

Classical Civilisation

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J280**

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

OCR Report to Centres

June 2012

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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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CONTENTS

General Certificate of Secondary Education

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OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

Content	Page
Overview	1
A351/01 City Life in the Classical World (Foundation Tier)	3
A351/02 City Life in the Classical World (Higher Tier)	6
A352/01 Epic and Myth (Foundation Tier)	9
A352/02 Epic and Myth (Higher Tier)	15
A353/01 Community Life in the Classical World (Foundation Tier)	23
A353/02 Community Life in the Classical World (Higher Tier)	27
A354 Culture and Society in the Classical World	32

Overview

General Comments

Examiners were encouraged by the knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject that candidates showed this year. There was evidence of excellent teaching and learning in all the modules, and many candidates wrote with great insight and maturity.

There were few problems with candidates not carrying out instructions properly, or in not completing the examination papers.

Examiners reported fewer instances of rubric errors from last year but would encourage centres in reinforcing the following points to candidates:

Both tiers

- ensure that they are attempting the right option. There were still a small number of candidates attempting the option that they had not studied for, realising the mistake after a few questions and then starting again;
- follow the instructions on the cover about writing extra information in the additional lined pages at the back of the question paper. It would be helpful if candidates indicated the use of extra pages at the end of their response;
- Write in the answer space and avoid using the margins and spaces under the lines. Responses which use all available space on the page tended to get very squashed and harder to read;

Foundation tier

- tick the correct number of answers. Some candidates were still attempting to optimise their chances by ticking more answers than were required. By doing so they lost marks;
- complete only **two** questions from Section B. There were some candidates who either completed one question or all three;
- read all parts of the commentary questions in Section B before choosing the two to answer. Some candidates clearly made a decision based on part a) and b) and found they did not have much to write about in part c) of the question;

Higher tier

- complete only **two** questions from Section B. There were some candidates who either completed one question or all three;
- Read all parts of the commentary questions in Section B before choosing the two to answer. Some candidates clearly made a decision based on part a) and b) and found they did not have much to write about in part c);
- For essay questions candidates should read the question carefully including the bullet points. Although this is not the only way to answer a question, they do give clear suggestions about one approach to take;
- keep referring back to the question when writing the essay. A not insignificant number of candidates lost focus of the questions.

The main area where candidates seemed to lose marks was in not answering the question set, often giving too much narrative information at the expense of discussion. This was evident in all the modules, including controlled assessment. Also many candidates need to produce a wider variety of ideas, rather than trying to give lots of evidence on one area.

Candidates should, wherever possible, try to examine issues from an ancient perspective. This is always likely to lead to a greater understanding and better evaluation. It is also important for candidates to try to examine two sides of a question where this is invited by the wording, as this makes evaluation easier. Candidates are also encouraged to consider the differences between rich and poor, or men and women, as appropriate in A351 and A353.

In the controlled assessment module, examiners were impressed by the research and interest which many candidates showed, and the accuracy of the marking and explanatory comments of teachers. It is clear that candidates and teachers alike are becoming more confident in the controlled assessment process.

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

General Comments

As expected the candidates produced a wide range of responses, but the vast majority demonstrated that they had been well prepared for the exam. Most candidates were familiar with the style of the questions. This year slightly more candidates had been prepared for the Athens option than the Rome option. As happened last year there were a small number of candidates who were apparently unsure of which topic they were expected to answer and answered questions from both topics, or muddled Athens and Rome in their answers.

Option 1 – Athens

Section A

- 1 Many candidates were clearly well prepared. A surprising number failed to identify Zeus. Artemis and Athene also caused some confusion.
- 2 Again most candidates responded well. Some candidates stated that Athenian houses did not have a 'storeroom' instead of 'kitchen'.
- 3 Mostly answered accurately, the most common errors being the job of 'fireman' and 'priest' as the roles of a slave.
- 4 Almost all candidates scored at least some marks on this. Sometimes the poor animal's entrails were inspected before it was killed.
- 5 Mostly accurate.
- 6 A little confusion here, as to be expected. Some candidates were not able to identify more than three correct options. Watching plays and cleaning the Parthenon were the most common incorrect answers.

Section B

- 7 This was the least popular of the questions in this Section.
 - (a) Some candidates only mentioned one or two factors in brief here, but the 'describe' type question requires either a few points in detail or several points.
 - (b) Candidates seemed polarised here: some were expert on Athene and her mythical links to Athens, as well as explaining how Athene's other attributes (war and wisdom) were important to Athenians, while others only identified the link between the names.
 - (c) Disappointingly many candidates offered only one or two reasons here but the more successful offered more detail. A pleasing number were able to comment on the relative difference between a humble Athenian home and the effort that was put into temple building.

- 8** Overall this was answered very well.
- (a)** Most candidates could list plenty of features of the layout of a Greek theatre accurately.
 - (b)** Candidates tended to answer this question very well though those that merely listed features without explaining how these features could help an audience enjoy a play did not score as highly. Credit was awarded to the many candidates who discussed scenery, costumes, props etc owing to open interpretation of the question.
 - (c)** This question tended to be tackled less well than the previous 2 and examiners were left with the impression that some candidates may not have read all three parts of the question before starting their response and fell down on this part of the question. Some candidates had little knowledge of a Greek chorus and confused it with a modern orchestra.
- 9** This was the most popular question in section B of this option and generally produced strong answers.
- (a)** Many candidates had excellent knowledge of the different teachers and what they taught.
 - (b)** Although this question was clearly focused on the *paedagogos* the stronger candidates also mentioned the various teachers and even the *kyrios*.
 - (c)** Again, there were many pleasing responses to this question. Many candidates could identify reasons to support both sides of the argument. However, the weaker candidates made generalised comments based on the modern world (eg 'Teachers were important as they helped the children learn so they could get a good job').

Option 2 – Rome

Section A

- 10** Apollo and Minerva were not always correctly identified.
- 11** On the whole this was answered well, the most common incorrect answers being in (d) where option B ('businessman') was often selected, and (e) where option D ('write') was often selected.
- 12** The responses were generally accurate however Legionary soldiers were not slaves.
- 13** Almost all candidates scored at least some marks on this. As with the Athens Option, sometimes the poor animal's entrails were inspected before it was killed.
- 14** Mostly accurate.
- 15** Very well answered.

Section B

Questions 16 and 17 more popular than Q18

- 16** (a) A real mix of responses here, ranging from detailed and accurate description to generalised comment based on modern churches.
- (b) Most candidates were aware that Jupiter was the king of the gods, but only a few were able to explain another two factors. Credit was awarded for some quite obscure but detailed answers where benefit of the doubt was given on the assumption that the candidate had been taught those details.
- (c) Again a mixed set of responses, but many candidates identified that they were there for both earthly and spiritual reasons.
- 17** (a) Most candidates could provide plenty of detail here ranging from measurements to the starting gates etc. The question was interpreted by some candidates as one where they had to quote from the text (as in A352), but in A351 the text is only there as a prompt. Candidates who responded in this way were not disadvantaged though some found it difficult to achieve high marks. Some candidates went off at a tangent and described chariot racing instead of the Circus Maximus.
- (b) Lots of good answers here – the best including three (or more) clear explanations. Some candidates simply described the day's events.
- (c) Many candidates produced good responses and were able to identify such factors as the risks they undertook, the betting, the link to teams and so forth. However some candidates resorted to circular arguments in response to this question by stating that charioteers became popular simply "because they were famous", or that they were popular "because women liked them".
- 18** (a) Candidates were generally very good and had clearly studied Gladiators in some detail.
- (b) There tended to be a slip towards basic description of events in these responses, but the better responses focused on "How far..." in order to explain **why** the events were interesting (or not) to an ancient Roman.
- (c) We were pleased by the responses to this question in which candidates demonstrated a wider knowledge of Roman life. Credit was given to references to emperors 'seeking votes' from the people of Rome as that was taken to mean 'seeking popular support'. However some candidates suggested that the emperor was elected into power. Many candidates were also able to identify that the games demonstrated the might of Rome.

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

General Comments

Overall candidates demonstrated good knowledge of the topics, and most were clearly familiar with the style of the questions. Examiners saw a wide range of responses, but the vast majority demonstrated that they had been accurately guided and well prepared for the exam. There was approximately an even number of entries for the two options, Athens and Rome.

A handful of candidates answered questions from BOTH the Athens and Rome options. Only the marks from the option with the best responses were counted, not a combination of the best answers from both.

There were a few candidates who started the Athens topic, then crossed out their answers and restarted the Rome topic, although most candidates were clearly aware of the correct option.

Option 1 – Athens

Section A

1 This was the least popular of the questions in this Section.

- (a) Some candidates only mentioned one or two factors in brief here, but the 'describe' type question requires either a few points in detail or several points.
- (b) Candidates seemed polarised here: some were expert on Athene and her mythical links to Athens, as well as explaining how Athene's other attributes (war and wisdom) were important to Athenians, while others only identified the link between the names.
- (c) Disappointingly many candidates offered only one or two reasons here but the more successful offered more detail. A pleasing number were able to comment on the relative difference between a humble Athenian home and the effort that was put into temple building.

2 Overall this was answered very well.

- (a) Most candidates could list plenty of features of the layout of a Greek theatre accurately.
- (b) Candidates tended to answer this question very well though those that merely listed features without explaining how these features could help an audience enjoy a play did not score as highly. Credit was awarded to the many candidates who discussed scenery, costumes, props etc owing to having taken an open interpretation of the question.
- (c) This question tended to be tackled less well than the previous 2 and examiners were left with the impression that some candidates may not have read all three parts of the question before starting their response and therefore were less successful on this part of the question. Some candidates had little knowledge of a Greek chorus and confused it with a modern orchestra.

- 3 The most popular question in section A of this option and generally produced strong answers.
- (a) Many candidates had excellent knowledge of the different teachers and what they taught.
 - (b) Although this question was clearly focused on the *paedagogos* the stronger candidates also mentioned the various teachers and even the *kyrios*.
 - (c) Again, there were many pleasing responses to this question. Many candidates could identify reasons to support both sides of the argument. However, the weaker candidates made generalised comments based on the modern world (eg 'Teachers were important as they helped the children learn so they could get a good job').

Section B

- 4 The Panathenaia question allowed candidates to demonstrate their detailed knowledge of the festival. Most were also able to focus on the question and provide a two-sided balanced argument, although some got no further than narrative description. The best answers contained a lot of really detailed factual information about the festival as well as awareness of Athens' place in the wider Greek world, and how the Panathenaia promoted the city's image and power.
- 5 The *kyrios* question was equally popular with the Panathenaia one. Again descriptions ranged in quality as would be expected, but the better answers debated whether the *kyrios* was more, or less important than the *kyria* and the slaves. A wide range of detailed factual support was used in the 'Thorough' answers. The best answers also raised the difference between rich and poor families. Very few really understood the idea that the *oikos* was a family firm, or that slaves contributed as craftsman and farm labourers etc in addition to their role as domestic helpers.

Option 2 – Rome

Section A

- 6 This was the least popular question in Section A by a considerable margin.
- (a) A real mix of responses here, ranging from detailed and accurate description to generalised comment based on modern churches.
 - (b) Most candidates were aware that Jupiter was the king of the gods, but only a few were able to explain another two factors. Credit was awarded for some quite obscure but detailed answers where benefit of the doubt was given on the assumption that the candidate had been taught those details.
 - (c) Again a mixed set of responses, but many candidates identified that they were there for both earthly and spiritual reasons.
- 7 A very popular question, along with Q8.
- (a) Most candidates could provide plenty of detail here ranging from measurements to the starting gates etc. The question was interpreted by some candidates as one where they had to quote from the text (as in A352), but in A351 the text is only there as a prompt. Candidates who responded in this way were not disadvantaged although some found it difficult to achieve high marks. Some candidates went off at a tangent and described chariot racing instead of the Circus Maximus.

- (b) Lots of good answers here – the best including three (or more) clear explanations. Some candidates simply described the day's events.
- (c) Many candidates produced good responses and were able to identify such factors as the risks they undertook, the betting, the link to teams and so forth. However some candidates resorted to circular arguments in response to this question by stating that charioteers became popular simply "because they were famous", or that they were popular "because women liked them".
- 8 (a) Answers were generally very good and candidates had clearly studied Gladiators in some detail.
- (b) There was a tendency towards basic description of events in these responses, but the better responses focused on "How far..." in order to explain **why** the events were interesting (or not) to an ancient Roman.
- (c) We were pleased by the responses to this question in which answers demonstrated a wider knowledge of Roman life. Credit was given to references to emperors 'seeking votes' from the people of Rome as that was taken to mean 'seeking popular support'. However some candidates suggested that the emperor was elected into power. Many candidates were also able to identify that the games demonstrated the might of Rome.
- 9 Weaker responses simply described the education system, but on the whole most candidates evaluated the statement to a greater or lesser extent. The best candidates discussed girls, as well as boys, and also the differences between rich and poor. Some candidates were quite vague on careers that young Romans might aspire to. As with the equivalent Greek question, some candidates showed a lack of real understanding of the context of the society pupils were studying: eg: not "get a job as a politician", but "have a successful career in the Senate".
- 10 As with question 9 some candidates described the role of the *paterfamilias*. Most, however, were able to compare their importance with the wife and/or the slaves, and some even discussed the role of the children. Daily responsibilities of the *paterfamilias* were, on the whole, covered well. The best candidates provided a well-balanced answer and differentiated between rich and poor households.

A352/01 Epic and Myth (Foundation Tier)

General Comments

The paper this year proved very accessible to most candidates. As in previous years, Homer proved considerably more popular than Ovid, although there was a slight increase in the number of candidates who attempted the Ovid questions. It was very encouraging to see far fewer rubric errors than in previous years, with virtually all candidates ticking the right number of responses in Section A, and virtually no candidates attempting all three comprehension questions. There are still however a few candidates who regard the instruction of answering two questions to mean answering two of the three five mark questions attached to each passage. Time did not appear to be an issue with no candidate seemingly running out of time.

Candidates found the Section A questions for each author much easier than the comprehension passages. In a significant number of cases, a whole five mark question was missed out. Even if the answer is almost entirely wrong, candidates will still score a mark or two for any accurate detail, and so should not miss out questions.

The major problems for candidates revolved around factual knowledge in the Section B questions. Candidates were often able to provide ideas in the first sub-question, but struggled to recall detailed facts of episodes, and as a result evaluation in the final question was often shallow. However there were a few superb answers in Section B which were as good as ones seen for the Higher Tier.

Option A – Homer

Section A

- 1 A vast majority of candidates scored full marks on this section. Occasionally Circe and Calypso or Alcinous and Aeolus were confused. Very few candidates scored less than four marks on this question.
- 2 This question caused more problems. Many candidates chose the option of boars being hunted, with only around half the candidates achieving both marks.
- 3 This question produced a mixed response, but two-thirds of candidates scored full marks. Ten years cropped up regularly for Calypso, and the visit to Aeolus often was thought to last a year. Many responses had changes of ideas and answers crossed out, suggesting this proved challenging to candidates.
- 4 This question was done far better than in previous years. Most candidates got the order completely correct, and very few lost more than a mark. The most common error was to reverse the final two answers, perhaps as candidates thought the maids would have shrieked on seeing the naked Odysseus.
- 5 These individual questions were very well done for the most part. The one exception to this was 5a, which was known by less than half of the candidates. 5b, 5c and 5d proved very straightforward. Occasionally in 5e candidates thought that Penelope was the name of Phaeacian queen, whilst in 5f Teiresias occasionally masqueraded as a member of the crew.

- 6 A very good number of candidates gained full marks in this question. The most common correct answer missed was that Calypso sang with a beautiful voice, with nearly all answers confusing her with Circe in warning him about the cattle of the Sun God. No candidate scored less than 3 marks.
- 7 This question, whilst pleasing, was slightly less well done than the previous one, with candidates gaining 4 marks more often than 5. Many thought that having one eye was a feature of being uncivilised, often missing the fact the Polyphemus did not live as part of a community. A significant number also believed that farming and talking to animals were signs of being barbaric.

Section B

- 8 (a) This question produced a wide variety in the quality of the responses seen. Most candidates referred to the wealth of the palace, quoting the references to the precious metals and some discussed the brightness of the colours in the passage and talked about the detail given to ordinary objects, such as the door handle. However there was a tendency for many candidates to state something was vivid or simply quote, rather than make points. A number of candidates disappointingly quoted a string of isolated words such as “splendid” or “mansion”, or simply picked out a list of descriptive words. Discussion of the simile was often rather bland, with numerous references to it helping the reader imagine the scene, which gained little credit as it did not show an understanding of the particular simile printed. Better responses were able to highlight the mystical or dazzling nature of the comparison. Unusual aspects were sometimes discussed, but surprisingly few candidates thought that the bronze walls or golden doors were worth mentioning. Some responses discussed the role of the gods in the construction of the palace, but many seemed confused about what the sentries were, and a number of candidates did not understand what a threshold was.
- (b) Many candidates did not read the question carefully enough, and this resulted in unnecessary discussion of what happened at the beach between Nausicaa and Odysseus, which unfortunately could not gain any credit. Those who started with Odysseus setting off from the beach usually fared much better. Most responses did not mention Odysseus stopping at the grove and praying, or that he did not travel with Nausicaa, but nearly all discussed the mist around Odysseus and his meeting with Athene, disguised as a young girl. Variable detail was given of the conversation between Athene and Odysseus, but the best responses discussed the family history in Phaeacia and the nature of the Phaeacians. A few exceptional answers gave details of the family tree of the royal family of Phaeacia. Few candidates chose to mention what Odysseus had seen on the way, and those that did tended to elaborate on the details of the palace in the passage, rather than the harbour and meeting place. A number of answers wrongly stated that Odysseus was given black looks as he went through the town, even from candidates who had also stated that he was hidden in a mist.
- (c) There were many pleasing responses to this question. Most focused on xenia, with the best discussing how the Phaeacians were a religious people and would have feared a punishment from Zeus, god of hospitality. A few responses however talked excessively about the custom of xenia and were unable to provide a second idea. Many responses discussed Odysseus’ enhanced appearance, his polite address which was designed to create pity, his heroic status and his supplication of Arete. His magical appearance from the mist was often discussed, as was the suspicion that he might have been a god. It was pleasing to see the range of ideas given, which is always key to a successful answer.

- 9 (a)** There were many fine analyses of Odysseus' leadership, with candidates being equally split as to whether he was a good or bad leader. Lots of answers picked up on the manner of address he gave to his men, stating that he wanted to be seen as one of them. His inclusive style of leadership was also mentioned in asking the men to help him come up with a plan, although some were credited equally for the belief that a leader should be more decisive and come up with vital decisions personally. Most candidates talked positively about his honesty in his appraisal of their situation, but others suggested the equally valid view that he was hardly inspiring his men. His scouting of the area was almost always universally praised. The major confusion occurred in the final phrase of "they might have spared themselves their lamentations for all the good that they did". A large number of responses misinterpreted this in believing that the men had actually done some good, while more perceptive responses realised that this showed Odysseus' toughness, which was usually taken as a criticism, rather than what was needed in the situation. Either response was credited. A smaller problem was that the mention of Polyphemus and the Laestrygonians resulted in candidates trying to retell how he was a good or bad leader in those incidents. Better answers discussed how a good leader might be more tactful in handling an already shell-shocked crew.
- (b)** Many candidates discussed the hopeless situation that Odysseus' men were in to good effect, focusing on the need for help, the fact the men were lost and that there was nowhere else to go. These details were in the passage, but as they were correct assumptions, they were credited. However most candidates thought that the men were hungry and thirsty. As the men had just feasted by the ships, this was not felt to be a valid answer. Another common assumption was to suggest that the men could smell food. More perceptive answers mentioned the need for supplies which was given credit. Candidates gave several creditable interpretations of the tame animals seen. Some felt that it unnerved the men and made them want to go inside away from them, whilst others felt it gave the men confidence that no harm would come to them there. Many candidates recalled that Circe was singing and at her loom, but did not take things further in saying that such activities were indicative of a cultured and harmless Greek woman. Candidates should also be aware not to miss obvious points, in that they decided to enter as they were simply carrying out orders given by Odysseus. Few candidates could recall that a reliable member of the crew, Polites, suggested that they should enter.
- (c)** This was a question where many candidates spent too long discussing material outside the parameters of the question. Nearly all started well with mentioning relevant ideas, but after a brief mention of the change to pigs, many candidates focused on what Odysseus then did and how he avoided becoming a pig. Candidates must make sure that they read the question carefully to ensure that they focus on relevant material. Where candidates stuck to the right information, weaker answers stated that the men were changed into animals, without specifying pigs, and discussed events that there is no textual evidence for, such as Circe intending to eat the men or going back to her singing and weaving. There was also confusion in some cases that one of the men escaped as a pig, almost certainly due to the recall of what happened in a film version of the Odyssey. Most candidates were unable to give precise details of the concoction given to the men. The best answers were often distinguished by excellent recall of the separate parts of the concoction or details of the food thrown to the pigs at the end, although there were as many wrong items of food suggested as right ones.

- 10 (a)** This question was generally answered well, but weaker answers exhibited the same problems as 2a. There was a tendency in many answers to quote parts of the passage that candidates found exciting, without discussing why they considered them to be so. Too often candidates talked about exciting vocabulary such as “shrieking” without discussion of why it was exciting. Other candidates sought to comment on alliteration, but examples such as “Scylla snatched” were not felt to make the passage dramatic. Many candidates, however, did come up with a range of creditable ideas. A number commented on how Homer created surprise in the opening lines by focusing on Charybdis. There was pleasing discussion of the gruesome imagery in the following lines, and some candidates were able to see the pathos in the final word of the victims, although a few candidates saw this as a rebuke towards Odysseus. The simile caused problems for the candidates. It is not enough to talk about how the simile helps modern readers or ancient listeners to visualise the scene better. More perceptive responses stated how it stressed the speed of the attack, the helplessness of the men, or the power of Scylla. The final lines were often commented upon, with the best answers stating that if a hardened warrior like Odysseus said this, it must have been truly awful.
- (b)** This question produced some superb responses and most candidates scored very well. Most could recall how many heads Scylla had, with a significant number also correctly identifying the number of legs and rows of fangs. A lot of responses gave details about her environment and the pointlessness of Odysseus arming himself. A few candidates even recalled Scylla feasting on other sea creatures or details about her mother. Many provided excellent detail of what Circe had said about the environment of Scylla, which was felt to be relevant detail. Weaker responses often said that Scylla had many heads, got the numbers of body parts wrong or talked about the number of arms that Scylla had.
- (c)** This question produced a good standard of responses. These tended to show knowledge both of Odysseus not telling his crew about Scylla and arming himself to face her. It was encouraging to note that candidates both praised (for not letting his men panic or mutiny) and criticised Odysseus (for not preparing his men for their fate). Most candidates criticised Odysseus for arming himself which put his crew in danger, whilst some, perhaps a little harshly, saw his decision to fight Scylla as self-centred to gain honour. The best answers also discussed his speech before facing Scylla and his decisive actions in getting men out of the danger after Scylla had struck. A number of candidates mistakenly believed that arming himself resulted in Scylla killing a second group of six men. Weaker responses criticised Odysseus for not saving the lives of the six victims, or for deciding to face Scylla at all, unaware that there really was nothing that he could have done. A number of candidates felt that as the men shouted out Odysseus, he must have been a good leader, but this was felt to be a rather contrived idea.

Option 2 – Ovid

Section A

- 11** Most candidates gained full marks in this question, and all gained at least two.
- 12** This question was again answered well. Most candidates achieved full marks.
- 13** The three multiple choice questions were all well answered, with nearly all candidates achieving full marks. Every candidate got 13b correct.

- 14** This was a very well answered question. Virtually all candidates knew the correct sequence of events.
- 15** This question was more problematic, but most candidates were still able to attain at least 3 marks. A significant number of candidates thought that Nisus was winning the war against Minos and a few thought she lived in Rome, with the fact that Scylla used to watch the fighting from the walls being the most commonly omitted wrong answer.
- 16** This question proved challenging for candidates. Whilst many achieved full marks, there were a number of candidates who scored around half marks. The transformations of a Lydian sailor and Ariadne were generally not well known, and many candidates thought a Lydian sailor was turned into a bull. The transformations of Baucis and Teiresias were better known.
- 17** Candidates generally found this question the hardest of the section, with less than one-third gaining all four marks. The age of mining was not well known, with Silver often being given in response, and the age of the first houses also proved difficult. Each year candidates find it hard to differentiate between some aspects the Silver and Iron Ages, and so would be well advised to learn this area more thoroughly.

Section B

- 18 (a)** Many candidates gave a good description and discussion of the personification of Notus. Most candidates were able to spot the simile, but as with other similes on the paper, discussion was limited, often being along the lines that a sponge is an everyday object. It would be pleasing to have seen more candidates go beyond this, perhaps commenting on the quantity of water that would come out, or the ease with which the water flooded out. There was good discussion as to how the range of gods involved suggested the force of the storm, but very few candidates sought to use the lines about the destruction of the crops giving a personal feel to the passage and create pathos. The final lines were also rarely used, although those that did made excellent comments on the conciseness of the instructions.
- (b)** Most candidates linked this question to the Iron Age and the story of Lycaon and gave an accurate retelling of it. Better answers went into a lot of detail about the crimes of Lycaon, while weaker ones gave a rather brief summary. Most candidates were able to provide a link between this story and the behaviour of humans at the time, but few gave details of the precise crimes that humans were committing against each other or discussed the lack of piety. Some candidates chose to answer the question as to why Jupiter decided to destroy the earth in a flood, rather than in any other way (such as a fire). This was seen as a perfectly valid interpretation of the question and gained due reward.
- (c)** There were many very fine answers to this question. Most candidates could remember the names of Deucalion and Pyrrha and also could recall Themis, although some were unable to name her or thought Apollo was asked for advice. There was some confusion in what advice they were given, with weaker answers suggesting that they were to throw stones rather than bones. The transformation of stones into people was widely known, but many failed to mention that Deucalion interpreted the meaning correctly and that the stones he threw became men, while those his wife threw became women.

- 19 (a)** Although this question was done a little better than 6a, it was another question where many candidates found it difficult to do more than paraphrase the text. Weaker responses stated that a line showed a peaceful and attractive scene, without really saying why. Better responses discussed the seclusion of the place suggesting that no humans had anything to do with it. The relaxing sound of the water was sometimes mentioned. However, nearly all answers seemed to only use the first half of the passage. Hardly any candidates chose to mention the relaxed nature of the nymphs, the removal of weapons and the beauty of the women, which was surprising given the space that Ovid gives to describing such details.
- (b)** Answers showed that candidates knew this story very well. Virtually all candidates mentioned that Actaeon saw Diana bathing, her decision to turn him into a stag and the death of Actaeon at the hands of his dogs. The main discriminator in deciding a mark was how many of the other details were given. Many recalled the nymphs tried to shield Diana, but fewer mentioned the throwing of water at Actaeon and even fewer the curse that she uttered.
- (c)** Candidates tended to answer this question well. All seemed aware that it was a total accident that Actaeon stumbled upon Diana, with a few recalling the giveaway lines “chance was the culprit. No crime was committed. Why punish a man for a pure mistake.” (3.141-142). The other common idea was the tragic irony of him being killed by his own dogs, while his fellow-hunters wished he were there. Many good answers could recall the pitiful sound he made and felt this was cruel. Some felt Diana had been too harsh in punishing him without giving him any chance. A very small number of excellent answers recalled that even some of the gods felt Diana had gone too far.
- 20 (a)** There were many fine responses seen to this question, and the marks gained for it were higher than the other opening questions for the Ovid passage. Only a small number of candidates struggled for ideas. The most successful ones were those that discussed a range of characters from the passage, rather than just concentrating on one or two. Most candidates started off by discussing Telamon, but weaker answers tended to repeat what was in the passage, saying he was excited. There was pleasing discussion of the selflessness of Peleus and the precision of Atalanta, which was often contrasted with the rashness of the other hunters at the end.
- (b)** This question proved very challenging for most candidates. While many mentioned in passing that the boar had killed people and destroyed crops, few could provide precise details such as naming either crops or individuals. Many resorted to guesswork in describing that it knocked down buildings. Some, in the absence of relevant knowledge, chose to discuss why the boar was unleashed on Calydon in the first place. Although this question was not generally done to a high standard, the marks gained for parts a) and c) ensured that the standard for the whole question was equivalent to the other Ovid questions.
- (c)** As with other questions, the key to the best answers here was the range of parts of the story that were discussed. It was pleasing to note that candidates were usually able to discuss the behaviour of Meleager and Althaea throughout the story. Most were able to discuss the mental anguish of Althaea because of her divided loyalties. The best candidates could recall the love shown by Meleager’s sisters through their grief and metamorphosis. Some candidates simply listed examples of love, but most did try to explain how the power of love was shown.

A352/02 Epic and Myth (Higher Tier)

General Comments

Examiners were impressed by the performance from many candidates this year on both set authors. As in the past, Homer proved the more popular option, but there was a slightly higher percentage of Ovid scripts than in previous years. There was no discernible difference in the standard of answers in the two options. Many of these answers showed evidence of superb teaching and learning, and it was clear that candidates had enjoyed studying the texts. In addition, it was encouraging to note that some candidates had read beyond the prescription. In such cases candidates are credited for relevant ideas and knowledge, although it must be stressed that examiners are not looking for such knowledge in answers for candidates to score full marks.

It was encouraging that the occurrence of rubric errors has fallen and very few candidates showed evidence of running out of time.

Answers in the first literature sub-question, which related to the printed passage, were variable. Candidates were clearly more at ease in answering questions about characterisation, but found discussion of what made a passage interesting, exciting or attractive more difficult. Candidates need to be aware that they cannot merely quote a line (or in many cases isolated words) and simply state that this reference is interesting, exciting or peaceful, as was often the case this year. They must make points to gain full credit for their answers. This was very evident in the handling of similes which were more often than not accompanied by the standard phrase that “it helps a reader to imagine the scene more easily.” When discussing similes, candidates need to try to discuss what the simile tells us about the situation in the passage. However it was pleasing to see that all candidates did try to support ideas with references to the text and were duly credited. One thing that seemed apparent, especially in Ovid, was that candidates did not use the whole of the passage to find ideas, far preferring the first half. In many cases candidates would be well advised to read the whole passage and think carefully, before writing the first ideas they see from the first few lines.

Many candidates were able to show a very good factual knowledge in questions where they were asked to describe events. Weaker responses were often as a result of the candidate not having read the question carefully enough and talking too widely about a character or an event. For example, in question 2c, many candidates talked at length about what happened to Odysseus when he faced Circe or the decision to send half the group to Circe, with the key information often being relegated to a sentence or two. However many were able to recall even minute details, although this was not necessary to gain full marks.

Examiner saw some excellent evaluation for many of the questions that demanded this. It was impressive to see candidates arguing lucidly, and many were aware that certain incidents, such as Odysseus’ leadership in the episode with Scylla could be taken in various ways.

Examiners saw some very fine responses to essays. Many showed a thorough knowledge of the texts and chose evidence carefully, but a significant number churned out what seemed to be a pre-prepared essay, most notably on question 5. Candidates must read the question carefully and, although the bullet points are not the only way to answer a question, they do give clear suggestions about one approach to take. Some candidates seem to have read the title and moved straight on to answering the question without looking at the advice given. As a result some essays were rather thin and too heavily narrative based, whilst others did not address the key issue in the question.

Option 1 – Homer

The three comprehension questions were roughly equal in popularity and were done to similar standards. The essay on epic poetry proved far less popular than that on the hindrances to Odysseus, although the average marks were very similar.

Section A

- 1 (a) This question produced a wide variety in the quality of the responses seen. Most candidates referred to the wealth of the palace, quoting the references to the precious metals and some discussed the brightness of the colours in the passage and talked about the detail given to ordinary objects, such as the door handle. However there was a tendency for many candidates to state something was vivid or simply quote, rather than make points. A number of candidates disappointingly quoted a string of isolated words such as “splendid” or “mansion”, or simply picked out a list of descriptive words. Discussion of the simile was often rather bland, with numerous references to it helping the reader imagine the scene, which gained little credit as it did not show an understanding of the particular simile printed. Better responses were able to highlight the mystical or dazzling nature of the comparison. Unusual aspects were sometimes discussed, but surprisingly few candidates thought that the bronze walls or golden doors were worth mentioning. Some responses discussed the role of the gods in the construction of the palace, but many seemed confused about what the sentries were, and a number of candidates did not understand what a threshold was.
- (b) Many candidates did not read the question carefully enough, and this resulted in unnecessary discussion of what happened at the beach between Nausicaa and Odysseus, which unfortunately could not gain any credit. Those who started with Odysseus setting off from the beach usually fared much better. Most responses did not mention Odysseus stopping at the grove and praying, or that he did not travel with Nausicaa, but nearly all discussed the mist around Odysseus and his meeting with Athene, disguised as a young girl. Variable detail was given of the conversation between Athene and Odysseus, but the best responses discussed the family history in Phaeacia and the nature of the Phaeacians. A few exceptional answers gave details of the family tree of the royal family of Phaeacia. Few candidates chose to mention what Odysseus had seen on the way, and those that did tended to elaborate on the details of the palace in the passage, rather than the harbour and meeting place. A number of answers wrongly stated that Odysseus was given black looks as he went through the town, even from candidates who had also stated that he was hidden in a mist.
- (c) There were many pleasing responses to this question. Most focused on xenia, with the best discussing how the Phaeacians were a religious people and would have feared a punishment from Zeus, god of hospitality. A few responses however talked excessively about the custom of xenia and were unable to provide a second idea. Many responses discussed Odysseus’ enhanced appearance, his polite address which was designed to create pity, his heroic status and his supplication of Arete. His magical appearance from the mist was often discussed, as was the suspicion that he might have been a god. It was pleasing to see the range of ideas given, which is always key to a successful answer.
- 2 (a) There were many fine analyses of Odysseus’ leadership, with candidates being equally split as to whether he was a good or bad leader. Lots of answers picked up on the manner of address he gave to his men, stating that he wanted to be seen as one of them. His inclusive style of leadership was also mentioned in asking the men to help him come up with a plan, although some were credited equally for the belief

that a leader should be more decisive and come up with vital decisions personally. Most candidates talked positively about his honesty in his appraisal of their situation, but others came up with the equally valid view that he was hardly inspiring his men. His scouting of the area was almost always universally praised. The major confusion occurred in the final phrase of “they might have spared themselves their lamentations for all the good that they did”. A large number of responses misinterpreted this in believing that the men had actually done some good, while more perceptive responses realised that this showed Odysseus’ toughness, which was usually taken as a criticism, rather than what was needed in the situation. Either response was credited. A smaller problem was that the mention of Polyphemus and the Laestrygonians resulted in candidates trying to retell how he was a good or bad leader in those incidents. Better answers discussed how a good leader might be more tactful in handling an already shell-shocked crew.

- (b) Many candidates discussed the hopeless situation that Odysseus’ men were in to good effect, focusing on the need for help, the fact the men were lost and that there was nowhere else to go. These details were in the passage, but as they were correct assumptions, they were credited. However most candidates thought that the men were hungry and thirsty. As the men had just feasted by the ships, this was not felt to be a valid answer. Another common assumption was to suggest that the men could smell food. More perceptive answers mentioned the need for supplies which was given credit. Candidates gave several creditable interpretations of the tame animals seen. Some felt that it unnerved the men and made them want to go inside away from them, whilst others felt it gave the men confidence that no harm would come to them there. Many candidates recalled that Circe was singing and at her loom, but did not take things further in saying that such activities were indicative of a cultured and harmless Greek woman. Candidates should also be aware not to miss obvious points, in that they decided to enter as they were simply carrying out orders given by Odysseus. Few candidates could recall that a reliable member of the crew, Polites, suggested that they should enter.
- (c) This was a question where many candidates spent too long discussing material outside the parameters of the question. Nearly all started well with mentioning relevant ideas, but after a brief mention of the change to pigs, many candidates focused on what Odysseus then did and how he avoided becoming a pig. Candidates must make sure that they read the question carefully to ensure that they focus on relevant material. Where candidates stuck to the right information, weaker answers stated that the men were changed into animals, without specifying pigs, and discussed events that there is no textual evidence for, such as Circe intending to eat the men or going back to her singing and weaving. There was also confusion in some cases that one of the men escaped as a pig, almost certainly due to the recall of what happened in a film version of the *Odyssey*. Most candidates were unable to give precise details of the concoction given to the men. The best answers were often distinguished by excellent recall of the separate parts of the concoction or details of the food thrown to the pigs at the end, although there were as many wrong items of food suggested as right ones.
- 3 (a) This question was generally answered well, but weaker answers exhibited the same problems as 2a. There was a tendency in many answers to quote parts of the passage that candidates found exciting, without discussing why they considered them to be so. Too often candidates talked about exciting vocabulary such as “shrieking” without discussion of why it was exciting. Other candidates sought to comment on alliteration, but examples such as “Scylla snatched” were not felt to make the passage dramatic. Many candidates, however, did come up with a range of creditable ideas. A number commented on how Homer created surprise in the opening lines by focusing on Charybdis. There was pleasing discussion of the

gruesome imagery in the following lines, and some candidates were able to see the pathos in the final word of the victims, although a few candidates saw this as a rebuke towards Odysseus. The simile caused problems. It is not enough to talk about how the simile helps modern readers or ancient listeners to visualise the scene better. More perceptive responses stated how it stressed the speed of the attack, the helplessness of the men, or the power of Scylla. The final lines were often commented upon, with the best answers stating that if a hardened warrior like Odysseus said this, it must have been truly awful.

- (b) This question produced some superb responses and most candidates scored very well. Most could recall how many heads Scylla had, with a significant number also correctly identifying the number of legs and rows of fangs. A lot of responses gave details above her environment and the pointlessness of Odysseus arming himself. A few candidates even recalled Scylla feasting on other sea creatures or details about her mother. Many provided excellent detail of what Circe had said about the environment of Scylla, which was felt to be relevant detail. Weaker responses often said that Scylla had many heads, got the numbers of body parts wrong or talked about the number of arms that Scylla had.
- (c) This question produced a good standard of responses. These tended to show knowledge both of Odysseus not telling his crew about Scylla and arming himself to face her. It was encouraging to note candidates both praising (for not letting his men panic or mutiny) and criticising Odysseus (for not preparing his men for their fate) in the first of these. Most candidates criticised Odysseus for arming himself which put his crew in danger, whilst some, perhaps a little harshly, saw his decision to fight Scylla as self-centred to gain honour. The best answers also discussed his speech before facing Scylla and his decisive actions in getting men out of the danger after Scylla had struck. A number of candidates mistakenly believed that arming himself resulted in Scylla killing a second group of six men. Weaker responses criticised Odysseus for not saving the lives of the six victims, or for deciding to face Scylla at all, unaware that there really was nothing that he could have done. A number of candidates felt that as the men shouted out Odysseus, he must have been a good leader, but this was felt to be a rather contrived idea.

Section B

- 4 This question was very unpopular with candidates, but did produce a variety of approaches and standards. Some candidates who answered it seemed unaware of the genre of epic poetry, and took epic in a modern sense, writing whether they found it a good story or not. This was credited, but such essays tended to not to show a good level of understanding of the way that the story was written. Some of the essays were strong on narrative, but were unable to analyse the text or answer the question set.

Better responses attempted to discuss features of epic poetry, and there were helpful comparisons with modern epics to discuss what an epic was. Many answers discussed the use of gods, monsters and challenges. Others talked of a quest, here being the attempt of Odysseus to return home and reclaim his kingdom. There was pleasing discussion of Homer's use of similes and epithets, and how they enhanced the story.

Some candidates struggled with whether the Odyssey was a series of stories, but the more perceptive answers talked about the individual tales that Odysseus told to Alcinous. Most however considered these tales as an integral part of the whole story which contributed to its epic quality.

- 5 This question was considerably more popular than question 4 and provided a wide variety of responses. The major problem for many candidates was that they focused their essay purely on what women did, and did not use the guidance in the second bullet point to talk about male characters who caused Odysseus problems. This resulted in AO2 marks for understanding being pegged in the “some” boundary, as they failed to appreciate many of the reasons for the problems faced. However they could still gain full marks for other AOs if they gave very thorough evidence and evaluation of what women did. Nearly all candidates did discuss how females helped Odysseus. Although the essay was deliberately worded so that this was not necessary to get full marks, candidates were rewarded for their ideas.

Most essays began with a very good treatment of Calypso, discussing the help and harm that she caused. Candidates who were aware of the wider story showed impressive understanding that the gap of seven years allowed problems for him to develop at home. The mention of Calypso often then led on to a discussion of Circe, who was usually dealt with in identical fashion to Calypso. Only a small number of candidates realised that Odysseus was to more blame on this occasion as he was not a prisoner, but was free to go at any time, with his men having to force the issue. There was good detail from many of the precise advice that Circe gave, although some strangely felt that Circe was not helpful as the encounters that she told him about were dangerous. A recurring error in many scripts was that Odysseus thought he had been on the island for only a few days. Candidates need to be more careful about using anything other than the actual text as evidence.

Nausicaa and Athene also were mentioned heavily. The best answers mentioned that, despite her help on numerous occasions, Athene had actually started all the trouble for Odysseus, or that she did not always intervene on his behalf. Many candidates then went on to discuss a variety of other females, including Ino, Lampetie, the Sirens, Charybdis and Arete, with some very perceptive candidates stating that for all her build-up, Arete actually does very little to assist Odysseus. Some intelligently realised that women seem to have killed very few of the crew, but presented a different kind of threat.

Many candidates gave a good discussion of male characters. Most often Polyphemus and Poseidon were discussed, but the best essays mentioned the shortcomings of both Odysseus and his crew, and several discussed the role of Zeus, the Sun god and Fate. There were lots of excellent ideas which focused on Odysseus’ greed and desire for fame, or his crew’s lack of trust, with Eurylochus often being seen as a prime mover in the troubles.

Option 2 – Ovid

Section A

The first two comprehension questions proved more popular than the third, but all were done to similar standards. Both essays were equally popular, and showed a very good knowledge of the text, although the quality of discussion was variable.

- 6 (a) Many candidates gave a good description and discussion of the personification of Notus. Most candidates were able to spot the simile, but as with other similes on the paper, discussion was limited, often being along the lines that a sponge is an everyday object. It would be pleasing to have seen more candidates go beyond this, perhaps commenting on the quantity of water that would come out, or the ease with which the water flooded out. There was good discussion as to how the range of gods involved suggested the force of the storm, but very few candidates sought to use the lines about the destruction of the crops giving a personal feel to the passage and

create pathos. The final lines were also rarely used, although those that did made excellent comments on the conciseness of the instructions.

- (b) Most candidates linked this question to the Iron Age and the story of Lycaon and gave an accurate retelling of it. Better answers went into a lot of detail about the crimes of Lycaon, while weaker ones gave a rather brief summary. Most candidates were able to provide a link between this story and the behaviour of humans at the time, but few gave details of the precise crimes that humans were committing against each other or discussed the lack of piety. Some candidates chose to answer the question as to why Jupiter decided to destroy the earth in a flood, rather than in any other way (such as a fire). This was seen as a perfectly valid interpretation of the question and gained due reward.
- (c) There were many very fine answers to this question. Most candidates could remember the names of Deucalion and Pyrrha and also could recall Themis, although some were unable to name her or thought Apollo was asked for advice. There was some confusion in what advice they were given, with weaker answers suggesting that they were to throw stones rather than bones. The transformation of stones into people was widely known, but many failed to mention that Deucalion interpreted the meaning correctly and that the stones he threw became men, while those his wife threw became women.

7 (a) Although this question was done a little better than 6a, it was another question where many candidates found it difficult to do more than paraphrase the text. Weaker responses stated that a line showed a peaceful and attractive scene, without really saying why. Better responses discussed the seclusion of the place suggesting that no humans had anything to do with it. The relaxing sound of the water was sometimes mentioned. However, nearly all answers seemed to only use the first half of the passage. Hardly any candidates chose to mention the relaxed nature of the nymphs, the removal of weapons and the beauty of the women, which was surprising given the space that Ovid gives to describing such details.

(b) Answers showed that candidates knew this story very well. Virtually all candidates mentioned Actaeon saw Diana bathing, her decision to turn him into a stag and the death of Actaeon at the hands of his dogs. The main discriminator in deciding a mark was how many of the other details were given. Many recalled the nymphs tried to shield Diana, but fewer mentioned the throwing of water at Actaeon and even fewer the curse that she uttered.

(c) Candidates tended to answer this question well. All seemed aware that it was a total accident that Actaeon stumbled upon Diana, with a few recalling the giveaway lines “chance was the culprit. No crime was committed. Why punish a man for a pure mistake.” (3.141-142) The other common idea was the tragic irony of him being killed by his own dogs, while his fellow-hunters wished he were there. Many good answers could recall the pitiful sound he made and felt this was cruel. Some felt Diana had been too harsh in punishing him without giving him any chance. A very small number of excellent answers recalled that even some of the gods felt Diana had gone too far.

8 (a) There were many fine responses seen to this question, and the marks gained for it were higher than the other opening questions for the Ovid passage. Only a small number of candidates struggled for ideas. The most successful ones were those that discussed a range of characters from the passage, rather than just concentrating on one or two. Most candidates started off by discussing Telamon, but weaker answers tended to repeat what was in the passage, saying he was excited. There was pleasing discussion of the selflessness of Peleus and the precision of Atalanta, which was often contrasted with the rashness of the other hunters at the end.

- (b) This question proved very challenging for most candidates. While many mentioned in passing that the boar had killed people and destroyed crops, few could provide precise details such as naming either crops or individuals. Many resorted to guesswork in describing that it knocked down buildings. Some, in the absence of relevant knowledge, chose to discuss why the boar was unleashed on Calydon in the first place. Although this question was not generally done to a high standard, the marks gained for parts a) and c) ensured that the standard for the whole question was equivalent to the other Ovid questions.
- (c) As with other questions, the key to the best answers here was the range of parts of the story that were discussed. It was pleasing to note that candidates were usually able to discuss the behaviour of Meleager and Althaea throughout the story. Most were able to discuss the mental anguish of Althaea because of her divided loyalties. The best candidates could recall the love shown by Meleager's sisters by their grief and metamorphosis. Some candidates simply listed examples of love, but most did try to explain how the power of love was shown.

Section B

- 9 This question provided a wide variety both in the ideas presented and the quality produced. Most candidates were able to describe a range of physical transformations, although sometimes candidates took rather too long in narrating the background to the change. Many candidates sought to use information they had used in the comprehension questions, such as from the stories of the flood or Actaeon. If there was a wide range of other myths discussed, there was no problem in this, but this was not always the case. Other transformations that were often described were those of Daphne, Io, Lycaon, Semele and Scylla. Candidates were strong in describing the change, but found it difficult to make any evaluative comments. Too often candidates spent a long time discussing what the moral was for each story. While this was relevant, it was rather repetitive and it did feel that some candidates had seen the word "change" and decided to write an essay that they had written before on the messages of the story. Better responses were aware that in some stories, such as in Daedalus and Icarus, the change was not the central part of the story.

Many candidates did not seem to make full use of the advice given in the bullet points. After considering what they viewed as physical transformations, weaker responses seemed to struggle for any other types of change to discuss. Some of the other types of change discussed were further examples of physical changes. As a result some essays were very unbalanced, and this made evaluation hard after a one-sided argument. Better responses discussed the change of types of story and the changes in behaviour of different characters, such as Daedalus and Scylla. There was good discussion of the changes in the way stories were linked, and the different outcomes. Some very perceptive answers were aware that Ovid changed the detail in the story to interest the reader, with some well-known stories such as the Minotaur being briefly only mentioned by Ovid.

- 10 Whilst many candidates wrote very fine essays, there was a tendency to only answer half of the question adequately. Many candidates seemed to take it as a given that the stories were entertaining, and that it wasn't necessary to address this part of the question. The first bullet point advised candidates to discuss whether they found the stories entertaining, but in some cases this seemed to amount to little more than a sentence that the stories were entertaining. Other candidates gave an idea or two as to why the stories might entertain, but were clearly much keener to move on to the second part of the essay. Where an essay title has two parts, it is expected that candidates will spend equal time answering both halves. If candidates were unable to say why they found stories entertaining, they were unable to show thorough or some understanding of the way Ovid wrote, and in many cases the evaluation was far from detailed.

There were, however, many good ideas as to why the stories were entertaining. Ovid's use of humour in stories like Baucis and Philemon and the boar hunt was regularly cited, although a number of candidates took the "entertaining" part of the title to mean funny, and so whilst several examples were often given, it did get repetitive. Better ideas discussed the different types of stories, Ovid's use of language and story-telling technique, and characterisation. There were few attempts to argue that Ovid was not always entertaining, but those that did often came up with fine ideas, such as the creation story lacking the usual excitement. It is always very admirable when candidates are prepared to discuss that they have not enjoyed certain aspects of the texts and support them with good evidence.

Many candidates had strong ideas on whether the stories were predictable and came up with very sensible arguments. A lot of candidates stated that some of the stories were very similar, such as gods having affairs with mortal women (usually resulting in suffering for the women), or pious couples being rewarded by the gods. Some of the more unusual transformations, such as that of Teiresias, were discussed well as examples of the stories not being predictable, and candidates made perceptive comments that Ovid often gave telling clues as to how a story might turn out, such as with the warnings that Daedalus gave his son. Most deaths were usually seen as predictable, but several candidates were surprised by the death of Meleager in particular, stating with maturity that it was unusual for an admirable character to suffer such an agonising death. In weaker answers the evaluation tended to become rather "predictable" and shallow, with little more than the candidate saying that they thought that something would or would not happen.

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

General Comments

It was felt that this unit worked well and candidates were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the topic at a level appropriate to their ability. There were very few candidates failing to complete the paper in time and the vast majority had clearly been well prepared for the examination.

It should be noted that in Foundation Tier Section A, if a question asks the candidate to tick a certain number of correct statements, candidates should only select that number of responses since they lose a mark for every extra one ticked.

Some candidates only answered one question in section B others answered all three or selected a part from each question.

Candidates writing answers outside the designated area were a problem since it is very difficult for examiners to see writing which is in between questions. Candidates should be instructed to write on the additional pages at the back of the answer book. If candidates do use the additional pages, they should put a note on for the examiner at the end of the main question and on the additional page label each part of the answer 1a, 1b etc.

Option 1 – Sparta

Section A

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

For Task 1c few candidates knew the correct answer.

In Task 2c many candidates were mistaken in thinking that the statement was true.

Task 3 was answered very well by the majority of candidates as was task 6.

Task 5 was usually done well with only a few difficulties related to the dog or the bow and arrows.

Section B

- 7 (a) This was well answered by most candidates. Many answers discussed the two kings, five *Ephors*, 28 over 60s and two kings in the *Gerousia* and all men over 30 in the *Apella*. Some answers were muddled about the age boundaries and who had to be over 60, others confused the *Gerousia* with either the *ecclesia* or the *Ephors*. Some candidates gave too much information in a) and not enough in b) and c).
- (b) A significant number of candidates were able to list duties of *Ephors* but candidates could only score a sound or thorough mark by showing some understanding of what these functions contributed to the running of Sparta. The fact that the *Ephors* elected the headmaster needed to be explained by saying that this was to ensure the *Agoge* ran correctly; the fact that the *Ephors* declared war on the *Helots* every year needed to be explained by saying that this was to keep them subdued and prevent an uprising.

- (c) The majority of candidates were able to ascertain that it was to prevent any one person or group becoming too powerful but only the best candidates fully explained how the different parts worked as a whole. The best answers provided examples to show how the different parts balanced and kept a check on each other. Weaker answers omitted examples of how the different parts balanced each other and gave a general description of equality '*eunomia*' and balance.
- 8 (a) The question was generally well answered and most candidates knew about the poetry being patriotic and used to encourage bravery. The most successful answers related the learning of poetry to the Spartan military ethos or tactics. Not many mentioned the link with the *agoge*. There were quite a few candidates who answered the question without saying what the poetry of Tyrtaios was about and this would have enhanced their answers considerably. A number of answers discussed the incentive of the prize of meat from the quotation.
- (b) A pleasing number of candidates could provide enough detail for a thorough score. The bread voting system was discussed sometimes and this was interesting. Not many could give numbers or the fact that the men formed a unit in battle and shared a tent on campaign but most understood its purpose and could give some factual detail. Discussion of providing a share of the food was very common.
- (c) The question was quite well answered although only the best candidates made clear links with the different stages of Spartan education/life and although many candidates could answer well in reference to the duties of boys and men, few included the women managing the estate so the men would have food. Discussion centred on the family not living together so that they would not mind when one or the other died did not score highly.
- 9 (a) This question was generally well answered and many candidates knew enough for full marks although they gave thorough responses in very varied ways. Many candidates mentioned the Delphic oracle but some focused more on the reforms that Lykourgos was supposed to have put in place while others gave details of the life of Lykourgos and how he travelled around Crete and Ionia etc. Some candidates did confuse Lykourgos with Leonidas. Weaker candidates tended to forget the main fact of Lykourgos going to the Oracle and just listed the laws he made the *Spartiates* abide by.
- (b) There was quite a lot of variation in how well this question was approached, the most successful answers mentioned the Messenian war, and equality among *Spartiatatai* most concentrated on how Lykourgos wanted to make Sparta 'strong'. Some candidates could list things that Lykourgos did; however, fewer could explain that, for example, the army/military training was to suppress the helots so they would not revolt again. Some candidates mistook Thermopylae for the Messenian War or made no mention of the Messenian War at all.
- (c) There were some interesting ideas here based upon the perceived success/failure of Sparta. At the limited end of the scale there was often a statement of candidates' opinion without too much justification. The most thorough answers considered both positive and negative outcomes.

Option 2 – Pompeii

Section A

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

In task 10, question a) was often answered as 'in the forum' instead of 'on a busy street' and question d) was mistakenly answered as dominoes. For task 10e) having to tick two correct answers did not confuse the candidates but many thought it was rich people and travellers rather than poor people.

In task 11 quite a few candidates mistakenly wrote that the sponsor of the games was Herculaneum.

In task 12 there was some confusion of the various buildings but there was no pattern to this.

Some candidates thought that the statement in task 14 about the emperor choosing the town council was true.

Tasks 13 and 15 were generally done well by most candidates.

Section B

- 16 (a)** This question was answered really well and many candidates knew enough to give a thorough answer. There was some confusion from a small number of candidates about the Latin names for the rooms eg *caldarium* = cold room but they got credit for the correct rooms in English.
- (b)** This question was often answered very badly. Good answers explained the heating process including slaves tending the furnace, the floor on pillars, flues in the walls and convection. However there was extensive misunderstanding of the system which led to candidates describing pipes under the floor carrying hot water, steam and even hot water circulating under the floors to heat the rooms. There were fires under the floors and even hollow floorboards.
- (c)** Weaker answers to this question tended to be lists of reasons why people went to the baths. These answers could only score in the 'some' band. In order to be 'sound' or 'thorough' the answer had to include explanation as to why most people in Pompeii had to use the public baths – because they did not have baths at home. Thorough answers also referred to the lack of offices for businessmen.
- 17 (a)** This question was sometimes well done with candidates knowing the design of the theatre and could explain it, although some candidates merely said what was in the theatre but did not explain eg tiered seating. There was some confusion with the amphitheatre.
- (b)** A good many candidates had knowledge of the typical plot of a Roman comedy. Candidates who discussed types of humour instead of plots gained no credit.
- (c)** Good responses to this question discussed the clever slave and reversal of the roles of real life, familiarity creating humour and enjoyment and also slapstick humour, good actors, familiar stock characters, costumes and masks – all the other things that would have made the play funny. Some candidates failed to pick up on the comedy aspect in the question and focused on popularity.

- 18 (a)** This question was quite well answered with many candidates knowing the details of Fiorelli's contribution. Some struggled with the technical description of exactly how the plaster casts were made. A common error was to list what Fiorelli did without saying how it improved the excavations.
- (b)** Many candidates were familiar enough with the main details of the eruption to give a thorough answer. A good few candidates knew about the earth tremors, the ash cloud, the pumice and the pyroclastic flows. The darkness was less often mentioned and some candidates did mistakenly have the town covered with lava.
- (c)** Some candidates had a good knowledge of who Pliny was and gave their opinion backed up with details. Many saw usefulness as content. The best answers supported their opinion with details of Pliny's account, while the most limited answers could only focus on Pliny being an eye-witness to the eruption. A number of candidates mixed Pliny the Elder and Pliny the Younger into one person and Pliny the Elder was also often mistakenly referred to as Pliny's father.

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

General Comments

This unit differentiated well and candidates were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the topic at a level appropriate to their ability. A significant number of candidates gave really excellent answers exceeding the demands of the question and were a pleasure to read. There were some displays of incredibly detailed knowledge of the houses in Pompeii and passionate discussions of the Spartans and their values at Thermopylae. It was disappointing when candidates with obvious knowledge failed to gain marks by not answering the specific question asked either as a result of failing to read them properly or misinterpretation. On the whole examination technique was good and the vast majority had clearly been well prepared for the examination.

In Section A most candidates answered two questions as instructed. In Section B there was little evidence of candidates running out of time and some wrote at great length in response to the essay titles. Candidates writing answers outside the designated area were a problem as it is very difficult for examiners to see writing which is in between questions. Candidates should be instructed to write on the additional pages at the back of the answer book. If candidates do use the additional pages, they should put a note on for the examiner at the end of the main question and on the additional page label each part of the answer 1a, 1b etc.

Option 1 – Sparta

Section A

- 1 (a) Well answered with most candidates having a very secure knowledge. Many knowledgeable answers discussed the two kings, five *Ephors*, 28 over 60s and two kings in the *Gerousia* and all men over 30 in the *Apella*. Some answers were a little muddled about the age boundaries and who had to be over 60 others confused the *Gerousia* with either the *ecclesia* or the *Ephors*. Some candidates gave too much information in a) and not enough in b) and c).
 - (b) The majority of candidates were able to list duties of *Ephors* but candidates could only score a sound or thorough mark by showing some understanding of what these functions contributed to the running of Sparta. The fact that the *Ephors* elected the headmaster needed to be explained by saying that this was to ensure the *Agoge* ran correctly; the fact that the *Ephors* declared war on the *Helots* every year needed to be explained by saying that this was to keep them subdued and prevent an uprising.
 - (c) The majority of candidates were able to ascertain that it was to prevent any one person or group becoming too powerful but only the best candidates fully explained how the different parts worked as a whole. The best answers provided examples to show how the different parts balanced and kept a check on each other. Weaker answers omitted to give examples of how the different parts balanced each other and gave a general description of equality '*eunomia*' and balance.
- 2 (a) The question was generally well answered and most candidates knew about the poetry being patriotic and used to encourage bravery. The most successful answers related the learning of poetry to the Spartan military ethos or tactics. Not many mentioned the link with the *agoge*. There were quite a few candidates who answered the question without saying what the poetry of Tyrtaios was about and this would have enhanced their answers considerably. A number of good answers discussed the incentive of the prize of meat from the quotation.

- (b) A pleasing number of candidates could provide enough detail for a thorough score. The bread voting system was discussed often and this was interesting. A few candidates got so carried away with describing the bread voting system they left themselves little time or space to write about anything else. Not many could give numbers or the fact that the men formed a unit in battle and shared a tent on campaign but most understood its purpose and could give some factual detail. Discussion of providing a share of the food was very common and details of the food were very good to see (although not required).
- (c) The question was quite well answered although only the best candidates made clear links with the different stages of Spartan education/life and although most candidates could answer well in reference to the duties of boys and men, not many included the women managing the estate so the men would have food. Sometimes good theorising was not accompanied by substantiating fact. A few candidates correctly argued that living apart kept the husband and wife passionate to ensure more Spartan babies. Discussion centred on the family not living together so that they would not mind when one or the other died did not score highly.
- 3 (a) This question was generally well answered and most candidates knew enough for full marks although they gave thorough responses in very varied ways. Many candidates mentioned the Delphic oracle but some focused more on the reforms that Lykourgos was supposed to have put in place while others gave details of the life of Lykourgos and how he travelled around Crete and Ionia etc. with some good references to the end of the legend, where he got the Spartans to promise to keep his laws until he returned, but then never did; the best got in something of both. Some candidates did confuse Lykourgos with Leonidas. Weaker candidates tended to forget the main fact of Lykourgos going to the Oracle and just listed the laws he made the *Spartiates* abide by.
- (b) There was quite a lot of variation in how well this question was approached, the most successful answers mentioned the Messenian war, and equality among *Spartiatatai* most concentrated on how Lykourgos wanted to make Sparta 'strong'. The majority of candidates could list things that Lykourgos had done, fewer could explain that for example the army/military training was to suppress the *Helots* so they would not revolt again. Some candidates mistook Thermopylae for the Messenian War or made no mention of the Messenian War at all.
- (c) Again there was a wide range in the quality of answers. In some cases candidates had strong opinions and backed them up well with factual knowledge. There were some interesting ideas here based upon the perceived success/failure of Sparta. The most thorough answers considered both positive and negative outcomes. At the limited end of the scale there was often a statement of candidates' opinion without too much justification.

Section B

- 4 Only candidates at the highest level made any distinction between isolationism and isolation. There were some interesting interpretations of isolationism – all credited – including geographical, personal (separation from family) and lack of contact with other states. Candidates generally had a secure knowledge of facts for AO1, an understanding of them for AO2 and were able to balance the pros and cons of Sparta's isolation for AO3. It was possible to score highly even on AO1 without much reference at all to isolationism if a candidate argued that it was not that which gave Sparta its strength and went on to give a thorough argument supported by factual knowledge. A substantial number of candidates argued that it was the Spartan system (education and government) that gave it its strength but that it was the isolation that allowed that to develop. Sparta's women were also seen

as something that gave it strength. For AO2 candidates were able to show understanding of the implications of their chosen factual content and for AO3 were able, at the highest level, to construct well reasoned, independent answers to the question. Weaker answers looked for ways in which Sparta was strong while ignoring the word isolationism. The best answers repeatedly referred back to the question in order to maintain the focus of the essay.

- 5 The passion with which candidates write about Thermopylae never wanes and the answers to this question were no exception. Generally candidates knew the facts of the battle for AO1. Some essays recounted the battle giving a wealth of factual detail but then failed to analyse how these facts reflected the values of the Spartans thus failing to gain marks on AO2 and 3. The best essays, which scored highly on AOs 1, 2 and 3 gave an in-depth analysis of how each feature of the battle reflected an aspect of Spartan values and how this was supported by other evidence. For example ‘All the Spartans fought to the death at Thermopylae because that was what the *Agoge* trained them to believe was the best way to die. This was reinforced by the fact that they could not go home if they lost the battle as their women told them to come back either “with their shield or on it”.’ Values were often clearly identified and linked to the events, but the best essays also saw them as rooted in Spartan ethos and education. The value most often disregarded was comradeship and equality. Some candidates found it more difficult to pick out values and priorities; often they could only go as far as never retreating and fighting to the death. Some of the stronger responses were able to make excellent links with Herodotus and also with the Demaratus/Xerxes conversation related in Herodotus with the ‘glorious death’. Candidates who knew and understood the values of the Spartans did not always explain/illustrate the background to them as in the training of the *Agoge*. Some candidates did not know the difference between Herodotus’ account of the battle and the one in the film *300* and Aristophanes and Lykourgos both featured in the battle on occasion.

Option 2 – Pompeii

Section A

- 6 (a) This question was answered really well and nearly all candidates knew enough to give a thorough answer. There was some confusion by a small number of candidates about the Latin names for the rooms eg *caldarium* = cold room but they got credit for the correct rooms in English. There were some very well-labelled diagrams.
- (b) This question was often answered quite badly. Good answers explained the heating process including slaves tending the furnace, the floor on pillars, flues in the walls and convection. However there was extensive misunderstanding of the system which led to candidates describing pipes under the floor carrying hot water, steam and even hot water circulating under the floors to heat the rooms. There were fires under the floors and even hollow floorboards. Candidates do need to be prepared thoroughly for this type of question.
- (c) Weaker answers to this question tended to be lists of reasons why people went to the baths which could only score in the ‘some’ band. In order to be ‘sound’ or ‘thorough’ the answer had to include explanation as to why most people in Pompeii had to use the public baths – because they did not have baths at home. Thorough answers also referred to the lack of offices for businessmen and some talked about the climate or the desire to show off with an entourage of slaves.

- 7 (a) This question was usually well done as most candidates knew the design of the theatre and could explain it well, although some candidates merely said what was in the theatre but did not explain eg tiered seating. Some candidates mistakenly thought the theatre was built into a hill and there was some confusion with the amphitheatre.
- (b) A good many candidates had excellent knowledge of Roman comedies and their plots. Plays discussed included *The Rope*, *The Arrogant Soldier*, *The Pot of Gold* and *The Bacchises*. Candidates who discussed types of humour instead of plots gained no credit.
- (c) Good responses to this question discussed the clever slave, reversal of the roles of real life, familiarity creating humour and enjoyment and also slapstick humour, good actors, familiar stock characters, costumes and masks – all the other things that would have made the play funny. Some candidates failed to pick up on the comedy aspect in the question and focused on popularity.
- 8 (a) On the whole this question was quite well answered with most candidates knowing the details of Fiorelli's contribution. Some struggled with the technical description of exactly how the plaster casts were made. A common error was to list what Fiorelli did without saying how it improved the excavations. It is delightful that a high proportion of candidates appear to be on first name terms with Giuseppe.
- (b) For the most part candidates were familiar enough with the main details of the eruption to give a thorough answer. Nearly all candidates knew about the earth tremors, the ash cloud, the pumice and the pyroclastic flows. The darkness was less often mentioned and some candidates did mistakenly have the town covered with lava.
- (c) Most candidates had a good knowledge of who Pliny was and gave their opinion backed up with details. There was a range of responses with those who saw usefulness as content and those who discussed the provenance of the source and assessed its contribution to our knowledge compared with other sources of information. The best answers supported their opinion with details of Pliny's account, while the most limited answers could only focus on Pliny being an eye-witness to the eruption. A number of candidates mixed Pliny the Elder and Pliny the Younger into one person and Pliny the Elder was also often mistakenly referred to as Pliny's father. Some answers focused more on Pliny's reliability than how useful the information is.

Section B

- 9 There was a very wide range in the answer quality for this question. For AO1 some candidates showed thorough knowledge of all the government officials in Pompeii, their roles, the buildings they used and how they were elected although in less successful answers there was quite a significant amount of confusion over the roles of *Aediles* and *Duovirs*. AO2 marks were gained by showing understanding of how the government functioned with candidates showing a varying degree of understanding. For AO3 strong candidates were able to link the corruption in the government with bribery and with various guilds to obtain support. Others discussed that the system must have been effective given how well run the city was. Another successful argument discussed the system's unfairness to women, slaves and poor people as voters or as candidates.

- 10** For AO1, candidates showed really extensive knowledge of the two houses on the specification, although there was some inevitable confusion of the two. Even answers with stronger arguments attributed features to the incorrect house. Some candidates also gained AO1 marks by giving details from a typical house. Some candidates had learnt about other houses in Pompeii and discussion of these was interesting and creditworthy but by no means expected. AO2 marks were gained by showing understanding of the purpose of features of the houses. For AO3 many candidates struggled to produce argument beyond that the houses reflected the wealth of their owners. There was some discussion of entertainment and education, but few looked behind ostentation to the socio-political reasons for it. There was some discussion of religion and reference to the *lararium* in the house of the Vettii. Only a few very thorough answers included what the houses didn't show or discussed the fact that we know about the values and priorities from other evidence. More thoughtful answers discussed *salutatio* and there was some very interesting discussion of the erotic pictures in the house of the Vettii.

A354 Culture and Society in the Classical World

General Comments

As with last year, the moderators were delighted with the sheer enthusiasm of the essays that were submitted in the samples. The Olympic Games was definitely the most popular option, with some moderators reporting that they only saw essays on that topic. One wonders if the Games will still be as popular once London 2012 has passed!

It was felt that centres are confidently using the marking grid in a fair way and applying the assessment criteria appropriately. There were some centres where AO3 was a problem – not enough credit was given to those answering the question directly, or too much was given to those not answering it but with a good level of AO1/AO2.

Some very bulky parcels were sent through, with folders for each student, and one even including the students' text books as well as all their notes. It is appreciated if centres could just attach the cover sheet to the essay and not send extraneous material. Similarly, it was reported that some centres had enclosed dozens of loose sheets with little or no attempt to bind the essays together. Treasury tags, or at least staples, would be appreciated.

Centres are reminded of the regulations regarding the level of help that can be given to candidates. Advice on research skills and selection of sources is appropriate but sample essays on the topic and essay plans are not allowed under the rules regulating Controlled Assessment.

Specific Points

Option 1: Sophocles' *Antigone*

Question 1 was far more popular than question 2.

1 'The Chorus is essential to the success of Sophocles' *Antigone*.' How far do you agree with this statement?

A few centres tackled this one. Generally, it was answered very well – certainly all candidates clearly knew the play well. Different approaches were taken, with some mostly considering the role of the chorus in general and needing to focus more on the specific play.

OR

2 Imagine that you are going to put on a production of Sophocles' *Antigone* for a modern-day audience. With detailed reference to the play, explain how you would stage it to make it accessible for your audience.

Insufficient evidence for comment.

Option 2: Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*

3 'Aristophanes is suggesting that the women of Athens would rule the city better than the men do.' How far do you agree that this is the main message of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*?

Few were seen, but seemed to be of a generally high quality. The stronger answers were ones which used the text closely.

OR

4 How useful is Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* in helping us to understand what life was like in Athens at the time?

Some candidates responded well to this title, using the text balanced with contemporary evidence, but others included very little contextual information about ancient Athens and tried to rely solely on the text.

Option 3: The Olympic Games

The Olympics accounted for about 75% of the essays seen, with a roughly 50/50 split between the 2 questions. There was a huge range of marks within this topic. The weakest essays also seemed to come from this topic, with some students clearly needing a lot of guidance.

The religion/sport question sometimes led to a one-sided focus on religion mostly, with little consideration of sport. Sometimes it seemed they weren't actually answering the question – perhaps using a previous year's topic for practice was leading them astray a bit? There was less of a tendency to try to list all the event of the Olympic festival without analysis this year, although some candidates were determined to do this. Some candidates found ways to bring in the modern Olympic Games, even though it was rarely relevant.

Option 4: Virgil *The Aeneid*

7 How far do you think that Aeneas behaves as he wants to in the *Aeneid*?

Insufficient evidence for comment.

OR

8 To what extent do you think that *The Aeneid* would have inspired its Roman audience?

Few essays were seen but, as so often with the literature topics, they were generally strong. They seemed to know the epic and had selected material from across the books, and understood the historical context.

Option 5: Pliny *Letters*

A handful of candidates attempted this topic, and they tended to respond very effectively, demonstrating excellent contextual knowledge as well as clear understanding of issues of Pliny's Letters.

Option 6: Roman Britain

More of question 12 were seen than of question 11. Sometimes there was a misunderstanding about "the Britons" meaning modern-day Britain, rather than Ancient Britons. Within both questions, a number of different topics were discussed, largely successfully. Some candidates relied too much on modern academic texts and websites, rather than on evidence from the ancient world. This seriously impaired their ability to reach the highest levels.

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