

2022 NCEA Assessment Report



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Subject: Classical Studies

Level: 3

Standards: 91394, 91395, 91396

Part A: Commentary

All Level 3 examination questions required the candidate to “discuss the extent to which ...”. This meant that candidates were asked to measure, – e.g., to some extent, to a great extent, it depends on ... etc. To achieve with Merit and Excellence, candidates must have integrated this analysis throughout their response, rather than addressing it at the end as an evaluative conclusion. Those who integrated analysis achieved a higher grade. Similarly, candidates who did not address the “to what extent” tended not to perform as well as they did not address the whole question. Candidates could also argue the opposite, e.g., 91396 Q4 “Discuss the extent to which conflict involving a significant classical figure was peacefully resolved.” – candidates could argue that a conflict was not peacefully resolved if they had chosen the right conflict and had sufficient supporting evidence.

Candidates who used the key words of the question – e.g., welfare, form and function, peacefully resolved – demonstrated focus and structure in their argument / response. Some candidates wrote exhaustively long responses that did not answer the question clearly.

Candidates who wrote in extended paragraph format were able to develop greater analysis than those who wrote smaller, less detailed paragraphs covering multiple points. Candidates who focused on quality over quantity tended to perform better. This included the length of the response and the number of examples, contexts or art works used within a response.

Some candidates answered a question they had prepared for, rather than a question from the examination. These responses did not meet the standard. Similarly, some candidates used inappropriate texts, art works, or historical figures for their chosen question and found it challenging to meet the standard. Providing a plot summary, description of an art work or biography of a figure did not meet the standard.

The examinations required candidates to use primary-source evidence. This could be in the form of direct quotation, accurate paraphrasing, or reference to specific details of art works. To be fitting to the examination, the evidence must be relevant to their chosen question and used in a way that supports their key ideas / argument. Just as candidates are required to choose an appropriate literary text, art work, or historical figure, they must also choose appropriate source evidence.

Part B: Report on standards

91394: Analyse ideas and values of the classical world

Examination

The examination included four questions from which candidates were required to select one to respond to. The questions covered the themes specified in the 2022 Assessment Specifications, which were: leadership, relationships, ideology, and responsibilities.

The questions required candidates to apply their understanding of the ideas and values of the classical world as communicated through a classical literary text.

Observations

Candidates demonstrated sound understanding of the ways in which a work of classical literature reflects the social, political, religious, and / or artistic environment of the time in which it was produced. This means that a link between their chosen literary text and historical context is an indicator of achievement.

Candidates who used Greek and Latin terms often (and correctly) performed better than those who did not. These terms need to be used in context and explained appropriately.

Many responses were on The Aeneid. Virgil's The Aeneid, Book 12, along with the other traditionally learnt books, were successfully used by candidates. A couple of content-specific comments relating to The Aeneid:

- Italians were already living in Italy. Aeneas does not found Italy, but he settles in Italy, builds Lavinium for Lavinia, and from there lulus heads out and builds Alba Longa, from which we get Romulus and Remus.
- Italians and Romans are not the same people until Augustus unites them. It was the Italian people that often lost their lands under the Civil War, which Virgil knew since he lost his family lands.
- Aeneas is not Augustus.
- Candidates are encouraged to respond with more than just the value of *pietas*.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- demonstrated a basic understanding of the text
- understood character motivation
- included some evidence / examples.

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

- did not answer the question

- showed knowledge of the text, but did not use it to respond to the question
- gave a plot summary
- mixed up the text with a modern film, or fell into modern-world discussion and left the ancient world out entirely
- showed major bias towards or against a character and lost their argument in that emotion.

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

- showed a solid understanding of the text and how it was connected to the wider classical context
- discussed the social commentary well and wove context and plot together to keep the reader engaged
- provided a well-balanced response to the question
- used evidence that supported their explanations
- focused strongly on two good examples, which limited scope to delve deeper into their discussion
- wove historical context into their response, though were sometimes unbalanced between the historical context and text
- focused their response clearly within the classical world.

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

- constructed original and well-thought-out responses that addressed the question well
- demonstrated clear knowledge of the text and integrated a wide range of supporting evidence
- presented balanced and objective analysis of ideas and characters
- provided different examples to support their response and demonstrated a breadth of understanding by including appropriate examples that are not commonly used
- wrote answers that reflected the focus of the question and the 'extent' element consistently, with detailed discussions of the text
- discussed the historical context of the text in a clear and explicit manner, regularly showing that they understood the wider ramifications of the text
- wove historical context throughout their discussion – this was particularly evident with the Aeneid, with the emphasis on the importance of *pietas* for Augustus and his policies.

91395: Analyse the significance of a work(s) of art in the classical world

Examination

The examination included four questions from which candidates were required to select one to respond to. The questions covered Explanatory Notes 3 and 4 of the standard as specified in the 2022 Assessment Specification.

The questions required candidates to apply their understanding of the significance of one or more works of art in the classical world. Candidates were to develop a response that analysed and drew conclusions about 'extent' in relation to the focus of the question.

Observations

In general, candidates used historical context appropriately to support their discussion. Sometimes the context was over emphasised at the expense of the art work itself. It should be used to support analysis of the art work in relation to the question.

Candidates who responded using one art work tended to show greater depth of understanding than those who answered using more than one. Similarly, a concise but detailed and well-structured answer achieved well.

The most commonly-used art works were the Colosseum, Prima Porta, Ara Pacis Augustae, and Kleophrades and Exekias vases. Some candidates also responded using the Arch of Titus and Trajan's Column.

Question Four was misinterpreted by many candidates – they did not understand depth as a stylistic feature. Instead, candidates discussed depth as in depth of meaning, depth of an emperor's character, or depth as in detail. Therefore, they were unable to gain Achievement.

Candidates must show understanding of art-specific terminology, particularly three fundamental terms – depth, form, and function.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- attempted to answer their chosen question
- showed an appreciation of specific features of the art work(s)
- made basic references to the context in which the art work(s) were created
- attempted to adapt learned answers to the question and showed sufficient understanding to meet the standard
- answered the question, but sometimes in an unbalanced way – either writing about the art work well or giving a lot of contextual information – without addressing the question in its entirety

- gave a brief overview that covered all aspects of the question
- gave two or more art works in answer, but each one was only very briefly addressed
- showed a straightforward understanding the art work(s) and the question.

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

- did not demonstrate understanding of art-specific language e.g., stylistic feature of depth
- wrote about their understanding of the art work(s) and either did not address their chosen question or misinterpreted the question
- lacked specific knowledge or details of the art work(s)
- wrote more about the context than the art work(s), e.g., wrote a lot about Augustus as a significant historical figure, with very few examples from art works such as the Prima Porta and the Ara Pacis
- wrote briefly on the art work(s) without including specific evidence or analysing its significance.

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

- showed depth in their analysis and understanding of most key features of the art work(s)
- showed knowledge of the context in which the art work(s) were created
- included specific supporting evidence in their discussion
- wrote on both aspects of the question in a mostly balanced way
- provided a great depth of knowledge on features of the art work(s) (three sides of the Ara Pacis; two frames of the Kleophrades hydria), but needed a wider range to support analysis
- drew sound comparisons within the art work(s), e.g., comparing the different messages or symbols in the art work(s).

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

- demonstrated perceptive analysis by linking features of the art work(s) and the context in which they was created
- included supplementary sources and / or art work(s) to enhance their discussion
- appropriately integrated relevant evidence to support their argument
- addressed the 'extent' part of the question with relevant evidence and quotes

- showed analysis and perception in both the context and importance of the art work(s)
 - framed a response to answer the question using analysis and depth of knowledge
 - used discernment when choosing which art work(s) to discuss and how specific evidence links to the question.
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91396: Analyse the impact of a significant historical figure on the classical world

Examination

Candidates were required to develop a response that analysed and drew conclusions about 'extent' in relation to the focus of the question. The questions required candidates to apply their understanding of the impact of a significant historical figure on the classical world and covered the themes specified in the 2022 Assessment Specifications: leadership, ideology, conflict, and change.

Observations

Candidates who attempted to respond to a question with a narrow or prepared focus were significantly less successful than those who could adapt their knowledge to the context of the question. Similarly, narrative-heavy responses did not result in high achievement.

Candidates must take the time to carefully read the question and plan accordingly. Question Two was often interpreted as challenges for the leader, rather than challenges to their leadership.

Some candidates were using the wrong historical figure (e.g. Aeneas) or selecting the wrong question for their figure, e.g., Socrates worked better for Question One than for Question Two.

Candidates who answered Question Four using Alexander the Great and Augustus looked at both violent and peaceful resolutions. It is ok to argue the negative / reverse of a question, if appropriate.

Alexander examples included conflict with his men over the Policy of Fusion, Susa weddings, proskynesis, Murder of Cleitus, and Mutiny at Opis.

Augustus examples included the Battle of Actium, conflict over morality / Lex Julia Laws, conflict of mos maiorum when Octavian was too young to inherit full status, conflict with Mark Antony & Cleopatra, civil war battles during the Second Triumvirate such as Battle of Philippi and issues with Sextus Pompey, and conflict between him and Senators after the death of Julius Caesar.

Alexander the Great continued to remain popular, followed by Augustus / Octavian, and Socrates. Less popular were Domitian, Julius Caesar, Nero, and Cleopatra, with very low numbers of each.

Grade awarding

Candidates who were awarded **Achievement** commonly:

- answered the question simplistically
- included brief or minimal use of primary sources, often not attributed
- used some specific examples to support ideas
- showed a basic understanding of the socio-political context of the time
- did not address the 'extent' part of the question, or it was implied.

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

- did not answer the question
- wrote a response that was very brief and did not include specific details to support their ideas
- included a lot of narrative that was often not related to the question
- provided irrelevant examples
- showed a limited understanding of the socio-political context of the time
- wrote a brief factual description of a historical figure's life.

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

- structured a response to answer the question fully
- explored the wider context and cultural context
- included specific details, such as dates and figures, for their examples
- selected specific examples to support their discussion
- offered different viewpoints, such as the viewpoint of sources or people in the context
- addressed multiple viewpoints of an argument objectively
- integrated and correctly attributed primary-source evidence that was relevant to their response.

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

- answered all parts of the question thoroughly
- drew conclusions related to the question that were supported by selected examples

- discussed the wider context of the relevant historical figure
- included a range of both primary and often secondary sources that were integrated throughout and attributed
- showed critical evaluation related to the question or sources, e.g., discussed limitations of primary sources, critiqued historical figures, critiqued events
- looked at alternative ideas / viewpoints where relevant to the question
- provided well-structured responses that referred to the question / key words often
- demonstrated an awareness of values and traditions of classical society beyond the immediately obvious and used complex primary sources.