

National Certificate of Educational Achievement

2014 Assessment Report

Classical Studies Level 2

- 91200 Examine ideas and values of the classical world**
- 91201 Examine the significance of features of work(s) of art in the classical world**
- 91203 Examine socio-political life in the classical world**

COMMENTARY

In 2014 candidates were required to respond to one of four questions in each achievement standard and were advised to support their answers with relevant evidence. They were expected to answer using short and/or extended paragraphs and where appropriate, bullet points and diagrams.

Successful candidates sifted through the questions and chose the one that best suited their learning. They had prepared thoroughly for the examination and demonstrated excellent knowledge and understanding. They showed an ability to interpret a question correctly and respond to all parts of the question without digressing. They used the space provided for planning wisely, managed their time effectively and went on to write concise answers. Their answers were generally written in extended paragraphs that included a key idea, a wide range of relevant evidence and thorough explanations that were linked to their key idea. In addition, their answers showed depth of knowledge and insightful understanding of the classical world.

Candidates need to remember that they are not expected to write an essay therefore lengthy and often irrelevant introductions are not only unnecessary but can detract from the overall quality of their response. Also, it is very important that candidates respond to the question and avoid writing everything they know; producing a pre-prepared response that does not address the question will only lead to disappointing grades. It is therefore important for candidates to focus on the key words of the question and respond accordingly.

Similarly, candidates who write brief answers, do not respond to all parts of a question, and fail to provide specific and well-explained evidence, will not earn high grades.

Candidates are advised to respond to the bullet points in each question instead of only responding to the overarching lead-in statement.

STANDARD REPORTS

91200 Examine ideas and values of the classical world

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- showed some knowledge and understanding of the ideas and values of the classical world, as shown in their chosen literary text; but their responses were mostly descriptive rather than analytical and lacked depth
- struggled to understand the key words of the question and how to respond to them. Their answers mostly outlined the story instead of responding to the question
- provided some relevant evidence to support their ideas. But their evidence was often insufficient, not specific, not explained well, or not linked to a key idea
- answered only one part of the question; often their response to bullet point two was very general
- produced a pre-prepared response that contained a lot of material irrelevant to the question
- wrote a lengthy introduction which often, simply summarised the plot.

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:

- focused on re-telling the story without addressing the question
- showed little or no understanding of the ideas and values related to their chosen text
- rote learned answers and produced a pre-prepared response that had little or no connection to the question
- failed to provide sufficient specific evidence
- misinterpreted the question
- did not draw conclusions
- wrote very brief answers.

ACHIEVEMENT WITH MERIT

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

- showed very good knowledge and understanding of their chosen literary text
- were able to make connections with the classical society in which their chosen text was produced
- wrote a detailed and analytical response to both parts of the question; often a part of their answer (usually their answer for bullet point two) was not developed fully or it lacked detailed exemplification
- drew some relevant and well-thought out conclusions which were linked to the ideas and values expressed in their chosen 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:

- showed excellent knowledge and a higher level of understanding of their chosen text and made clear links to the ideas and values of the society in which it was produced
- addressed both parts of the question analytically and in detail
- wrote well-constructed, extended paragraphs that were directly linked to the question
- provided specific and relevant evidence throughout their answer
- demonstrated individual thought and insight into the ideas and values of the classical world relevant to the literary text they were writing about.

OTHER COMMENTS

Candidates must remember that this achievement standard is about ideas and values of the classical world not about responding to a literary text. Also, they must understand that classical literary texts are a reflection of the society in which they were produced and make the connection between their chosen texts and the classical society they are expected to write about.

91201 Examine 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:

- selected appropriate art works/buildings which allowed them to respond to the question
- demonstrated some knowledge and understanding and were able to respond to at least one bullet point successfully
- provided some relevant evidence though often their evidence was not specific or it was not linked to a key idea
- did not respond to bullet point two or they wrote vague and general answers for bullet point two
- produced descriptive rather than analytical answers
- showed only a basic knowledge of their chosen art works/buildings so their answers lacked depth
- began their answer by writing several paragraphs of factual information, which was totally irrelevant to the question and of no value.

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:

- failed to respond to the question
- demonstrated a lack of knowledge and understanding of their chosen art work/building
- simply gave factual information about each art work/building, showing good general knowledge but not answering the question
- selected an inappropriate artwork/classical building for the question
- failed to provide sufficient specific evidence
- provided irrelevant and/or incorrect information
- misinterpreted the question
- provided limited conclusions or none at all.

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 an informed knowledge of appropriately selected artworks/buildings across most parts of the question
- addressed all parts of the question and provided in depth answers, although their answers were unbalanced
- provided analytical not descriptive answers
- supported their answers with specific and relevant evidence and provided good explanations
- drew some relevant and well-thought out conclusions.

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:

- selected the right art works/buildings for the question
- showed excellent knowledge of the art works/buildings they chose and a higher level of understanding
- wrote detailed and analytical responses that addressed all parts of the question
- focused on providing material that was relevant and of value
- demonstrated a perceptive insight into the society of the classical world
- used specific and relevant evidence consistently to support their answers and explained their evidence
- drew developed and perceptive conclusions.

91203 Examine socio-political life in the classical world

ACHIEVEMENT

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

- included some information that addressed parts of the question appropriately
- showed general knowledge and understanding
- Provided some supporting evidence which was often general and explained briefly
- answered one part of the question but not the other
- wrote answers that were unbalanced and lacked any depth
- provided answers that were descriptive and not tailored to the question
- misinterpreted parts of the question or misunderstood some key terms
- included extraneous and/or irrelevant information
- provided limited or basic conclusions.

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:

- did not provide evidence
- misunderstood or misinterpreted the question
- wrote responses that were vague, inaccurate and lacked detail
- provided detailed content that was unrelated to the question
- wrote a short response that did not allow them to address the question in sufficient detail
- wrote about personal opinion and used 'facts' that were unsubstantiated
- relied heavily on social knowledge at the expense of political knowledge
- used pre-learned responses that were inappropriately matched with the question
- confused Greek and Roman civilisations
- described content that was unrelated to 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:

- identified what the question required and provided detailed, relevant and analytical answers although their responses were unbalanced
- showed sound knowledge and understanding and answered both parts of the question
- were able to incorporate relevant and well explained evidence
- could link the evidence to the political and social spheres
- used correct terminology and language
- gave solid conclusions about the content that they had used to answer the question but conclusions were often not as consistently detailed as the body of the work.

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:

- showed excellent knowledge and understanding
- answered all parts of the question in detail, analytically and with real insight into the classical world
- used evidence of direct relevance to the question, from a variety of sources, which were explained well
- drew strong conclusions that may have looked at the wider context
- provided detailed and insightful conclusions about the content they had used to answer the question and linked them to the question
- wrote fluidly and lucidly
- used correct terminology and language confidently.

OTHER COMMENTS

This achievement standard requires candidates to have sound knowledge of both social and political life.