

# Assessment Report

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## On this page

[Level 3 Classical Studies 2020](#) ▼

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Standards [91394](#) [91395](#) [91396](#)

### Part A: Commentary

Choice of literary text, art work, and historical figure is very important. Some do not lend themselves to the demands of Level 8 of the New Zealand Curriculum because there is insufficient source evidence available, or what is available is too narrow or brief. The AS91394 literary text must relate to 'ideas and values', AS91395 art work must relate to 'significance', and the AS91396 historical figure must relate to their 'impact'. If the values, significance, or impact is narrow and lacking depth, this will affect the candidate's ability to answer 'the extent to which ...' and / or will reduce the number of questions from which they can choose in the examination. Teachers are strongly encouraged to review their teaching and learning programmes in light of this feedback.

Questions that ask 'to what extent ...' are asking for a measure – for example, to some extent, to a great extent, it depends on – and to achieve with Merit and Excellence, candidates must endeavour to integrate this analysis throughout their response, rather than addressing it at the end as an evaluative conclusion. Those who did integrate their analysis achieved a higher grade.

Candidates must use the key words of the question – for example, justice, celebrates war, freedom threatened / challenged – to focus and structure their

argument / response. If they do not, they will not be answering the question, instead just writing 'all that they know'.

Candidates must not expect every question will explicitly include the 'theme', which is, in fact, a concept too, from the assessment specifications. Sometimes, it will be an aspect of that theme; for example, sense of justice was an aspect of ideology.

Candidates who wrote in extended paragraph format were able to develop greater analysis than those who wrote smaller, less detailed paragraphs covering multiple points. Using the planning page before beginning to write an answer is crucial to this end.

Some candidates answered a question they had prepared for, rather than a question from the options available in the examination. This led to responses that did not adequately address the demands of the question. Similarly, candidates who used inappropriate texts, art works, or historical figure for their chosen question found it challenging to meet the standard. Providing a plot summary, description of an art work, or biography of a figure does not meet the standard.

Candidates must use primary source evidence. This can be in the form of direct quotation, accurate paraphrasing, or reference to specific details of art works. This evidence must be relevant to their chosen question and used in a way that supports their key ideas / argument. Just as candidates are required to choose an appropriate literary text, art work, or historical figure, they must also choose appropriate source evidence.

Candidates are encouraged to look at the assessment schedules for each examination paper. These give guidance on the types of things required for each level of achievement. For example, the AS 91394 schedule shows that at A3 / A4 candidates are required to show evidence of sound understanding of the ways in which a work of classical literature reflects the social, political, religious, and / or artistic environment of the time in which it was produced, but there is some oversimplification. This means that a link between their chosen literary text and historical context is an indicator of achievement. Of course, this will present differently according to the chosen text.

## Part B: Report on standards

### 91394: Analyse ideas and values of the classical world

### Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- showed good understanding of the plot and used it to answer the question
- tried to link to the wider context, but would only do it through the plot
- did not link themes, but just followed the sequence of the plot
- made too much reference to historical figure / wider context rather than the text; there were some entire essays on 'Augustus propaganda', rather than the *Aeneid*, for example
- answered the question, but lacked the depth needed for Merit; this may have been because they focused on only one or two examples from the text, or the examples they did provide were discussed too briefly for higher grades
- lacked specific evidence, and instead said things such as "Bdelycleon was the son of Philocleon and wanted to stop him from going to jury service", or "Aeneas was a Trojan who founded Rome"; some candidates also muddled their evidence, using the wrong examples to explain their points.

### Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not answer the question or submitted a rote-learned answer that did not address the question
- gave a plot summary at the expense of responding to the question
- did not use any evidence to support their argument.

### Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- understood the text and how it was connected to the context of the question
- wrote well about the social commentary, and interwove context and plot
- used appropriate and immediately relevant evidence to support their explanation
- provided a good discussion of the text, demonstrating that they knew the text well
- repeated examples or explanations, limiting the breadth of their answer
- focused too heavily on a couple of good examples, which did not provide enough scope to delve deeper into their discussion
- focused too heavily on the historical context and not enough on the text.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- used a wide range of different examples, particularly those examples that were not commonly used
- used a wide range of different examples, particularly those examples that were not commonly used
- used specific and relevant evidence, which was often woven into their explanation
- provided detailed discussions of the text and ensured that this discussion reflected the focus of the question
- discussed the wider historical context of the text in a clear and explicit manner, showing that they understood the wider ramifications of the text, although candidates scoring E7 sometimes left the historical context towards the end, instead of weaving this throughout their discussion.

### Standard-specific comments

Merely providing a plot summary will not result in achievement.

Candidates must use the key words from the question and explain what they mean in relation to their chosen text. Just writing about a theme learnt in class – for example, furor and pietas – without linking to the key words of the question will not result in Achievement.

Conclusions need to be relevant to the question. Answering the question by using words from the question is crucial from start to finish.

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## 91395: Analyse the significance of a work(s) of art in the classical world

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- used an art work that was well-suited to their choice of question
- used an art work that was well-suited to their choice of question
- wrote a good response to the question and provided some relevant evidence to support their ideas
- showed some good knowledge and understanding

BUT:

- gave responses that lacked depth, or candidates did not respond to all parts of a question successfully; for example, for Question 4, candidates often explained the symbolism, but did not link symbolism to the story it tells
- provided some specific, relevant evidence but not enough; often their evidence was not fully explained, or it was not linked to their key idea
- gave responses that were descriptive and lacked consistent analysis; for example, for Question 3, Arch of Titus, some candidates described the spoils of war, but did not explain how they reflect the celebration of victory
- at times gave responses that were implicit rather than explicit; this was particularly obvious in Question 1, where candidates discussed challenges very broadly.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not answer the question; for example, many candidates simply discussed the historical / mythological background
- provided very little relevant / specific evidence from an art work
- wrote answers that were too brief
- chose the wrong art work(s) for the question
- provided evidence from too many art works and so their answers were superficial
- chose a non-classical art work, for example, Michelangelo's *David*
- misinterpreted the question; for example, for Question 2, many candidates did not accurately understand the term 'form' (understanding classical art specific terminology is crucial for achievement).

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- chose one appropriate art work and used it to answer their chosen question successfully
- chose one appropriate art work and used it to answer their chosen question successfully
- showed depth of knowledge and understanding of their chosen art work, and were able to use lots of relevant and specific evidence from this to answer the question effectively

- showed knowledge and understanding of the context (historical / artistic / mythological / social / political) that was relevant to the question
- responded to the question analytically; for example, they explained the evidence and linked back to their main idea(s), resulting in responses that showed an ability to think, make relevant connections, and draw relevant conclusions.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- wrote perceptively so their answers showed insight into the classical world
- evaluated successfully; i.e., responded explicitly (or implicitly for E7) to the part of the question that asks, “to what extent”
- chose an art work wisely and applied it effectively to their chosen question
- demonstrated excellent knowledge and understanding of their chosen art work
- provided analytical responses that showed a higher level of thinking
- used extensive and relevant evidence consistently
- consistently linked their evidence to their key ideas, and explained both ideas and evidence effectively
- presented a convincing argument and did so effectively; i.e., the discussion was at a sophisticated level and their writing was well-structured and free of grammatical errors
- focused on the question and used the wording from the question to write only relevant responses
- showed excellent understanding of the relevant terminology and used it wisely to enhance responses.

### **Standard-specific comments**

This Achievement Standard is about analysing the significance of works of art, not about showing how much historical / mythological / artistic knowledge candidates have.

It is recommended that candidates use evidence from only one or two art works and choose a question that best lends itself to those work(s). Not all questions work for all art works.

Candidates must focus on the key words of each question and use them in their answers.

Candidates cannot use a modern art work (e.g., Botticelli's *Venus*) to answer their question.

The application of modern ideas and values to ancient societies is inappropriate.

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## 91396: Analyse the impact of a significant historical figure on the classical world

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- demonstrated clear understanding of the significant figure in the context of the question
- answered the question with simple use of key words linked to their evidence
- demonstrated a basic understanding of the socio-political context of the time
- relied on narrative explanations for their evidence
- used some specific primary source examples to support their ideas, but often omitted attribution
- drew conclusions related to the question, but the extent aspect of the question was implied.

Candidates whose work was assessed as **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not complete their response, or wrote a very short answer that did not analyse their chosen significant figure with enough depth
- wrote long biographical summaries of their chosen significant figure that did not address any of the questions
- provided examples that were not relevant to the chosen question
- were unable to demonstrate understanding of the socio-political context of the time
- responded using a prepared context that did not answer the question.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Merit** commonly:

- referred to the question and used key words throughout their response

- used a structure that was logical and supported the development of their response
- provided a focused discussion of the impact of the historical figure in the context of the question
- used a range of primary sources that related to their chosen question and could attribute at least some of the examples to the author
- acknowledged and discussed multiple viewpoints that related to the social and cultural contexts of their chosen significant figure
- drew conclusions that specifically responded to the question and were often supported by examples.

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement with Excellence** commonly:

- demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the historical figure and their socio-political environment in the context of the question
- demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the historical figure and their socio-political environment in the context of the question
- integrated the use of synonyms for key words in the question throughout the response
- analysed in depth the complexities of the “extent” aspect of the question
- focused their analysis carefully on the second part of the question
- incorporated complex use of attributed primary and secondary source evidence throughout the response, and included discussion of limitations and / or bias
- used primary source evidence to inform the response, as well as support argument(s)
- critiqued primary and secondary sources as an integrated part of the response
- drew ideas together thematically
- wove evaluation of events, leadership, and sources throughout the response.

### Standard-specific comments

Candidates who attempted to respond to questions with a narrow or prepared focus were significantly less successful than those who could adapt their



knowledge to the context of the question.

Candidates who used an analytical structure were able to develop their discussions and use evidence to better support their points.

Merit and Excellence candidates did not simply respond in favour of the question, but formed an argument that considered other viewpoints and interpretations.

Students who wrote about Alexander the Great appeared to be rewriting their Policy of Fusion internal assessment and tried to make it fit a question, rather than applying their knowledge to the question. This did not work well for them and is not recommended.

## [Classical Studies subject page](#)

### **Previous years' reports**

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