

Classics: Classical Civilisation

Advanced GCE H441

Advanced Subsidiary GCE H041

Examiners' Reports

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

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Chief Examiner's Report

General Comments

At the end of the second full cycle of the new specification, it is pleasing to report that all the units seem to have bedded in well and that candidates have a good sense of what is expected of them. It was common to read in examiners' reports how much they had enjoyed marking their allocation for a particular Unit, and how much pleasure they had taken in reading the lively and interesting personal opinions and reactions of candidates. It was felt that candidates generally showed more engagement with the texts and the material evidence this year. They evidently enjoyed their studies and knew a good range of detail. The Unit reports provide specific feedback on significant issues and trends for the individual Units.

Whilst candidates had clearly revised well and could provide detailed information in their responses, sometimes the information was not always well employed. For example, there were many instances of candidates using material from last year's questions or trying to reproduce prepared essays or topics without making the material or argument relevant to the question selected. In commentary questions, the command phrase '*Using this passage as a starting point*' means that for a successful response there **must** be some consideration of material from the stimulus passage in addition to material from elsewhere in the play, book or other evidence. References to other material, or modern parallels, can be helpful but it is unwise for the discussion of such material to be longer than the relevant point about the Classical material.

On the whole, candidates made good use of the time allocation. There are still occasions, however, when candidates devote too much time to the commentary question and give short shrift to the essay. At AS, there is an increasing trend to do the paper in 'reverse order' – essay, (c), (b) and (a) – the jury is still out as to whether this is a successful technique. Targeting the higher marked questions does seem to help with timing, but not with the effective answering of the commentary question. The commentary questions are designed to take the candidate through the whole question in a logical manner so that they gain momentum as they complete each part of the question. There was evidence of some effective planning this year at both levels. Planned responses were generally better organised and produced more thoughtful, considered arguments. In particular, planning can help with the synoptic comparisons required at A2. Candidates need to be aware, however, that spending more than five minutes on the plan and making it too detailed can have a detrimental effect on the final piece of work.

A few other issues highlighted in examiners' feedback reports were:

- The quality of written communication was worse than last year.
- There were far fewer rubric errors at AS but a significant number at A2.
- The starting of a new page for each question was significantly worse than in previous years.
- Legibility is still a big issue for many candidates and illegible scripts create a lot of extra work for examiners (and the Chief Examiner!).

Principal Examiners felt that there was a marked difference in the performance of the candidates at AS and A2 this year, with the AS candidates generally out-performing the A2 candidates. At AS examiners reported an encouraging improvement in the overall standard in most units, particularly in the E-C grades. At the top end of the mark range, there were some superb answers to both commentary questions and essays in all the Units. At the lower end of the mark range there were far fewer very poor papers. As a result the overall percentage of A grades has remained fairly static, but there has been an increase in the percentages of other grades. At A2, however, candidates performed in a much less even manner: there appeared to be fewer candidates who produced outstanding performances across their two units or sometimes even across a complete paper; there were also some extremely weak performances with some candidates scoring in single figures. These issues had the effect of making the percentages for individual grades very similar to 2010.

F381 Archaeology: Mycenae and the classical world

General Comments

As ever, it is the sheer enthusiasm and enjoyment for the subject displayed in candidates' answers that continues to delight the examiners. Teachers are still encouraging candidates well in their study of Classical Archaeology. Most answers were pleasing, although examiners felt that there was a decrease in actual knowledge shown. A lot of answers made very valid points and discussed techniques well, but were let down by a lack of supporting evidence. In both essays and part (c) commentary questions, brief plans tended to produce stronger answers.

There were few rubric errors. Examiners felt that time management by candidates had improved. Most candidates make a good attempt at both sections and allocated an appropriate amount of space to each. In addition, there was an improvement in students reading the 'two societies' part of the question and trying to include non-Mycenaean examples.

On the negative side, candidates still struggle to spell Mycenaean or archaeology, despite both words appearing on the question paper. Mycenaean in particular was misspelt on perhaps 95% of scripts. There was also an increasing problem with using irrelevant examples, despite the plea made in the examiner's report last year. These examples included Egypt, the Aztecs, Mesopotamia, Petra and even the Tudors. Unfortunately, this led to loss of valuable marks in a number of cases, where half the answer was irrelevant to the question.

A final small note – there seemed to be a noticeable minority completely misunderstanding the interpretation of Grave Circle B. It was contrasted with Grave Circle A by candidates who thought these were the only graves at Mycenae and, because Grave Circle B is less rich overall, it was therefore where the lower classes were buried. One extreme example believed the slaves were buried there and, from this, assumed that amber and rock crystal were prevalent amongst the poorer people in society!

Comments on Individual Questions

Commentary Questions

Question 1 was slightly more popular than Question 2.

- 1 (a) Most were able to discuss the 'Temple' well. However, many candidates described either the room or the artefacts, but not both. The figurine was recognised by most candidates so everyone had something to say on this question. The Temple Complex was also known by all, and there was a good range of both artefacts and features of the layout. The only factual misunderstandings came from amalgamating the 'Temple' with the Room with the Fresco Complex. The second half of the question proved harder and the discriminating factor. Most could not think of anything beyond the circular argument of 'they worshipped gods here so it was a temple'. Stronger responses brought up arguments such as meaning of the snakes and the fact that it didn't correspond to domestic dwellings.

- (b) The topic of 'daily life' elicited some surprising responses, with marriage, death, riots and earthquakes apparently forming the daily routine for many in the ancient world. Some answers tried to twist the topic to discuss the life of the kings, but many gained high marks by using Linear B, archaeological evidence and the ruins at Pompeii. The biggest stumbling block encountered for this question was when candidates stopped reading the question after 'teaching us', and so they missed out the link to daily life/ordinary people. There were certainly some quite tenuous links with the question at times. However, those who did read it properly generally had a decent range of examples to talk about. Linear B proved very popular, often with some impressive recall of detail and some thoughtful comments about how the Mycenaean world was organised. Interestingly, those who used Pompeii as a comparative example often seemed to fall short, perhaps because the wealth of material led to unfocused answers.
- (c) The focus of many answers here was the architectural remains of tombs, rather than grave goods. Stronger answers used grave goods in detail. This was generally answered better than 1(b), as recall of tombs and graves was better. Most people could talk about the size/craftsmanship of tholoi and make a valid point. The stronger answers brought up some highly thoughtful points, including the difference between the recently dead and long dead (bones being pushed aside) and discriminating between respect for the dead and showing off the family's status. As mentioned above, Grave Circle B caused a stumbling block for a significant minority of candidates, plus there was some confusion between the shaft graves and the *tholoi*, with some seeing them as contemporaneous and hence the Grave Circles as 'middle class'.
- 2 (a) All candidates knew the particular dagger shown in the photo. Unfortunately, many answers dwelt in detail on this particular artefact, rather than doing as the question asked. In general knowledge of small artefacts and metal working techniques was not as good as in question 1(a). There was regular confusion between techniques, or a name given without any indication of the type of decoration the technique produced. Most could mention at least one other metal object, sometimes a good range, although the word 'small' was sometimes conveniently overlooked.
- (b) Many tried to twist this question in a different direction, but most managed to provide appropriate material to answer the question and show off their knowledge. This question discriminated clearly between the stronger and weaker answers. The stronger used it as a chance to show that they could employ an artefact and analyse it sensibly, whereas the weaker ones couldn't think of anything to say and hence talked about the rich instead. Slaves were invariably popular (both Mycenaean and Roman), but there were also those who looked beyond these to poorer classes in general. A pleasing number used skeletal evidence to infer details of the life of the poor.
- (c) There were some very strong responses to this. Pleasingly, many answers went beyond weapons and armour and discussed fortification. The stronger answers looked at a whole range of topics beyond the obvious weapons and armour, including Mycenaean preparedness for war (Cyclopean walls, 'rowers'), fighting tactics, and Roman martial organisation (similar layouts of forts). There was also generally a good range of artefacts given as examples, although there was a temptation to use literature. Several candidates got distracted by gladiators and hunting to the exclusion of military activity.

Essay Questions

3 and 4 were equally popular, but those who went for 5 tended to do better, as long as they provided evidence.

- 3** This question was by a small margin the most popular one this year. Weaker answers rambled around a few points without providing evidence from sites, but stronger answers could refer to actual sites and projects. The biggest stumbling block by far was to fall into the 'shopping list' of either trench types or surveying techniques and to forget the question until the conclusion rolled around. Those who did actually grapple with the question tended to look at a good range of points, including rescue archaeology, keeping accurate records, presenting to the public, and underwater archaeology. Some were quite passionate about the validity of archaeology and how the benefits outweighed the destruction. Those who remembered to give examples of archaeological sites gave a good range, although Schliemann and Fiorelli were by far the most popular. However, those who went down the 'shopping list' approach often forgot to refer to examples. As a side note, there was a distinct tendency for candidates to forget that the verb of destruction is destroy and not 'destruct'/'destroyed'!

- 4** This question was popular and enabled the candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of dating techniques. Some clearly understood the various techniques available to archaeologists but were not able to attribute the techniques to specific artefacts and sites. Again, there was a danger of giving a 'shopping list' essay and many candidates fell into this. When examples were given they were of a decent range, but there were also many candidates who become fixated on the details of dating techniques and forgot to provide any examples. Candidates displayed a satisfactory knowledge of the various dating techniques, as few got confused between them, and some showed surprising levels of technical detail. However, there were only a few candidates who rose to the challenge of the actual question. Some candidates gave careful analyses of absolute and relative dating and how these played out with real examples and techniques, but these were few and far between.

- 5** This essay was less popular than the rest, but it was handled well by those who tackled it. There was a range of analytical points within this small sample and it would have been interesting to see more candidates tackle this type of question, as they discussed such things as funding applications, meticulous record keeping, the advance of new recording technology, and presentation afterwards. Answers that referred to specific sites and projects gained the higher marks.

F382 Homer's *Odyssey* and Society

General Comments

Examiners were pleased by the overall standard of the answers and delighted by some individual responses. The level of engagement and personal response shown by candidates of all abilities was impressive and it was evident that students had enjoyed studying the *Odyssey*. In particular, candidates are demonstrating a greater awareness and appreciation of Homeric society and are including a significant range of examples in their responses.

Unfortunately, there were some rubric errors, with candidates attempting both context questions, and timing was also a problem for some. It is worth stressing to candidates not to write pages for the part (a) of the commentary questions.

The most common combination was question 1 and 4 with very few candidates attempting questions 2 and 5.

Comments on Individual Questions

Commentary Questions

- 1 (a) This question was generally well answered. Most candidates included the storm and Ino's intervention. The more detailed answers mentioned Odysseus' hesitation in abandoning his raft and his appeal to the river god. There was some confusion about the sequence of events in the water. Some candidates included detail of Athene's visit to Nausicaa and her journey to the river, although the question asked 'what happened to Odysseus'.
- (b) This was another question that was well attempted by candidates. The majority were able to discuss competently Odysseus' use of flattery as well as his ability to gain sympathy by alluding to his own sufferings. Many also referred to his use of supplication and references to the time he once led a fine army. Some were able to comment on Odysseus' ability to acknowledge Nausicaa as of marrying age and therefore appeal to her desire for marriage and a husband. However, only a small number of candidates demonstrated a more sophisticated analysis – why Odysseus had chosen to compare Nausicaa to Artemis or the fact that by referring to his misfortune at the hands of the gods, Odysseus is actually showing Nausicaa that he is worthy of their interference.
- (c) There were some very full answers to part (c) and some candidates wrote so much that they were short of time for Section B. Others ignored the part of the question which limited responses to Odysseus' 'travels' and brought in material from the second half of the epic, especially to do with Athene. Most candidates covered Poseidon, Zeus, Calypso and Circe. Many suggested that Calypso and Circe both hindered and helped Odysseus. Candidates sometimes dismissed Athene as totally helpful; better answers gave detail and questioned her support. More circumspect responses considered how the gods had helped as well as hindered Odysseus. They then analysed whether Odysseus himself or even his men were to blame for the trouble encountered.

- 2 (a) There were very few detailed responses to this question. Some misread the question and summarised events since Odysseus landed in Ithaca, being disguised as a beggar and reunited with Telemachus in Eumaeus' hut. They then related all events up until the contest itself. Most candidates could correctly describe the practical details of the contest e.g. string the bow and shoot an arrow through the 12 axe heads. They also correctly stated how Telemachus tried on three occasions to string the bow and would have succeeded on the fourth were it not for a nod from Odysseus. However, recall of the Suitors' attempts to string the bow was variable.
- (b) Despite the standard 'vivid' in the question, many responses struggled to make more than a couple of well-supported points. The similes, although mentioned by nearly all, proved resistant to analysis. Most picked out the ominous nature of the thunderclap and there were reasonable attempts at commenting on the mortification of the Suitors. Some candidates made a good job of exploring the proleptic qualities and the sardonic ironies in "get their supper ready" and passing on to "further pleasures".
- (c) Answers to this question were generally focussed on the characterisation of Telemachus rather than on his contribution to the epic poem. Most answers were able to discuss how Telemachus changes throughout the poem, from a young and inexperienced speaker at the Ithacan assembly in Book 2 to his harsh punishments of the disloyal maids in Book 22. They discussed his journey to manhood and his own mini Odyssey to Sparta and Pylos. More perceptive answers discussed how Telemachus allows us to realise the urgent situation in Ithaca prior to meeting Odysseus in Book 5 and understood that Telemachus is necessary for Odysseus to carry out his punishment of the Suitors, as well as providing the reader with an initial concept of the correct *xenia* etiquette in Book 1.

Essay Questions

- 3 This question proved to be not as popular as question 4. Most candidates were able to offer some definition of a hero, from a fairly crude macho type to far more sophisticated analyses of the significance of *kleos* and *time*. As in previous sessions, there were probably more modern than ancient Greek definitions of the hero. Generally this was well done, with most able to provide examples of heroic and non-heroic behaviour.
- 4 The most popular of the three questions for Section B and generally very well attempted with a good range of women discussed. The stronger answers included Odysseus' conversation with Agamemnon in Book 11 and the comparison between Penelope and Clytemnestra, as well as Demodocus' song of the adultery of Aphrodite and Ares. More telling responses made a clear distinction between a woman being deceptive and untrustworthy – for example Penelope is deceptive with her shroud trick to the Suitors, as well as with the bed trick to her husband Odysseus. However, her motives are commendable as she is trying to maintain her loyalty to her husband and is therefore trustworthy.
- 5 Very few candidates attempted Question 5 and, in general, the answers were of poorer quality with candidates struggling to identify more obvious examples of unreal elements such as Polyphemus, Scylla etc. There was even more difficulty in providing evidence of reality.

F383 Roman Society and Thought

General Comments

Examiners derive much enjoyment from reading the wide range of responses to questions in the unit and this year was no exception. In addition, candidates clearly had a sounder understanding of social context.

It was felt that essays could be further improved with more careful planning and by offering more specific details from texts.

Comments on Individual Questions

Commentary Questions

- 1 (a) Candidates were able to list a range of entertainments although some restricted their selection to different types of food. Better answers were those which were able to provide a wide-ranging selection with supporting detail.
 - (b) This question was well-answered. The most successful responses were based on sensory aspects, from sounds 'shrill', to colours 'black/white olives', to materials 'Corinthian Bronze'. Some only discussed the use of detail to create a vivid image and therefore only provided a limited range of material. A few candidates appeared unsure of the meaning of 'vivid'.
 - (c) While almost all candidates could cite examples of food and dinner parties in the prescribed works, analysis of why they were a popular topic was less well done. Answers which demonstrated a clear understanding of the nature and purpose of satire were the most successful. Some made clear distinctions between the ways in which the three different writers delivered their criticism. Candidates were asked to discuss three authors; some only discussed two – most commonly omitting Juvenal.
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- 2 (a) All but a few candidates could provide at least a basic knowledge of slavery. Some candidates were less sure of the process for freeing a slave. Some answers provided a full and detailed account of all three aspects of the questions and scored highly.
 - (b) This question was well-answered with candidates providing a wide range of textual references to demonstrate Pliny's horror. Less successful answers merely paraphrased Pliny's words to explain his horror rather than analysing technique and effects. Better answers noted the change of perspective towards the end of the passage as Pliny considers the implications of such an act for himself.
 - (c) Some responses assessed how much letter space was devoted to Pliny himself rather than to others. Some answers considered the purpose of Pliny's letters and the effect of publication. The best answers showed real insight, considering how letters could work for both sides of the argument. These answers also showed detailed knowledge of each letter used.

Essay Questions

- 3** This question was popular. Almost all candidates could name the relevant emperors with detailed background knowledge and why they might or might not be respected. Others gave detailed analysis of references in the prescribed texts to emperors. Most chose to compare Juvenal's disrespectful attitude towards Domitian with Pliny's respectful attitude towards Trajan. Some were able to pick out examples in *Dinner with Trimalchio* where Trimalchio is described in terms that might also fit Nero. The decision to have Horace in the list of authors enabled candidates to discuss how he 'fought for the wrong side' and to explore Maecenas' role. Also commonly mentioned was Claudius. Better answers combined very good society knowledge with a balanced answer.
- 4** A few responses were able to provide a clear and detailed explanation of both philosophies. Several candidates equated Epicureanism with hedonism. Knowledge and understanding of Stoicism was better than for Epicureanism, with evidence being supplied in general terms from Pliny's letters and from Horace. Details may have improved responses further. The question also required a personal response in the form of a choice between the two philosophies; most candidates reserved this choice for their conclusion, supporting their choice with brief reasons. A better approach might have been to provide a running analysis of the benefits/enjoyable aspects of each philosophy throughout the essay.
- 5** This question was also a popular choice. However, some candidates took the meaning of 'cruelty' literally and merely listed instances within the writers of physical cruelty. This made for a less successful answer. Better answers demonstrated a full understanding of the nature of satire and contrasted the use of cruelty by the different authors, providing detailed evidence for their views. Effective comparisons were made between Juvenal (the 'angry' satirist) and Horace (the 'smiling' satirist). Some candidates were able to provide a sophisticated answer based on argument rather than author.

F384 Greek Tragedy in its context

General Comments

Examiners were pleased by the rise in the number of candidates taking this unit. The enjoyment and appreciation of the plays by the students was evident in their answers. The wide ranging detail of responses, and varying opinions elicited by the questions indicate that the candidates had thought about the plays, and were able to discuss their ideas effectively. It was also pleasing to see references to productions, which reinforced the idea of the set texts as drama.

Candidates were able to write fluently, and express their ideas in well-structured and thought out arguments. There were still some issues of English; Question 1 added shepard to the usual spelling suspects (Euripedes, Aegitus, a multitude of versions of *stichomythia* and manoeuvres). 'Empathy' and 'Sympathy' were interchangeable in use and meaning. Of the questions, Question 2 on Euripides' *Medea* proved to be marginally the more popular of the Commentary Questions, while of the essay questions, Question 4 on the *Bacchae* was answered by most candidates, with Question 3 (*Agamemnon*) the next most popular, and Question 5 (The role of the Chorus) a distant third.

Comments on Individual Questions

Commentary Questions

- 1 (a) Candidates generally knew the most important and relevant details. Most were able to give an account of the events which occurred. A few still considered 'since' to mean 'before', although this was significantly less than in previous years. There was a certain amount of confusion over the roles of the Theban Shepherd, and the Messenger from Corinth, as well as the information sought from him. Quite a few candidates placed the departure of Jocasta after the arrival of the Theban Shepherd, rather than before. The fact that Oedipus' self-blinding was described by a messenger was also often omitted, and at times, details of the events after Oedipus' emergence from the palace were blurred.
- (b) This question produced a full range of answers. Many candidates treated the question as simply 'how does Sophocles make this passage dramatically effective' and did not discuss the idea of an effective ending. There were also quite a few answers which did not analyse the staging of the scene, despite the directions in the question. Better answers did look at the emotions raised by the appearance of Oedipus, and the loss of his daughters. They were also able to consider fully the final speech of the Chorus, and its nuances. Too many answers did not deal with this aspect in detail.
- (c) Most candidates had knowledge of the three occasions on which Oedipus and Creon were on stage together. They were able to discuss the idea of role reversal from the beginning of the play, and the accusations Oedipus made against Creon and Teiresias. There was a range of interpretations of their relationship in the passage, ranging from Creon being sympathetic to Oedipus' plight, to Creon cruelly getting revenge on Oedipus for his treatment earlier in the play. Some answers concentrated on a character study of Creon, rather than the relationship between the two characters.

- 2 (a) *Medea* is a very popular play which allows the candidates to express a range of views. The majority of candidates were aware of the main details, although, as in previous years, a number spent too much time describing the events which occurred before the play started, at the expense of what actually happened in the play. Many did not mention the appearance of the Tutor, or Medea's 'feminist' speech to the Chorus. Some even neglected to describe the scene between Medea and Creon, or attributed Medea's exile to Jason.
- (b) This question produced a wide range of ideas. Most answers discussed Jason's reasons as given in the passage, and were able to express an opinion. Candidates were often able to discuss his reasons with reference to contemporary standards, such as Medea's position in Greece as a foreigner, and Jason's search for *kleos*. Many candidates also used the facts that Jason had not mentioned his potential marriage to Medea, and that he made no attempt, until prompted, to prevent his sons being exiled, as reasons for Jason being selfish and not justified in his reasons. The question, as often happens with the characters of Medea and Jason, polarized opinions amongst the candidates.
- (c) The amount of detail given in Part (c) varied considerably. Most candidates were able to use Medea's appearance in a number of scenes as evidence for their opinions. Better answers discussed her anger at Jason, her manipulation of the male characters and her desire for revenge, as well as her pride. They also used her wavering before killing her sons to show that there were times when her portrayal was inconsistent. Often, the use of the second half of the play was weaker, with some answers not even discussing the killing of the children, or the final confrontation between Jason and Medea. Some candidates also regarded her pleas to Creon and Aegeus, and her supplicating of Jason, as signs that she was weak and helpless, rather than seeing that this was how she portrayed herself to achieve her revenge.

Essay Questions

- 3 Candidates who answered this question showed a sound knowledge and use of the text, with good appreciation of the play. The question offered plenty of opportunity for structured responses with a good range of answers. Candidates were able to use a variety of angles to initiate their discussion. Most answers tended to concentrate on only the main characters and the Chorus, with some not even mentioning Cassandra. More in depth answers discussed the other characters, such as Aegisthus and the Watchman, showing how his opening speech introduced an atmosphere of fear within Argos. A few answers even analysed the Herald's speech, saying his description of conditions in war induced pity in the Chorus and the audience. The vast majority of answers disagreed with the quotation, citing Cassandra and the sacrifice of Iphigeneia amongst others, as reasons for the play creating pity. Although the majority of answers cited Clytaemnestra as merely being a fearful figure, some did state that pity was created for her loss of her daughter. Agamemnon was pitied for his fate. Cassandra was seen as the most pitiable figure because of her fate at the hands of Apollo and Clytaemnestra. Few candidates discussed the emotions created by her visions of the history of the House of Atreus. Some candidates saw Aegisthus as a figure who created neither fear nor pity. Many answers concentrated on the characters or the audience, although some answers were able to discuss each aspect separately.

- 4** Candidates who answered this question tended to show a good degree of textual knowledge. A common approach which tended not to gain a higher range of marks under AO2 was to narrate events within the play and then attempt an answer to the question at the end. Most answers concluded that Pentheus did deserve to be punished, but that Dionysus went too far in how he punished Pentheus. Some argued that he did deserve to be punished, but did not tackle the “how far” aspect of the question. There were many interesting approaches to the question. A number of candidates brought up the problems faced by Pentheus as a young king trying to restore order to his kingdom; they also mentioned that it was not his fault that he did not believe in Dionysus, because that was how he had been brought up. Some answers produced an extended psychoanalysis of Pentheus with very little textual support, or argued that Dionysus should simply have revealed his divine power to Pentheus, ignoring the textual evidence that he does precisely that. There was also an occasional mention of the threats posed by Pentheus to the women of his city as a reason for him to deserve his punishment.
- 5** Although this question was rarely tackled, it produced a full range of responses. Some candidates knew the texts very well and were able to argue with finesse both for and against the statement. Some analysed the role of the Chorus in different plays, and argued that the contribution they make, and its importance, varies from play to play. Mention was made of the wider role of the Chorus, not just as a character in the play, but of its importance in informing the audience of past events and commenting on the action, and even occasionally, its visual impact. Weaker answers tended to simply narrate what the Chorus does within each of the plays, without much attempt to tackle the question. They produced one-dimensional approaches to the question with a glib agreement with the stimulus quotation ‘I agree, the Chorus is boring and confusing’. Most answers used all four plays, although some were more selective in their choice of material.

F385 Greek Historians

General Comments

The majority of candidates took the opportunity to answer questions solely on Herodotus by answering Questions 1 and 3. Question 5 was barely touched. Plutarch was not popular this year. Although a few answered the Thucydides context question, all those that did so chose the Herodotus essay.

One major concern this year was the film *300*. Many answers were seen which incorporated details from the film that were not in Herodotus.

Comments on Individual Questions

Commentary Questions

Most candidates chose Question 1, with only a few going for Question 2.

- 1
 - (a) In general, this was not answered well. Many tried to describe the prophecy about empires toppling, which was not appropriate. Stronger answers went into the oracles and the death of his son in some depth.
 - (b) There were some very good and interesting responses to this question. Stronger answers focussed on style, although some of those that focussed on content were able to score highly.
 - (c) Several candidates had prepared answers on this topic and were able to produce some strong answers. Higher marks were given to those that were able to use the passage as a starting point.

- 2
 - (a) Few answered this question, but those that did were able to provide enough information to gain high marks.
 - (b) There was some strong response to this. Most used the passage well to illustrate their answers and show understanding.
 - (c) Although few answers were seen, the examiners were pleased by the strong personal response to this question. As always, stronger answers were the ones that were able to do more than wheel out a prepared answer, but managed to incorporate the passage into the answer.

Essay Questions

3 was the by far the most popular option. Only a few chose 4, and hardly anyone chose 5.

- 3** This was the most popular answer by far. Most answers relied on generalised points about Herodotus' skills, but the ones that gained higher marks were those that could refer closely to events described by Herodotus. Detail, not reliance on films or generalised comments, was what the examiners were looking for. Some answers chose to describe why he was a bad historian and then go on to say why he was a good storyteller, but the stronger answers tended to be the ones that took a synoptic approach to the question. Many answers relied on retelling the narrative, without attempting to analyse; such answers scored highly under AO1, but not AO2.
- 4** Very few answered this question, but the ones that did tended to be strong with a lot of detail from the text. Thucydides has clearly impressed many candidates with his factual and unemotional style of writing. It was the reference to the text, rather than generic points that gained the extra marks. Many had clearly prepared essays on this topic, and there were some that tried to twist the question to fit the essay that they had prepared.
- 5** There were too few essays seen to be able to make any general comments on this essay.

F386 City Life in Roman Italy

General Comments

The enjoyment that candidates derive from this unit is clear, particularly in questions requiring personal response. Most communicate a genuine interest in what they have studied and have developed a cultural understanding of what life was like in cities of Roman Italy. Answers on the whole showed a detailed knowledge of all the prescribed material, including literary references, although this year a few focussed on Pompeii alone resulting in a lack of sufficient supporting material. As always, candidates offering relevant details from outside the prescription were awarded the appropriate credit.

Comments on Individual Questions

Commentary Questions

- 1 (a) Most knew general details about Eumachia and the building, with some making reference to inscriptions and statues. It was felt that candidates could have made greater use of the plan printed on the paper and discussed the layout and size. Almost all candidates were aware of the location of the building.
 - (b) Specific details from source material vary for Eumachia's tomb and examiners expected discussion of a range of the detail available. Most compared Eumachia's tomb with Naevolia Tyche's, where factual knowledge was detailed; better answers included details about others. A few answers made no comparison and no reference to the issue of 'impressive'.
 - (c) Most answers were able to draw on information from both Pompeii and Herculaneum. There were many straightforward comparisons of the rich valuing their private homes whereas the poor valued public facilities. The most popular houses mentioned were the House of Menander, House of Octavius Quartio and the House of the Stags. Most understood the value of the rich paying for public facilities in order to gain status and support in elections. In this case the amphitheatre at Pompeii was the most frequently cited. A few did not understand the distinction between domestic and public buildings.
- 2 (a) Candidates could identify features and some activities but not all answers made use of the photograph or described the actual appearance of the Piazza. Almost all answers made reference to the mosaics and offered a long list of the different images. Again a range of detail was included in the better answers, for example, the temple of Ceres could be discussed together with associated religious activities and some mentioned the close proximity to the theatre.
 - (b) Candidates knew a lot about the development of Portus and could put it in terms of problems and solutions. There was some confusion over the emperors involved in the construction of the two harbours. More perceptive answers followed the development from silting to harbour constructions analysing the success throughout.
 - (c) Many answers described a range of buildings within Ostia but with limited relationship to the interests of a sailor. Some candidates thought hard about the scenario and made interesting points with great success.

Essay Questions

Examiners felt that answers to Section B could be improved further with more careful planning. A general introduction on a topic followed by a range of detail, with analysis for each point is a suggested approach. Bullet points are included as guidance for candidates and other relevant material will always be given credit.

- 3 This was a question which allowed for a range of answers. There were several answers which just described houses and gardens with little analysis. Other answers discussed how much space the rich had and how much they used it. A substantial number considered large houses and gardens to be a waste of space particularly the slave quarters of the House of Menander and the garden of Octavius Quartio. Surprisingly, there was little discussion of the use of individual rooms. The general layout of houses in particular cities might have made a suitable introduction for candidates to approach this question.

Many answers described the changes in use of space at the Samnite House; a few considered Vitruvius's description of the public man's need for an atrium; a few understood the importance of axial vistas, though some could have given explanations to develop their argument.

- 4 An introduction to this question might have been to consider the location and layout of the towns. Answers which focussed on the houses of the rich and the houses of the poor missed opportunities to include a wider range information. Most contrasted the lavish homes of the rich in Pompeii with the two examples of houses showing more cramped space in Herculaneum and added the public facilities available to all. Some referred to the 'working class' often assuming that they did not have homes and lived in the streets. Other answers understood that slaves could be freed and freedmen could prosper but were still treated as examples of the 'poor'. Credit was given for references to Trimalchio.
- 5 Most answers compared literary evidence with building remains but could make little more than the obvious comparison that archaeological evidence can be seen whereas literary evidence may not be reliable. There were some fine answers which made use of the information from the discovery of Pompeii and Herculaneum, Pliny's account of the eruption of Vesuvius and inscriptions. A few candidates did not understand the difference between archaeological evidence and literary evidence.

F387 Roman Britain: life in the outpost of the Empire

General Comments

In its second year, F387 seems to have performed well. Examiners greatly enjoyed the experience of marking candidates' responses but noticed a lot of differentiation between well supported, secure and confident answers and those which were short, generalised and lacking in focus.

A number of teaching points may be picked out as particularly important if candidates are going to go into this exam with the tools to achieve the higher levels on the assessment grid.

- 1 Candidates should read the question carefully. Failure to note precisely what was asked sometimes led to a frustrating lack of focus, and underdeveloped or poorly structured answers.
- 2 Planning: it was noted that essays and even commentary questions were far more structured and effective when students had taken the time to plan an argument or even simply list the examples and sites they could use in their response.
- 3 The use of specific and detailed examples from Roman Britain to support an argument.
- 4 The concept of 'change over time': it was common to find answers which seem to assume that 'Roman Britain' was an undifferentiated period in our history. The Roman occupation of Britain lasted for 360 years but candidates often seemed unaware of when towns and villas were established during that period and that there might be different factors affecting their establishment and use at different times during those 360 years.
- 5 Geographical location of sites: a better appreciation of the geography and topography of Britain would help to dispel misapprehensions or generalities, often stereotypical (for example, it was apparently too hostile / dangerous / cold / wet / hard to find decent farmland / difficult to persuade the natives to be welcoming 'up north').

There were no rubric errors noted this year.

Comments on Individual Questions

Commentary Questions

Question 1 using inscriptions was the less popular choice, but those who attempted it seemed to find it easier to dig out the information and comment on it, than the diagram in Question 2.

- 1 (a) Though less popular than Question 2 the question was generally done quite well by those who attempted it. Many candidates would also have gained more marks if they had made a systematic use of the sources, making use of all the information, including the ascriptions with locations and dates. They were free to set these towns in context and mention others, too!
- (b) This question required some kind of understanding of 'urban life', which was generally well understood and supported, and some consideration of 'widespread', which was less commonly done well.

- 2 (a) This question posed some problems because of geography and timescales; responses varied greatly in quality, with the best being secure and well-developed, while others could only see a 'north-south divide', though the Fosse Way was well used as a possible delineator. General references to 'villas on the coast' or 'near towns' needed specific comment to gain candidates more marks. There was not much comment about what was meant by 'Romanisation.'
- (b) This question opened up the discussion; candidates whose answers had been limited in (a) often found it much easier to develop answers with specific examples and a good range of repeated material in this answer. There was a good spread of knowledge about specific villas – those mentioned in the specification and a good range of others – with a focus on mosaics, bath suites, agricultural complexes, dining rooms, and a good understanding of *how* and *why* villas developed.

Essay Questions

Examiners found the lack of plans frustrating. This is particularly important because the way questions are worded calls for some in-depth evaluation and discussion of more than one aspect of Roman Britain.

- 3 The better responses were marked out by a good range of detailed specific examples, though there were very few which took what the examiners thought an obvious route, looking at Pre Roman Iron Age art (e.g. Battersea shield, Birdlip mirror, La Tène style), then Roman art from the early period (Claudius head, Marcus Favonius Facilis), and then the later pieces. There was a tendency to plunge in with something like the Gorgon from Bath first, then consider other pieces, and possibly only then to consider Celtic styles. There were a number of candidates who brought in discussion of *interpretatio Romana* – a concept of *religion* – rather than *style*. There was also a tendency to try to apply Hill and Ireland's summary of what makes up 'Celtic style' in any piece discussed, including the Mercury from Uley and Marcus Favonius Facilis.
- 4 Like Question 3 there were multiple things to discuss in this question: first, 'how far', then 'development', then attribution or not to the Roman army. Of all the questions on the paper, this led to the most differentiation. There were some very fine detailed and supported answers, which set the army in context, discussed what it possibly was and was not responsible for; other causes of economic development; growth and possible decline. Less secure responses included less detail and less range, and further down the mark range, the army was held responsible for any and every innovation in industry and agriculture, and was held to account for building villas, bringing ploughs, and introducing tastes for wine and olives. A lack of awareness of temporal contexts or change over time was most evident here. Likewise, many candidates could have improved their performance by incorporating more considered material, or even specific numbers so that statements such as 'the Roman army had a massive impact' could be quantified somewhat.

F388 Art and Architecture in the Greek World

General Comments

Examiners continue to be delighted by the enthusiasm shown by candidates for the subject matter of this Unit. At all levels they write with such interest and personal insight that it is clear that the vast majority have enjoyed their studies. This year the marks covered virtually the whole of the mark range, with many candidates showing a good knowledge of the prescribed material and a few showing knowledge of examples beyond those required by the specification, for example the Westmacott Athlete, the Apollo Sauroktonos, and the Centauromachy friezes from the Hephaestion and the Bassai temple. Whilst many candidates offered a range of detailed examples, others could offer few specific details to support their arguments. Examples need to be recognisable to examiners, for example, it is not enough to mention the Ajax and Achilles pot without some detail to identify which one is meant.

Many candidates had clearly attempted the questions from 2010 during the course of the year, and it was disappointing to see that some were trying to answer the same questions on different material, or were attempting to change the question to one they felt equipped to answer. For example, 1(a) sometimes became 'to what extent is this pot a decorative delight?' and 1(b) became either 'painters were only interested in depicting war' or a development of vase-painting question. A small number of candidates believed that pots were sculpted rather than painted and incised.

There was a significant minority of rubric errors this year: some candidates attempted both commentary questions; some answered one part of Question 1 and one part of Question 2; others spent so long on the commentary question that they were unable to attempt an essay. Careful allocation of the time is essential if candidates are to do themselves justice. The spelling of technical terms was no worse than last year (except for *Contra pesto* for *contrapposto* and Polykleitos's treatise for *treatise*) but there was some confusion of such terms, for example *Contrapposto*, symmetry and repetition were assumed to be the same thing, and Doric and Ionic features were mixed up.

One aspect which did concern examiners was the work of a few candidates; they simply criticised all the art they discussed in a very negative manner, without a proper context, or supporting argument and evidence. The legs are too short, the feet too long, the arms are wrong, the faces are expressionless, and architecture is not art and is an unnecessary expense. To end on a more positive note, as mentioned in the 2010 report, candidates produce some interesting individual personal responses to the Art and Architecture they have studied. Below are just two of the many examples enjoyed by examiners this year:

- The Propylaia was 'an astounding entrance to the Simon Cowell of all sanctuaries'.
- 'Kritios Boy just stands there as though he is modelling underwear for Marks and Spencer.'

Comments on Individual Questions

Commentary Questions

Once again, the popularity of vase-painting question was shown by the number of candidates who tackled this question, around 80%, though this is a slight decrease from last year. The candidates who answered the architectural sculpture question often produced interesting and well thought out responses, though they were sometimes short on supporting detail.

- 1 (a) Most candidates recognised the pot and there was some very sound and creative analysis; fewer successfully analysed the composition in any detail, often focussing on technique at the expense of composition. The best answers covered the whole vase, yet spending most time on the main scene. They identified the scene and commented nicely on the balance between Heracles and his female opponents (though the vast majority of candidates thought Amazons were male). They explored the composition with its intricate overlapping; the variety of figures with their poses, costumes, weapons, groupings; the mirroring, parallels and variations; the anatomy as achieved at this stage, e.g. the attempt at a classical twist of the torso, the use of foreshortening. The best responses appreciated all of this and did not expect the artist to use techniques developed after his time. Weaker answers covered some of these points. There were, however, some misidentifications, e.g. Greeks surrounding a naked savage, or Achilles and Hector fighting at Troy, and there was often a desire for Euphronios to do something different, e.g. introduce facial expression, use fewer characters, and use Classical drapery.

The frieze of dancing men received some very elaborate over-interpretation, but it was generally associated with the purpose of the vase – for drinking parties. There were some answers which were on the right lines but were quite generalised, making no specific reference to elements of the pot's design.

- (b) There were some very nice responses in answer to this question. Some candidates, who were not able to do much visual analysis in (a), produced very sensitive discussions on the theme of war and glorifying war, covering a large range of vases with detailed and relevant comment. It was interesting that interpretations differed quite widely, yet were all good – for example, Exekias's Achilles and Ajax was seen both as glorifying war and the opposite, usually with some deft attention to detail and a nice way of exploring the point. Similarly, the Berlin Painter's Achilles and Hector received sensitive and accurate interpretations in both directions. Euphronios's vase was most often taken as a glorification because of its lack of pathos and business-like attitude to the job of heroism. The Kleophrades Painter's Fall of Troy was a favourite example of anti-war and received some heartfelt and detailed treatment. One or two candidates found its savagery to be a glorification – which was puzzling since there are two examples of sacrilege in it, as well as cruelty. Many pointed out there is not much glory in killing the helpless.

Non-war pots also received a lot of coverage. Some candidates made this work very well in their answers, as a contrast and balance. Some used it as an excuse to write about any pot they could remember.

- 2 (a) The answers to this question tended to lean fairly heavily on Woodford's description and interpretation. The central characters were often described in some detail, as were the horses [though some assumed there were just two horses]. Few candidates dealt with the whole pediment, the Anxious Seer, the Crouching Youth and the river-gods, or considered it as a totality.

Most candidates addressed both the ideas stated in the question. There were some quite sensible comparisons with earlier pediments [most often the Siphnian Treasury], to test whether the east pediment from the temple of Zeus was indeed 'original and imaginative', for example, the use of a central deity, the hierarchical arrangement of central figures, whether the outer figures are relevant to the theme, and the use of animals fitting to the slope. Some candidates limited their analysis to the figures shown in the image. Some focused on technical merit of the sculpture, rather than engaging with original and imaginative, which was not always helpful in producing a balanced response.

- (b) Most candidates seemed to find this question quite straightforward, and some of those candidates could give plenty of detail from the temple of Zeus *pediment* and the *metopes* from the Parthenon (and a few from the *friezes* from the temple of Hephaestus, and the temple of Apollo at Bassae, though neither of these was necessary for a successful response to the question). The majority limited the content of their answers to what was visible in the photograph. There was little discussion of Apollo and whether his presence made a difference to the whole impression and meaning, or of the symmetry that orders the chaos of the *pediment*. It was sometimes difficult for examiners to decide which *metope* was being discussed as the description was so sketchy. As usual, the centaur without a neck was the most mentioned character of all.

The vote seemed to be between seeing a mass of fights all at once in the pediment versus isolated duels in the *metopes*. Both formats were judged suitable: *metopes* were viewed as clearer for the viewer, whilst *pediments* were felt to represent the whole incident better. There were several responses which contained a good analysis of which type of sculpture was the most successful without mentioning a single example.

As always, it is important for candidates to read the question carefully. Some decided to focus on the popularity of the subject of the Centauromachy rather than answer the question of the success of its depiction in a particular medium. A few candidates even digressed into a discussion on the theme in vase-painting.

Essay Questions

The best essays showed evidence of planning and a clear, well-thought out structure. Question 3 was slightly more popular than Question 4, with a 60% - 40% split.

- 3 Most, but not all, candidates could identify the relevant statues for the two sculptors. As with 2(a), a common strategy was to compare them with what went before in terms of Contrapposto, pose, musculature and naturalism, grouping and props [though there was sometimes too much concentration on comparative material]. For example, Polykleitos was judged as less original because the asymmetrical pose of the Doryphoros already existed in Kritios Boy and the Riace Warriors; similarly, Praxiteles's work on Hermes and Dionysus was 'less original' because there was already an adult and baby in Eirene and Ploutos but at least Hermes had a 'story'. This approach could work quite well, but at times it could also be a little negative. A positive approach generally worked better, e.g. Doryphoros was seen as more naturalistic; Diadoumenos was judged as subtle, proportionate and looking good from all sides; Aphrodite scored highly by being the first female nude, having a 'coherent story' and a definite pose. Some candidates were able to characterise these sculptures quite well, but others found it hard to recall the details and qualities of the materials the sculptures were made from, and whether the props were a necessity. A significant minority of candidates who attempted this question did not know which statues Polykleitos and Praxiteles had produced; such answers struggled to engage in sufficient detail with the task. Praxiteles was thought to have sculpted everything from Kritios Boy to Aphrodite of the Agora; from Diskobolos to Apoxyomenos. Polykleitos was cited as the sculptor of the Delphic Charioteer, the Artemesium Zeus and an 'elephantine statue of Zeus'. It was not always clear that candidates understood Contrapposto and its effects; even when it was understood, many assumed that it was a Polykleitan invention and that it was used in every statue thereafter.

The best answers displayed a command of the appropriate factual knowledge, producing a detailed analysis, and distinguishing between 'bold innovator' and 'experimenting with a variety of novel poses', rather than lumping the two ideas together.

- 4 Many candidates answered this question well, displaying detailed knowledge of all the buildings on the Acropolis and showing good understanding of contextual matters, such as the Persian sack of Athens and the formation of the Delian League, as well as a basic grasp of the requirements of Greek religious practice.

The best answers gave a balanced coverage to the general character of the building programme, the background to why new sanctuary buildings were required, and their comparative degrees of decoration. Many answers provide a good guided tour from the Propylaia and the Nike temple into the sanctuary, then viewing the elaborate Parthenon and the Erechtheion, but they did not go on to make the material fully relevant to the question. Whilst most candidates were able to comment on the civic pride and triumphal feeling about the Persian Wars, very few actually commented on the idea of religious devotion.

Some candidates discussed only the Parthenon; others answered without any detailed reference to specific buildings, which left their analysis unsubstantiated. In addition, there was a surprising amount of inaccuracy about the Parthenon and the Acropolis in general:

- Acropolis and Parthenon were sometimes used interchangeably.
- Perikles turned the Acropolis into a sanctuary for Athena.
- Perikles built the Acropolis for Athens.
- Perikles placed the Acropolis in an area where it could be seen from miles around.

A minority of candidates misinterpreted, or reinterpreted, the quotation. 'Vain' was sometimes taken to refer to Athena; 'vain' was read as 'in vain' or as 'in vain like a woman'.

F389 Comic Drama in the Ancient World

General Comments

There was rather more parity in candidate choice between the Commentary questions this year, with only slightly more answers to Question 1 than to Question 2, but there was a marked preference for Question 3 over Question 4 in the Essay questions. In the Commentary questions, the phrase 'using the passage as a starting point' seems not to have registered with all candidates as a useful suggestion about where to start thinking about their answer. Some candidates, however, failed to refer to the rest of *Frogs* or *Dyskolos* even though the question specifically asked for information from elsewhere in the play.

Where candidates used relevant material from *Lysistrata* and *The Swaggering Soldier* – presumably studied in addition to the four plays actually required for the examination – this was credited in answers to Question 4, but was unfortunately not relevant to any of the other questions. It may be useful to remind Centres that the plays prescribed for the June 2012 examination are still *Frogs*, *Wasps*, *Dyskolos* and *Pseudolus*. From the June 2013 examination, the prescribed plays are *Frogs*, *Lysistrata*, *Pseudolus* and *The Swaggering Soldier* (*Miles Gloriosus*).

Comments on Individual Questions

Commentary Questions

- 1 (a) Answers to this sub-question generally showed good use of parts of the passage, but 'effective piece of comic drama' and 'funny' are not the same thing, and many candidates assumed that the question required merely a list of the jokes. Since that meant that in most cases half the passage was ignored, there were a lot of incomplete answers.
 - (b) Many candidates were able to recall both the formal *Agon* between Philocleon and Bdelycleon and the Trial scene in *Wasps* in considerable detail, and were able to make good points relevant to the question. Some answers also displayed effective use of the initial entry of the Wasp Chorus. The *Agon* in *Frogs*, however, proved more tricky and was used less effectively, often with inaccurate recall of its contents. Some good points were made about the respective values of *Agon* and *Parabasis* in presenting serious points. Although this was not strictly required, being in fact material required for Question 4, appropriate credit was given for relevant comments.
- 2 (a) This question was generally well done. There were particularly well-balanced analyses of Sostratos' character, though only a few candidates seemed to consider that the influence of Pan might have been a factor in his behaviour. The words 'throughout' and 'always' were important, and weaker answers did not always acknowledge these. There was a case for considering the possibility that Gorgias might not always have had unselfish motives, but these were made more rarely.

- (b) This question was, however, a casualty of the 'not reading the question' syndrome. Candidates had clearly done a lot of work comparing and contrasting the role and treatment of slaves in both *Dyskolos* and *Pseudolus* and there were a lot of good general answers to a question on that topic. The actual question focused specifically on the slaves of Gorgias and Sostratos in *Dyskolos*. Only Daos (who appeared in the passage as a hint) and Pyrrhias were really relevant, though there was a case for briefly indicating that Sostratos wanted to ask for advice from Getas, referred to specifically in the play as being Kallipides' slave, not that of Sostratos. In *Pseudolus*, discussion had to focus on the eponymous hero.

Essay Questions

- 3 Answers to this question suggested that had last year's 'timeless/of its own time' question been set again there would have been many excellent answers. Again there was an indication in some of the weaker answers that candidates thought that all that was required was an analysis of the different kinds of humour and a discussion of which play was the funniest. Successful answers took 'audience' or 'viewer' as a starting point and some good comparisons were made with modern theatre or viewing experiences as the focus of the argument.

In the context of this question, it should be noted that comments were required on both *Dyskolos* and *Pseudolus*. Some candidates seemed to be under the impression that comparing just one Aristophanes play with just one New/Roman comedy play would be sufficient. The 'more difficult to understand' side of the question was also less well tackled in weaker responses. Some answers showed a lack of understanding of the plays, but there were also many good answers which drew constructively on candidates' personal responses and showed clear individual engagement with the plays both on the page and in performance. Some candidates went so far as to state that Aristophanes is the greatest comic writer the world has ever seen but this seemed to be contrary to their own beliefs, especially when they contradicted the statement in their argument.

- 4 This was not a popular question, and it is therefore difficult to make general comments. Stronger answers looked at costume and staging as well as choral odes and the *parabases* in Aristophanes, and commented also on the features of New Comedy plots which made a scripted Chorus less necessary. There were also some good comments on the way in which Plautus used *Pseudolus*' soliloquies to involve the audience. Some answers failed to distinguish between the Frog and the Initiate Choruses in *Frogs*. One or two candidates commented on the musical elements of ancient Comedy, both in relation to the flute player specifically mentioned in *Pseudolus* and to the stage directions in *Dyskolos*.

F390 Virgil and the world of the hero

General Comments

Examiners felt that the vast majority of candidates had clearly enjoyed their studies because their responses showed a great deal of enthusiasm and engagement with the texts. It was felt that the paper allowed candidates to perform to the best of their abilities. It was accessible enabling all candidates to find something to write about and there were subtleties in the questions which enabled some candidates to stretch themselves and actively explore their material. At the top end there were a number of responses which were exploring the subtle nuances of the literature in an astute, analytical and authoritative way – these in particular were a joy to mark.

Timing did not seem to be a problem for the vast the majority of the candidates. However, there did seem to be a greater number of candidates who were not reading the question carefully enough. Problems included ignoring the 'how typical' in 1(a), recalling events from Books 7-12 in 2(b), including immortal women in Question 3, totally ignoring the quotation in Question 4 and the recalling of a prepared essay on whether Aeneas should be seen to be a hero.

Comments on Individual Questions

Commentary Questions

- 1 (a) Some candidates simply wrote a character analysis of Juno and ignored the majority of the passage and the actual question. Generally, however, those candidates who could analyse the passage could compare Juno's behaviour here with the rest of the epic. There were some good answers which explored how truthful Juno was being here and saw that she does not really care for Turnus – how can she when she uses *Allecto* so cruelly to inspire him and Amata? He is simply a convenient way to delay Aeneas achieving his destiny.
 - (b) Candidates were generally stronger when discussing Jupiter and had seemingly not been prepared on the role of Fate as much. Some did explore the ambiguity of the concept well and made full use of the passage but overall too many did not seem to understand that Jupiter is a facilitator of fate, not its ordainer. One or two did note that if he controlled fate he would not need his scales to discover the outcome of a fight. A few commented that Jupiter often takes the easy way out by letting the ball go by to the wicket-keeper, such as in the Council Meeting in Book 10. It was pleasing to note the number of candidates who made a valid attempt at assessing their importance to the epic.
- 2 (a) There were some very good answers to this question. Candidates were skilled in tracking through the passage and explaining why it was effective. In particular, there was greater analysis of the simile and detailed discussion of the question than in previous years. Stronger responses made full use of the second half of the passage. A handful of responses wrote about Passage 1 instead of Passage 2.
 - (b) Weaker responses tended to recycle their 2(a) answer and did not give enough time to the *Iliad* passage or wrote of the war in general or did not focus on TROY. There was much good work on fathers and sons and on the loss of friends. There were some lovely studies of book VI of the *Iliad* with Hector and Andromache, which were mature and sophisticated. Although the best answers did range across the whole of *Aeneid* II, not enough did and many simply stuck to the passage. The focus on sorrow and pity was generally good, but many candidates found it difficult to explain why one was more sorrowful than the other.

Essay Questions

- 3 What was good about this very popular question was the masses of detail candidates were able to offer. AO1 was well achieved especially on Dido, Andromache and Creusa – the most popular triad. Weaker responses tended to list the sad things which happened to women but the stronger answers considered the different stages of Dido's portrayal and discussed divine intervention with her and Amata. Time was also valuably spent considering exactly why their portrayals were sympathetic or not. The best responses considered both ancient and modern audiences – perhaps how a Roman audience would see similarities between Dido and Cleopatra.

- 4 Candidates compared the two heroes well but some did not return to the quotation. As in 2010, candidates were generally stronger on their recall of the *Iliad* than the *Aeneid*. Many candidates would have benefitted from citing a greater range of examples from the second half of the *Aeneid*. Most considered the different types of hero and why it is difficult to compare them. There was good understanding on the Roman hero, though some candidates were hazy about what makes a Greek epic hero. The most able saw that within the *Aeneid*, Aeneas changes from the Greek prototype to the New Roman.

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