

2015 NCEA Assessment Report

Classical Studies Level 2 91200, 91201, 91203

Part A: Commentary

In the 2015 examination, candidates were expected to respond to one of four questions in each achievement standard. They were instructed to answer using short and/or extended paragraphs and where appropriate, to support their answers with bullet points and/or annotated sketches. Most importantly, it was highlighted in the examination paper that candidates must support their answers with relevant evidence from ancient sources.

Successful candidates chose the question that best suited their learning, managed their time effectively and used the space provided for them, to plan their responses. They also wrote in extended paragraphs and used bullet points, diagrams and annotated sketches sparingly. Their answers showed that they had prepared thoroughly for the examination and had the ability to apply what they learned to the question instead of using rote learned answers. Most importantly, they provided relevant evidence to support their ideas.

Excellence candidates, wrote concise and detailed answers and their paragraphs usually included a key idea, a wide range of relevant evidence and thorough explanations, which were linked to their key idea. In addition, their answers showed insightful understanding of the classical world.

Candidates are not expected to write lengthy introductions and conclusions. It is also very important that they respond to all parts of the question. General information is unnecessary and irrelevant and detracts from their overall answer.

Similarly, candidates must be reminded that brief answers do not usually earn high grades. They must therefore develop their answers and provide several examples.

Part B: Report on standards

1. Assessment Report for 91200: Examine ideas and values of the classical world

Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> used their chosen literary text to demonstrate general knowledge and understanding of the ideas and values of the classical world failed to respond to all parts of the question provided responses that were often brief and descriptive rather than analytical provided some relevant evidence in support of their ideas but their evidence was often not well explained or not specific enough. Often, they simply provided too little evidence wrote a lengthy introduction most of which was irrelevant or just a summary of the plot provided answers that were clearly pre-prepared and often irrelevant to the question they chose to answer.
Not Achieved	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 simply outlined the plot instead of answering the question failed to provide sufficient specific evidence misinterpreted the question wrote very brief answers.

<p>Achieved with Merit</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated knowledge and an informed understanding of the ideas and values of the classical society that was relevant to their chosen literary text • responded to all parts of the question but often a part of their answer was not developed fully or it lacked detailed explanation • provided in-depth answers and provided several relevant examples.
<p>Achieved with Excellence</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showed excellent knowledge and a thorough understanding of the ideas and values of the classical society that was relevant to their chosen literary text • responded to the question with perception; this means that they showed real insight into the ideas and values of the classical world relevant to the literary text they were writing about • responded to all parts of the question analytically and provided detailed and in-depth explanations • provided lots of specific and relevant evidence throughout their answer and explained it thoroughly • wrote well-constructed, extended paragraphs that were directly linked to the question.
<p>Standard specific comments</p>	<p>Candidates must not use pre-prepared answers. They must think about the question given in the examination paper and how to answer it.</p> <p>It is not necessary to quote from the text. Evidence may be in the form of a quote or paraphrasing but it must be accurate, well-explained and used appropriately.</p> <p>Candidates who used evidence from a movie, for example “Troy”, did not earn credit. They must adhere to the text.</p> <p>Candidates should attempt to learn the correct spelling, especially of the most common names, for example “Odysseus”.</p>

2. Assessment Report for 91201: Examine the significance of features of work(s) of art in the classical world

<p>Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated a basic knowledge and understanding of the features of a classical art work(s) and building(s) and its significance in the classical world • provided some well-developed answers for at least one part of the question • provided some explanation rather than just description • provided some relevant evidence to support answers • answered the question as given in the paper rather than a rote-learned response to a previous examination question • wrote in clear sentences and paragraphs that were succinct • included irrelevant details that did not directly answer the question • chose to write about more than one art work or building, as opposed to just one in greater depth or breadth.
<p>Not Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • displayed limited or no knowledge and understanding of the art work(s) or building(s) in the context of the question • wrote in very general terms and answers were underdeveloped or too brief • provided little or no specific evidence • gave a response that was either verbose or mostly irrelevant • selected an art work(s) or building(s) that did not provide scope with which to answer the question • provided answers with no direct reference to an art work(s) or building(s).
<p>Achieved with Merit</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated knowledge and an informed understanding of a classical art work(s) or building(s) and its significance in the classical world • examined and explained aspects of the art work(s) or building(s) in depth

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • included specific examples from an art work(s) or building(s) to support their ideas • responded to both parts of the question but the treatment of the question may have been unbalanced • answered the question specifically and directly, avoiding irrelevant material • used appropriate terminology correctly, such as composition, drapery or illusion of depth.
<p>Achieved with Excellence</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided an insightful response demonstrating an informed and thorough understanding of their chosen classical artwork(s) / building(s) and its significance in the classical world • examined and explained an art work(s) or building(s) with depth and breadth, using several relevant and very specific examples throughout to support their discussion • linked their ideas to a well-chosen art work(s) or building(s) • wrote a response that did not include extraneous information, writing directly in answer to the question.
<p>Standard specific comments</p>	<p>Candidates are asked to name their chosen art work(s) or building(s) before they begin their response, and therefore they must do so.</p> <p>Choosing an art work(s) or building(s) that was relevant to the question was crucial. Not all art works or buildings worked well for all questions, conversely not all questions suited particular works or buildings.</p> <p>Learning appropriate art historical and Greek and Roman terminology / vocabulary enabled many students to write more precise explanations. This assisted in demonstrating more thorough knowledge of chosen art works or buildings.</p> <p>Many candidates wasted time with lengthy introductions (giving art work or building profiles / fact files) and unnecessary conclusions that were irrelevant to the question and did not help them to show their understanding in the context of the question.</p> <p>Good answers typically showed an in depth knowledge of one art work or building. Students who attempted to use more than one art work or building often did not go into sufficient detail, compromising their over-all grade score. Writing about more than one art work or building was not enough in itself to attain a high grade score if the treatment in the response lacked depth throughout.</p> <p>Many candidates wrote answers that were verbose, often writing many paragraphs off-topic or without making any specific reference to a relevant idea, example or evidence.</p> <p>There were a high number of responses where rote-learned answers to previous examination questions were presented. This is not a sound strategy for success. There was an increase in the use of drawings and diagrams, although this was usually done very poorly indeed. Candidates are reminded that these can only be used in support of written material in either short and / or extended paragraphs -- they cannot be a substitute for them.</p>

3. Assessment Report for 91203: Examine socio-political life in the classical world

<p>Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated a general understanding of socio-political life in their chosen city-state or civilisation • showed some good knowledge of socio-political life but their responses were very general and lacked focus • provided some well-developed answers and explanations for at least one part of the question • their answers were unbalanced and often favoured only one part of the question, ignoring the other parts • re-told the narrative – often at great length and with precise detail – but did not show the necessary analytical skills required for a higher grade • used some relevant source evidence to support their answers OR used Greek or Latin terms as an expression of primary source material; these terms were
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	<p>culturally specific and were used in such a way as to express understanding, therefore they earned them some credit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided considerable background to a question, but often at the expense of an actual answer • included considerable material which was irrelevant • chose a question that was not ideally suited to material that they knew • used wrongly attributed primary source evidence or evidence which was of marginal relevance to the point that they were making.
<p>Not Achieved</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Not Achieved commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated a limited knowledge and understanding of socio-political life • provided answers that were under-developed or did not address any part of the question • provided very brief or irrelevant responses to the questions • confused Greek and Roman civilisation • used technical terms incorrectly • wrote pre-prepared generic paragraphs • tried to cover too much material • failed to provide enough specific examples.
<p>Achieved with Merit</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Merit commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrated very good knowledge and understanding of socio-political life. • responded to all parts of the question in detail but their answers may have been unbalanced; where one part was outstanding in detail and understanding, another part was dealt with in a perfunctory paragraph • used a wide range of primary source evidence but did not always explain how it related to the point that was being made or that was little more than descriptive. Sometimes candidates used primary source evidence in one part of the answer but were not able to do so consistently • still focused too heavily on the narrative at the expense of answering all parts of the questions. It was clear that some candidates had the knowledge to get to Excellence, but were so obsessed with the minutiae of the narrative, that they did not actually address the specific demands of the question.
<p>Achieved with Excellence</p>	<p>Candidates who were assessed as Achieved with Excellence commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showed excellent knowledge, understanding and interpretation • addressed all parts of the question in detail, providing developed conclusions as they did so. They showed insight in their thinking and in some cases seemed to be genuine responses considered during the examination, not pre-prepared • used primary source effectively by not only choosing the best time to incorporate it into their answers, but commenting at the time on its significance. • wrote their answers in an organized and logical way, using the language of the question to assist them in doing so.
<p>Standard specific comments</p>	<p>This is not an essay-writing standard and therefore there is no requirement for an introduction or a conclusion. Candidates who did this often wasted their time and in the case of weak candidates, the introduction and conclusion were often longer than the response.</p> <p>The planning pages were often not well used. Either they were left blank or, they were filled up with quotations. In a number of cases the plan was longer than the answer.</p> <p>The rise to power of Augustus was a popular topic, but often did not score highly because of the focus on narrative at the expense of analysis. Athenian democratic institutions under Solon and Cleisthenes, Spartacus and slavery generated a greater number of high grades.</p> <p>Some candidates attempted to include material simply trying to cover explanatory notes to the standard in an attempt to secure a particular grade; this is seldom a wise approach. Candidates need to treat the exam on its merits, choose the question that best suits their knowledge and then give as full an answer to that question as they can.</p>