

# **National Certificate of Educational Achievement**

## **2014 Assessment Report**

### **Classical Studies Level 1**

- 91021 Demonstrate understanding of ideas and values of the classical world**
- 91022 Demonstrate understanding of the significance of features of work(s) of art in the classical world**
- 91023 Demonstrate understanding of an important historical figure in the classical world**

## COMMENTARY

Successful candidates read and followed the instructions in the examination booklet, therefore carefully choosing the question which best suited their learning. Merit and Excellence answers gave equal focus to each aspect of the question and used their supporting evidence to demonstrate a perceptive understanding. Unsuccessful candidates did not complete all parts of the question in the examination booklet, or did not answer the question correctly.

Candidates need to select the most appropriate question for the contexts they have studied and select appropriate, relevant evidence to support their explanations.

There was evidence of heavy reliance on pre-prepared material in all three standards. These candidates had difficulty responding to the question asked and struggled to achieve.

## STANDARD REPORTS

### **91021 Demonstrate understanding of ideas and values of the classical world**

#### **ACHIEVEMENT**

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

- understood and addressed the question clearly, covering at least one part of the question
- showed general knowledge of the text through the use of examples, or retelling of moments of the plot but lacked specific details
- relied primarily on knowledge of the text, rather than interpretation of the ideas within it
- discussed the classical ideas and values shown within the text but at a basic or straightforward level, for example stating that a particular theme was important to classical society but not giving detail as to why.

#### **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 commonly:**

- misunderstood, or did not address the question
- showed only basic knowledge of the text, lacking specific examples or giving inaccurate information
- lacked discussion of the classical ideas and values within the text
- provided only plot summary rather than discussion.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

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

- understood and addressed all parts of the question, though focus may primarily still be on the knowledge required for the first bullet point rather than the interpretation required for the second
- showed knowledge of the text through use of specific and accurate examples rather than retelling of plot
- interpreted parts of the text in order to answer the question as well as showing knowledge of plot and character
- discussed a range of aspects of society showing in depth understanding of the ideas and values reflected by the classical text.

## **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 commonly:**

- understood and addressed all parts of the question with a focus on the understanding required for the second bullet point
- consistently used specific and accurate examples that showed knowledge of the text to illustrate specific points in response to the question
- interpreted parts of the text to show perceptive understanding of how the text reflected the society that created it
- discussed a range of aspects of classical society linking back to the text to show perceptive understanding of the ideas and values of the classical world reflected by the text.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

Candidates should take care when choosing the question they will answer, that they understand all aspects of the question and that it is the most appropriate question for the text they have studied.

## **91022 Demonstrate understanding of the significance of features of work(s) of art in the classical world**

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

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

- demonstrated a basic understanding of the significance of features of a work of art in the context of classical society
- supported their responses with general references.

## **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 commonly:**

- demonstrated either no understanding or limited understanding of the significance of features of a work of art in the context of classical society
- failed to support their responses with accurate references
- omitted one or more parts of the question.

## **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

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

- demonstrated in-depth understanding by giving an informed explanation of the significance of features of a work of art in the context of classical society
- provided specific references to support their responses
- considered a range of aspects in their responses
- used the language of the question clearly in their responses
- answered all parts of the question.

## **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 commonly:**

- demonstrated perceptive understanding by showing insight into the significance of features of a work of art in the context of classical society
- showed an understanding of the wider cultural context
- selected questions appropriate for their knowledge of classical art works, allowing them to showcase the full extent of their understanding
- considered a wide range of aspects in their responses
- wrote clear, fluid responses which addressed all parts of the question fully.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

Common buildings studied included temples: the Parthenon, Temple of Athena Nike and Erechthion; entertainment venues: the Colosseum, Pompey's Theatre, Amphitheatre at Pompeii; and houses: House of the Faun.

Common art works studied included mosaics: Alexander mosaic, Lion and the Bull, Grazing Goats; busts: Bust of Augustus, the Bust of Commodus; vases: Exekias, the Berlin Painter, the Francois Vase; the Arch of Titus, Trajan's Column and the pediments found on the Parthenon.

It was disappointing to see many rote-learned candidate responses from past examinations that did not focus on answering the question, especially answers that included a compare/contrast element, similarities/differences, usual/unusual features.

Selecting the appropriate art works is important to allow the opportunity for clearly demonstrating knowledge of the wider cultural context.

Generic buildings such as a Roman insula or domus are not acceptable as named classical buildings and candidates who referred to these were unable to provide the evidence required to achieve.

## **91023 Demonstrate understanding of an important historical figure in the classical world**

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

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

- demonstrated a straightforward understanding of the historical figure
- used narrative details rather than focused discussion to demonstrate their understanding
- focused their answers on some parts of the question
- used details from primary evidence, though usually without a source reference or explanation of context.

### **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 commonly:**

- demonstrated only a vague or inaccurate understanding of the historical figure
- did not answer the question, but rather wrote on a topic they had inaccurately predicted or wrote on irrelevant events
- did not use primary source evidence.

### **ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT**

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

- demonstrated in-depth and accurate understanding of the historical figure through focused and developed explanation
- focused on answering all aspects of the question, rather than giving narrative detail
- used primary source evidence in the correct context to support the points made
- were able to give accurate references to sources used.

### **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 commonly:**

- demonstrated perceptive understanding of the historical figure by analysing sources of evidence in relation to the context of the question
- considered the wider social and/or political context of the historical figure in relation to the question
- used a comprehensive range of accurate details to support explanations
- answered all parts of the question in detail
- structured their answers to develop a coherent and convincing response to the question

- provided a range of primary source evidence, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the context.

## **OTHER COMMENTS**

Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and Nero were used widely and suited this level of study well. Other figures included Socrates, Crassus, Spartacus and Agrippina.

Candidates who answered on mythological figures were not successful, as the standard requires the figure to have been historical.

Successful candidates chose questions that best suited the historical figure they had studied and did not rely on previously learnt responses. They focused carefully on the question and used primary evidence in their answers. These candidates also avoided giving long sections of narrative detail, and instead focused on discussing the historical figure in the context of the question.

Merit and Excellence answers were more analytical and addressed all parts of the question methodically. They were able to provide accurate source references for primary evidence and used the evidence in the correct context. Excellence answers often demonstrated perceptive understanding of the perspectives of the sources of evidence and connected this to the context of the question.