



General Certificate of Secondary Education

Classical Civilisation

Paper 2 Greek and Roman Civilisation

Report on the Examination

2007 examination – June series

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Paper 2 Greek and Roman Civilisation

General Comments

As on Paper 1, some candidates who were clearly knowledgeable about the topic performed very badly on the essay questions. Many wrote quite extensively on what they knew rather than on what was needed in answer to the question. Some Tier H candidates would have been better entered for Tier F, and others needed practice in analysing the questions and writing essay plans.

Topic 1

This topic was offered by very few centres. While most candidates knew that the Bull's Head Rhyton was used in religious ceremonies, some thought it was used for storing wine. Answers to 1(c) needed to be more specific; many candidates simply stated that a lot of gold jewellery has been found. Answers to 1(d) were generally good and, in Question 2, most candidates coped well with the questions on the *megaron*. Question 2(a)(ii), however, caused problems as candidates appeared to lack knowledge of other areas of the palace. Some candidates lost marks on Question 2(c) because they confined their answers to the palace itself, but those who wrote about the fortifications and position of the citadel produced some excellent answers.

Question 3(a) was the more popular of the two essays but often produced rambling answers which included information on the Cyclopean Walls and Lion Gate. Candidates should be encouraged to give individual examples of frescoes and pottery. There were some pleasing essays about Schliemann written by those who heeded the wording of the question. An analysis of Schliemann's excavations was required, not of Schliemann himself. Others wrote about his work at Troy even though the question asked for Mycenae. Indeed, Troy is not included in the specification.

On Tier F, Question 3(b) was usually well done, but the term 'decorative objects' in 3(a) was not always understood.

Topic 2

This topic was very popular this year. Question 4 was generally well answered across all of its parts. In Question 5, most candidates coped well with parts (a) and (b), but many failed to read part (c) carefully and wrote about the duties of the *Hellanodikai* before the Games. Diet and supervised training were often mentioned in answer to part (d), but few candidates mentioned the buildings at Olympia.

There were some excellent answers to 6(a), but some candidates lacked focus or wrote about why the City Dionysia was popular. Even good candidates sometimes failed to analyse the amount of difficulty involved in the tasks they had identified. Part (b) was by far the more popular of the essays, and there were some very good answers. Some lacked precision, and either mentioned combat events without looking at the rules and risks of the individual events or confused the risks faced in the different combat events. Weaker answers also contained a large amount of irrelevant information.

Virtually all candidates on Tier F opted for Question 6(b), and the answers here were almost universally very pleasing.

Topic 3

Again, few centres offered this topic, but candidates who did answer these questions seemed to score more highly than in previous years. In Question 7, most candidates coped admirably with parts (a) and (b), but a few misinterpreted part (c)(i) and wrote about why it was advantageous in general for the jury to be composed of citizens. A more significant number failed to read part (c)(ii) carefully and wrote about the court procedures rather than the juries themselves. Question 5 was very well answered.

Question 9(a) was easily the more popular essay choice, and there were some fine answers. Some candidates coped well with the first part of the question but made few points in response to the second part. Indeed, a few failed to make any response to the second part.

Conversely, on Tier F, 9(b) was the more popular choice, and candidates coped well with this question.

Topic 4

Most factual difficulty occurred in response to Questions 10(d) and 11(a). There was some repetition of material in Questions 11(b) and 11(c) as some candidates failed to distinguish between what the host would actually provide for his guests and what they would do themselves to contribute to the enjoyment of the evening. Answers to 11(d) were generally detailed and well considered.

Question 12(a) was the more popular essay choice and usually produced the better answers on both tiers. Centres must stress to candidates that they must answer the question set, as many wrote an apparently pre-learnt essay on the advantages and disadvantages of being a slave, and consequently half of what they produced was irrelevant. The more structured question stopped this from happening on Tier F. In response to 12(b), there was a lack of specific knowledge about the two festivals and answers were very generalised.

Topic 5

Questions 13(a) and (c) were well answered, but it was rare to see a correct answer to 13(b), with Germanicus frequently given as the answer. As on Paper 1, candidates must give one word when they are asked to do so, for example, in response to Question 13(d), and not just write character descriptions.

Candidates appeared to have enjoyed learning about Agrippina, and answers to Question 14(b) were very good. Candidates were less sure about Claudius' domestic policies, but the establishment of a civil service and the draining of the Fucine Lake frequently scored candidates two of the three marks available.

Question 15(b) was by far the more popular essay on both tiers, and candidates wrote with great relish about Nero's many crimes. It was most interesting to see their views on what constituted immaturity and what constituted evil. Some candidates concentrated on Nero's age

at his accession and then attributed all subsequent bad acts to that without really engaging with the idea that some things were just unsuitable and others were downright wicked.

Topic 6

Question 16 was well answered in all its parts, but Question 17(a) caused problems for many candidates, and not many scored all three marks in Question 17(e) as many did not expand on why the young age of the bride may have been a problem. Centres should encourage candidates to explain their points, particularly when three marks are available. Centres should also remember that the specification states Roman life in the first century AD. Some candidates wrote about marriage customs which had all but died out by this time.

Question 18(a) was the more popular essay, and there were many good answers. It was interesting to see how many candidates approved of single sex education and strict discipline. Some candidates merely pointed out the differences between the two educational systems but omitted the evaluation part of the question. There were also some good, well argued answers to 18(b), but on the whole marks tended to be lower than for question 18(a).

Answers to Question 18 on Tier F were pleasing although, in response to Question 18(a)(ii), some candidates ignored the prohibition and repeated material from part (a)(i).

Topic 7

Candidates displayed good knowledge of housing in response to Question 19, although some lost the mark on part (b)(i). Question 20 was answered less successfully, with the exception of part (d), which gave candidates the chance to show what they knew about the amenities on offer. In Question 20(a), some thought the stepping stones were bollards to stop traffic and others said the wheel ruts were deliberately made for carts to run in. Some knew Fiorelli had made casts of the shutters, but many stated that the shutters had been excavated in their responses to 20(b).

Question 21(a) was the more popular essay, and there were some excellent answers. Some responses, however, lacked structure, and many candidates made no reference to the archaeological evidence and thus could only score a maximum of five marks. In 21(b) too, candidates knew the basic similarities and differences between the two towns, but many only made vague generalisations. Centres must note that this is an archaeological topic and the evidence must be cited.

The archaeological evidence also caused problems on Tier F for those choosing Question 21(a). Question 21(b) was the more successful choice.

Topic 8

Very few centres offered this topic. Candidates answered Questions 22(a) and (c) well, but answers to part (b) were very poor. Many candidates had great knowledge about Roman legionaries but answered a different question, comparing legionaries with auxiliaries and thus scoring no marks for Question 22(d). Question 23 was answered much better, with only 23(a)(ii) causing problems.

Neither of the essays on this topic was well answered, and candidates appeared to lack the basic factual knowledge needed. Question 24(a) elicited sweeping statements about the success of the Roman invasion and the kudos Claudius gained without any mention of what the legions actually did.

Question 24 was more successful on Tier F, with only a(ii) and b(ii) causing problems.