

Scholarship

2014 Assessment Report

Classical Studies

COMMENTARY

Successful candidates focused on the question set and demonstrated their ability to think critically and develop a cogent answer in essay format. No single interpretation of any question was mandatory, nor any specific detail insisted upon, but well-informed supporting evidence, drawn from primary sources, was expected.

Essays of scholarship standard were produced for all seven contexts in Section A, although weaker candidates sometimes ignored the specified setting of questions (e.g. the definition of ‘companions’ in Alexander Q2 and ‘heroic charisma’ in Virgil Q9).

The compulsory resource based questions in Section B again produced answers of high quality. Most students chose to answer in essay format. Successful candidates showed an impressive ability to comment in depth on the sources provided and incorporated evidence of wider reading. Poorer answers either ignored the sources provided and/or showed little knowledge of context, and/or ‘downloaded’ factual background material, for example, on religious ritual. Both contexts attracted a similar number of answers.

The trend towards Roman topics continues, although Alexander the Great remains a popular examination option.

Alexander:	163 answers (2013, 184)
Augustus:	106 answers (2013, 91)
Socrates:	60 answers (2013, 47)
Aristophanes:	77 answers (2013, 84)
Virgil:	295 answers (2013, 267)
Greek Vase Painting:	69 answers (2013, 89)
Roman Art:	183 answers (2013, 148)

Not surprisingly, there was also some preference for Roman over Greek source material in Section B: 60 to 40.

SCHOLARSHIP WITH OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:

- wrote fluently with a degree of literary flair and/or sophistication of thought
- demonstrated in-depth knowledge of content, based on wider reading
- selected accurate and compelling evidence
- sustained a balanced argument and reached valid, nuanced conclusions
- answered all parts of the question lucidly and convincingly.

SCHOLARSHIP

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship but not Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:

- wrote clearly and produced a structured response in essay format
- demonstrated sound knowledge of content, based on wider reading
- supported their argument with a range of relevant evidence
- answered all parts of the question.

OTHER CANDIDATES

Candidates who were not awarded Scholarship or Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:

- failed to write clearly and/or structure their argument effectively
- revealed significant gaps in their knowledge of the question under discussion
- answered only a part of the question
- did not sustain an analytical approach, drifting into narrative.