

National Certificate of Educational Achievement

2011 Assessment Report

Classical Studies Level 3

- 90511 Explain a passage or passages from a work of classical literature in translation**
- 90512 Explain a work or works of classical art**
- 90513 Examine in essay format an aspect of the classical world**

COMMENTARY

Successful candidates answered all parts of questions and followed instructions carefully. Very few appeared to be confused about the number of questions to answer for each of the three external standards, although a number continued to answer 90511 and 90512 in essay format. This form of answer is time-consuming and risks introducing material irrelevant to the question set, as detailed in the two bullet points. The only standard that requires a response in essay format is 90513, *Explain in essay format an aspect of the classical world*.

In all standards, candidates should focus on ensuring that their answers are analytical in their approach, rather than an accumulation of factual knowledge.

STANDARD REPORTS

90511 Explain a passage or passages from a work of classical literature in translation

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- demonstrated a basic knowledge of the literary text
- placed the passages in their historical and/or literary context
- supplied examples from the extracts provided or paraphrased from elsewhere in the work
- explained the literary features of the passages at a basic level
- wrote responses that covered parts of questions, or wrote a general response
- wrote with reasonable clarity.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- lacked familiarity with the literary text
- did not place passages in their historical and/or literary context
- showed evidence of having misunderstood or misinterpreted the meaning of the extracts provided
- copied long sections of the extracts as quotes, without providing explanation
- did not supply supporting evidence from the extracts provided
- used quotes or paraphrasing in the wrong context
- did not identify literary features in the extracts provided
- wrote very brief responses, or irrelevant, prepared responses
- provided a plot summary without actually addressing the question
- did not follow the question structure or did not answer all parts of the questions
- did not answer the required number of questions.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- provided analysis of the literary text, supported by appropriate examples
- drew appropriate conclusions based on this analysis
- included supporting evidence from the extracts and elsewhere in the text as appropriate
- demonstrated some understanding of the extracts in their social, political, and historical context
- approached their answer in a clear and logical manner
- answered all parts of the questions, although often not in equal depth
- used the answer space provided in the Answer Booklet as a guide for how much to write.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- provided a detailed analysis of the literary text
- demonstrated in-depth knowledge of the extract provided, including authorial intention
- demonstrated a clear and thorough understanding of the socio-political context of the work
- provided some evidence of wider reading
- used extensive supporting evidence from the extracts provided and elsewhere in the text as appropriate
- used Greek or Latin terminology correctly
- wrote in a clear and logical manner
- answered all parts of the questions fully.

OTHER COMMENTS

The standard does not require that candidates answer in essay format, with crafted introductions and conclusions. Responses should address the specific detail of the aspects bulleted for discussion. Both should be fully covered, and responses should focus on analysis of the literary work, rather recall of plot.

90512 Explain a work or works of classical art

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- interpreted the questions correctly, showing some understanding of art historical terms
- had some knowledge of the art works, relevant to the questions set
- addressed both bulleted parts of the question, although their answers lacked depth and an analytical focus
- supported their points with some examples, although these were often not specific or detailed
- wrote with reasonable clarity.

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- demonstrated lack of knowledge of their chosen art works and made major errors in their answers
- did not answer the question set, providing irrelevant material (for example, attribution details that were not required or comparisons with other art works)
- did not focus on the specific demands of the question, writing everything they knew about their chosen art works
- did not include supporting evidence or provided generalised examples
- showed evidence of having misunderstood or misused technical terms (for example, in Topic A, Question One, some candidates did not understand the meaning of “narrative techniques”)
- did not write clearly or in detail
- addressed one bullet point only
- answered only one question, despite clear instructions to answer two.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- interpreted the questions correctly, showing sound understanding of art historical terms
- demonstrated specific knowledge of their chosen art works, beyond the reproductions in the Resource Booklet
- addressed both bullet points in some depth
- focused on key words in questions, avoiding irrelevant material
- provided a range of relevant and specific examples to illustrate their points (for example, in Topic B, Question Three they were able to give a number of examples of verism from the Patrician’s head that showed experience or wisdom)
- demonstrated an ability to analyse and explain how their chosen evidence illustrated the point that was being made (for example in Topic B, Question Two, they wrote that Hadrian’s Baths were a perfect vehicle for Roman propaganda as they highlighted the wealth of the Roman Empire and the Emperor AND went on to demonstrate how this was achieved through the elaborate and luxurious decorations AND provided relevant supporting evidence, such as the use of polychromatic marble and granite in the *frigidarium*)
- wrote clearly and linked ideas logically.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- demonstrated detailed knowledge and in-depth understanding of their chosen artwork, beyond the given reproductions (for example in Topic A, Question One, they not only knew the names of the myths and the characters involved, but also details of the contexts and the reasons why actions took place)
- addressed both bullet points fully and systematically, and focused their answers on the specific questions set

- provided a convincing analysis of works of art, illustrating and supporting points made with a variety of specific and relevant examples
- responded in-depth, but wrote fluently and succinctly, using technical terms correctly.

OTHER COMMENTS

Many candidates did not approach the paper systematically; they answered both bullet points simultaneously or began with the second bullet point or wrote on only one bullet point. Following the structure of the question (i.e. answering each bullet point fully and in turn) is more likely to produce higher grades than any other approach. A large number also responded in essay format, instead of answering the two bullet points of each question. As a result, they wasted a lot of time introducing the work of art and writing a conclusion.

90513 Examine in essay format an aspect of the classical world

ACHIEVEMENT

Candidates who were awarded Achievement for this standard demonstrated the required skills and knowledge. They typically:

- addressed most or all parts of the question
- provided some evidence in support of their argument
- explained, but did not analyse, their evidence
- included some irrelevant material or made errors that obscured (but did not invalidate) their understanding of the question
- did not refer to primary source material to any great extent, if at all
- showed basic ability to plan and structure an essay
- wrote shorter essays (of two to three pages).

NOT ACHIEVED

Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved for this standard lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement. They typically:

- did not directly address the question set, but diverted to write about what they had prepared (for example, they wrote about sacrifice rather than prayer in Question One, Roman Religion)
- made general statements without supportive detail
- provided little evidence of accurate factual knowledge
- confused events (like Alexander's battles) or points (like Socrates' arguments)
- expressed their ideas unclearly
- did not answer in essay format.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Merit typically:

- incorporated points of discussion and analysis into their response
- addressed all parts of the question, but not always in a balanced way
- provided relevant supporting evidence, and at times made appropriate references to primary source material

- wrote fluently and structured their ideas effectively.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE

In addition to the skills and knowledge required for the award of Achievement with Merit, candidates who were awarded Achievement with Excellence typically:

- offered sustained analysis and tied together the different parts of the question
- provided a balanced discussion of the question
- reached relevant and sometimes insightful conclusions
- demonstrated a wide knowledge of primary source material
- wrote fluent, well-planned, and structured essays, often in sophisticated language.

OTHER COMMENTS

Some candidates had difficulty writing in a formal essay format, with clear paragraphing and a logically developed argument. Those who read the requirements of the question carefully, who planned their response before starting, and who observed essay writing conventions were able to communicate their ideas more convincingly.