

2022 NCEA Assessment Report



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Subject: Classical Studies

Level: 1

Standards: 91021, 91202, 91203

Part A: Commentary

A range of classical texts, art works, and classical historical figures are being used by candidates to successfully respond to the examination across the three Achievement Standards, respectively.

Candidates who delivered their responses in a structured essay format were more successful than those who did not. While there is no prescribed framework beyond 'using paragraphs' as to how candidates should answer, understanding ways to structure a response (for example, writing paragraphs that approach the two parts of a question separately, or writing paragraphs that approach the two parts of a question in an integrated manner, etc.) enabled candidates to present with more clarity, and demonstrate in-depth or perceptive understanding.

There is a tendency among candidates to prepare for certain themes as outlined in the assessment specifications at the expense of a broader and deeper understanding of the whole topic. This can run as far as candidates having pre-prepared responses. As such, some candidates made poor question choices as they may not have been as well prepared for the second part of a question or had the ability to use the primary-source evidence they had learned in an insightful way.

Candidates who wrote an excessive amount tended to provide irrelevant information or hit the same criteria repeatedly. The quality of the response is more important than the quantity.

The three Achievement Standards that comprise this examination require candidates to situate their knowledge in the classical world. Candidates who earned higher levels of achievement have sound historical knowledge supported by relevant primary evidence. That has enabled them to explain their response to a question within, and in reference to, the relevant context(s) of the classical world. This enabled candidates to show a deeper understanding of the ideas and values communicated through classical texts, the significance of classical art, or the importance of a classical historical figure.

Part B: Report on standards

91201 Demonstrate understanding of ideas and values of the classical world

Examination

The examination allowed candidates to apply their understanding of a classical literary text to a chosen question to demonstrate understanding of ideas and values of the classical world. A perceptive response focused on describing relevant and detailed evidence from a classical text and explaining how this evidence, when situated in the ancient context, revealed ideas and / or values of the classical world in relation to the question selected.

To answer a question in this examination, candidates were expected to understand a classical literary text regarding the 2022 Assessment Specifications:

- heroism
- literary conventions
- social and cultural traditions.

Observations

The most popular literary works that allowed candidates to achieve were the *Odyssey* and *Antigone*. The *Iliad*, *Aeneid*, and *Oedipus Rex* were the other common texts used.

Successful candidates responded to the question with specific and relevant evidence and made clear links between their ideas and evidence.

Candidates did not always take the time to understand and focus on the question. For example, for Question 2, many wrote on several characters when the question called for only one and, as a result, provided a lot of redundant material. Likewise, many candidates wrote about a range of unexpected situations when the question asked for “a situation”. When answering a question, candidates are encouraged to use words from the actual question and specify regularly and clearly to the character, group, response, or literary convention they are writing about.

Some candidates often struggled to address both parts of the question in their answers in a meaningful and balanced way, and this made it difficult for them to earn higher grades. Many candidates produced high-quality responses that addressed one part of the question comprehensively, but often at the expense of the other part of the question.

In general, candidates who took the time to plan their response provided answers that were more focused and better able to achieve higher grades than those who did not plan.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- selected a question that was suited to the literary work they studied
- wrote a response that showed some good knowledge and understanding
- provided some relevant evidence and used it in a way that supported their ideas
- answered both parts of the question, but treatment may have been unbalanced.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- did not answer either part of the question
- discussed general information or wrote plot summaries on the text
- wrote answers that were brief or superficial and showed limited understanding of the literary text
- provided explanations about ideas and values that were overly simplistic or inaccurate
- did not provide relevant / specific evidence from their literary work.

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

- showed depth of knowledge and understanding of their chosen literary text by exploring a range of aspects relating to both parts of the question
- responded to both parts of the question in a meaningful way, explicitly and substantively, either separately or in an integrated response
- provided relevant and specific evidence to support their explanation for both parts of the question
- linked evidence back to their main idea(s) so their answer made relevant connections
- structured responses effectively, using key words from both parts of the question regularly linked to the response.

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

- wrote perceptively by applying relevant discussion of a wider cultural context to their chosen question. For example, they showed understanding of social or political issues of the society that the text was created for and explored how the text reflected these in a thorough and convincing manner
- chose the question that best suited their knowledge and applied it effectively to their literary text
- demonstrated knowledge and understanding of their chosen text and provided specific and substantive response to both parts of the question
- responded analytically and made clear connections
- consistently drew upon well-chosen, specific, and relevant primary-source evidence and used it in a way that enhanced the response
- produced a response that was well-structured, clear, and fluent, and was mostly free of errors
- used relevant terminology wisely to enhance responses
- focused on the question and used the wording from the question to write relevant responses
- minimised time spent writing on background information that was not directly relevant to the question.

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

Examination

The examination required candidates to select one of four questions and write a response in paragraphs. To answer a question in this examination, candidates were expected to have an understanding of the features of a classical artwork(s). The questions allowed candidates to apply their understanding of features of a classical artwork(s) or building to demonstrate understanding of their significance within the classical context. A perceptive response to a question focused on providing relevant and detailed evidence about features of a classical artwork(s) or building and explaining how these features, when situated in the ancient context, were significant in relation to the chosen question.

Observations

Popular artwork(s) or buildings used were the Colosseum, Parthenon, and Attic Vases. Candidates need to make sure that they are answering both parts of the questions. For instance, candidates writing about the techniques used in the Colosseum did not necessarily link these to the building's purpose.

Candidates who did well used the words from the question in their response in order to ensure that they were answering what the question was asking them. Candidates who chose suitable questions for the material that they had learned did much better than candidates who chose inappropriate questions. For instance, subject matter questions do not lend themselves well to answers using the Colosseum.

Candidates who had an understanding of art history terminology, such as stylistic features and specific techniques, were able to achieve better grades than those who did not.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- wrote about only one building or artwork(s) that was well-suited to their choice of question
- wrote a response that showed some good knowledge and understanding
- provided some specific relevant evidence and used it in a way that supported their ideas
- answered both parts of the question (candidates at times focused on one part of the question, but still responded on the other part).

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- chose an artwork(s) or building that was not fitting for the question
- did not answer either part of the question; they simply discussed general information relating to the building or artwork(s)
- wrote answers that were too brief, or only included superficial information
- did not provide relevant / specific primary evidence from their artwork(s) / building.

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

- showed depth of knowledge and understanding of their chosen building / artwork(s)
- responded to both parts of the question explaining their ideas clearly
- provided relevant and specific evidence to answer both parts of the question
- linked evidence back to their main idea(s), and their responses showed an ability to make relevant connections.

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

- wrote perceptively, and their answers showed insight into the art and architecture of classical world, i.e., showed knowledge and understanding of the context that was relevant to the question
- chose the question that best suited their knowledge and applied it effectively to their artwork(s) / building
- demonstrated excellent knowledge and understanding of their chosen artwork(s) / building

- provided analytical responses that showed an ability to think and make connections
 - consistently used extensive and relevant evidence from their artwork(s) / building
 - consistently linked their evidence to their ideas and explained both ideas and evidence effectively
 - wrote responses that were well-structured, clear, and fluent, and were mostly free of errors
 - showed excellent understanding of the relevant terminology and used it wisely to enhance responses
 - focused on the question and used the wording from the question to write purposefully relevant responses
 - minimised their treatment of background information not directly related to the question.
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91203: Demonstrate understanding of an important historical figure in the classical world

Examination

The questions in the examination required candidates to apply their understanding of a classical historical figure to a chosen question to demonstrate understanding of the figure's importance in the classical world. A perceptive response focused on providing detailed descriptions supported by primary-source evidence and explaining how these details, when situated in the classical context, reveal the importance of the figure in relation to the question.

To answer a question in this examination, candidates were expected to show understanding of a classical historical figure regarding the following 2022 assessment specifications:

- leadership
- power
- relationships
- response to an event.

Observations

In 2022, Julius Caesar, Nero, Augustus, and Leonidas were popular choices for candidate responses. Less common responses included Alexander the Great and Cleopatra.

Candidates who focused their answers on the question and wrote in an effective essay format, using the words from the question to maintain coherence, were successful. Candidates who took the time to plan were able to write coherent and focused responses. Insight was often shown by candidates in a few sentences providing insightful commentary, rather than on displaying large amounts of tangential knowledge.

Candidates who selected questions where they felt confident to answer both parts of the question substantively were successful. Many candidates fell short on one part of the

question to their detriment. Candidates who spent more time on a concise and balanced response, addressing both parts meaningfully, gained higher grades.

Candidates who used short introductions and gave a brief interpretation of how they intended to respond to the question were generally more successful as they were focused on addressing the question.

Candidates who provided quotes and explained them showed an ability to analyse and demonstrate informative understanding. Candidates who critiqued sources, showed contextual insight, discussed cultural expectations, and addressed motivations of historical figures were most likely to demonstrate perceptive understanding when these were integrated into the response to enhance the answer to the question.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- included some irrelevant detail that did not address the question
- wrote in generalised language and offered some detail
- addressed one part of the question only, or addressed the second part of the question insufficiently
- used evidence in a very general way. This included Greek or Latin words, minor use of quotation or attribution, or descriptions that could be inferred as being derived from primary sources
- focused on telling the story or making a narrative description in large parts, instead of consistently focusing on answering the question.

Candidates who were awarded **Not Achieved** commonly:

- wrote responses that did not answer the question or misinterpreted the question
- wrote overly brief responses or wrote too generically or superficially
- addressed the question in a vague and / or unconvincing manner and discussed events in very general terms, lacking specific details
- made inaccurate or oversimplified statements about classical society
- wrote irrelevant answers and typically did not use the key words from the questions to guide their answer
- used minimal evidence from primary sources or provided evidence that was irrelevant or incorrect
- wrote responses that had little relevant information, lacked specific details, or were inaccurate
- chose a mythical, rather than historical, figure e.g., Achilles and Patroclus.

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

- addressed both parts of the question in a meaningful way, explicitly and substantively, either separately or in an integrated response
- explicitly connected their discussion of the text to the questions
- demonstrated connections between text details and ideas and values of classical society clearly
- provided specific and relevant primary-source evidence consistently to support their explanation, often in the form of attributed quotations; evidence was clearly

introduced and its relevance in the context of the question was clearly commented on

- structured responses effectively, with key words from both parts of the question regularly linked to the response
- demonstrated depth by exploring a range of aspects relating to both parts of the question
- understood the historical figure and the historical context
- did not address both parts of the question substantively, with one part of the question being a sentence or two at the end of paragraphs, or only being addressed in a very general way.

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

- answered the question fully, with a specific and substantive response to both parts
- demonstrated insight into the motivations of the historical figure and applied the implications of this to their understanding of the question
- commented on the significance of cultural expectations or codes of behaviour that were relevant to the chosen question
- showed insight by situating the response in the wider context and discussing the implications of the wider context
- demonstrated understanding of the limitations of primary-source evidence and applied the implications of this to their understanding of the question
- consistently drew upon well-chosen, specific, and relevant primary-source evidence in a way that enhanced the response
- applied appropriate structure to the response, using key words from the question to frame paragraphs
- chose the question that best suited their knowledge and applied it effectively to their historical figure
- focused on the question and used the wording from the question to write only relevant responses.