question was much less popular than Question 1.
- (a) Many candidates read this question as asking them to write down everything they could think of about the origins of the Peloponnesian War, rather than the broader outline of the war that Thucydides has given us. Rather worryingly some answers discussed the passage in detail without addressing the question. However, most made a decent job of answering this question.
 - (b) There were some interested answers to this. Most were very aware of the pros and cons of treating Thucydides as a reliable source. The stronger answers were the ones that made close use of the text on the paper.
 - (c) They really do not seem to trust Thucydides! His failings as an unbiased historian were discussed widely by most candidates, although several felt that he deserved credit for his unflagging attention to detail, especially when it comes to describing military scenes. His scientific aims, even if not successful, earned him some supporters.

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- 3** This question elicited some very firm responses. The general feeling was that, although he might not make an excellent historian by the academic standards of today, he still makes for a good read. As always, the stronger answers were the ones that relied on a solid knowledge of the text rather than on unfounded generalities.
- 4** As with Question 3, there were several candidates that had clearly learnt a list of points to mention on this topic, but they did not always have evidence to back up what they had to say. Most answers showed that they had a sound understanding of Thucydides' reasons for using speeches in his work, but the higher marks went to those that could display familiarity with the texts.
- 5** As stated in the introduction to this report, Question 5 was not the most popular of the essay questions, but it was generally answered well. Most candidates were intrigued by Plutarch's approach to write more like a biographer or novelist than the other two historians. Examiners were impressed by the depth of knowledge shown by candidates in answer to this question.

F386 City Life in Roman Italy

General Comments

It was encouraging to read so many varied responses.

Candidates were credited with any *relevant* details in their answers which may be drawn from houses other than those in the specification (provided that they are relevant to particular towns in a question); it had been stated at INSET that this approach would be allowed. Buildings frequently mentioned and credited where appropriate were:

- House of Julia Felix Pompeii
- House of the Faun Pompeii
- Theatre (and Odeon) Pompeii
- Central Baths Herculaneum
- Baths of the Seven Sages Ostia
- House of the Mosaic Atrium Herculaneum
- Various temples and Mithraea

Comments on Individual Questions

- 1 (a) Nearly all candidates were able to describe an atrium. The minimum criterion was that the description should place that room in the Roman period. Many candidates identified the impluvium and compluvium with better answers *describing* these features; similarly with the lararium. As one candidate pointed out there would probably be fellow clients, as that would be the only time you would get to see this impressive room.
- (b) This question elicited answers using material from both houses with gardens and houses without. A good introduction to this question would have been to describe a typical Roman garden. This was appreciated in better answers but was ignored on the whole by many.

Many could identify the type of garden described by Vitruvius, citing the House of the Deer/Stags with its sea view over the Bay of Naples. Garden houses from Ostia were well known and the drawback of communal living and lack of space was appreciated in other houses though specific details would have enhanced arguments for example the House of Apuleius. The insulae with their small courtyards were discussed as being more practical than for show with the owner growing a few herbs. In Herculaneum many candidates were aware that the owners of the Samnite house had had a big garden but sold it off and that the House in Opus Craticium perhaps might have been able to use the balcony to grow herbs. The general conclusion was that houses were only in a magnificent style if the owners had the money to spare.

A few candidates drew their material from Pompeii but were able to gain some limited credit for their analysis.

- (c) This question was about decoration. Gardens were included to widen the material available so reference, for example, to decoration in the House of the Stags/Deer was again credited.

Candidates discussed a range of subjects drawn from mosaics such as those in the House of Apuleius, styles of wall painting, statues- the most popular being Hercules urinating. Fashion in architecture and decoration was also discussed and styles were frequently mentioned here as well. Named examples would have enhanced answers.

Views varied on the extent to which the houses truly reflected these interests and beliefs. Making an impact and being impressive was much more important than the owners' true taste.

As with 1b some candidates drew their information from Pompeii alone.

- 2 (a) Centres had gone to great lengths to find details of Scaurus' life and answers were generally good if rather brief. Credit was given for knowledge of his full Roman name and for details of his family especially the early death of his son. Details of his house were best left for 2b.

- (b) Candidates could list the advertising and self promotion of Scaurus but too frequently failed to analyse the effect. Scaurus' house is ideally situated to watch his amphorae of garum sauce leave the port for places like Spain and Gaul and its sheer size must have been impressive. Scaurus had workshops and credit was give for details of his 'tomb'. Some candidates gave too much focus to the production of garum sauce.

- (c) There were many general answers on trade in Pompeii with detailed discussion of the buildings and activities of the Forum. Candidates needed to focus on *people* who earned a living through trade, such as Eumachia.

Analysis of the information varied. Some felt that as such people brought goods and luxury items to the wealthier Pompeians, there must have been some respect. Others felt trade was tolerated out of necessity.

- 3 Fewer candidates attempted this question. There were nevertheless some excellent answers. Details from a range of tombs were offered and conclusions drawn. References to Trimalchio and the description of his tomb were also credited. The location of the tombs was appreciated as was Eumachia's 'picnic bench'.

Better answers offered some knowledge of Roman burial practices and beliefs and these were linked to named tombs. As ever candidates should keep an eye on the title. In this case a conclusion at least should have covered 'how useful' from the question.

Report on the units taken in June 2009

- 4** This was a popular question. All candidates appreciated that the Baths were also a place to socialise but other activities suggested included schools, philosophical debates, business deals, sunbathing at the heliocaminus at Ostia, and 'meeting up with prostitutes'.

However what many candidates could have explained was the actual process of getting clean. Many candidates did not appreciate the progress through the rooms and were unclear on the purpose of each room. This information would have made a suitable introduction to the answer.

- 5** This was also a popular question. There were some very fine answers but also some answers which were very general and lacked sufficient detail. This was an opportunity for candidates to use any known building and a variety of expensive houses, temples, official buildings were indeed cited though often just by name with no supporting details. The most popular thread of argument was entertainment which used discussion of the amphitheatre at Pompeii. One candidate really entered into the spirit by threatening to start a riot!

Grade Thresholds

Advanced Subsidiary GCE Classics - Classical Civilisation (H041)
June 2009 Examination Series

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
F381	Raw	100	67	58	49	40	32	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
F382	Raw	100	74	66	58	50	42	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
F383	Raw	100	73	64	55	46	37	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
F384	Raw	100	73	64	55	47	39	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
F385	Raw	100	68	61	54	48	42	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0
F386	Raw	100	67	58	50	42	34	0
	UMS	100	80	70	60	50	40	0

Specification Aggregation Results

Overall threshold marks in UMS (ie after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
H041	200	160	140	120	100	80	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
H041	23.9	48.1	69.0	83.6	93.7	100.0	1367

1367 candidates aggregated this series

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see:

http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums_results.html

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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