

# **Scholarship**

## **2012 Assessment Report**

### **Classical Studies**

## COMMENTARY

In 2012, the examination paper for Scholarship Classical Studies followed the same format as in previous years and most candidates appeared to have no difficulty following instructions. A number of candidates did not write three essays, but these candidates were typically less informed, rather than pressed for time. In 2013, the paper will have a new format. Details of this format are available on the NZQA site under Classical Studies, Scholarship, Assessment Specifications.

In the 2012 paper, some candidates misread or misinterpreted questions, despite the glossed vocabulary. The most frequent error involved 'barbaric habits' in Question 1, Alexander the Great, where a number of candidates ignored or overlooked the context of the quotation from Arrian. Others candidates did not address the specific requirements of their chosen question. For example, in Question 1, Greek Vase Painting, a significant number of candidates wrote a general essay on the mood of scenes on vases, without addressing the second part of the question, involving the ways in which the painter achieved this mood. And, in Question 1, Roman Religion, many wrote all they knew about Stoicism and Epicureanism, but did not consider the extent to which these philosophies were compatible with state religion.

Although the best responses to Question 3 (all topics) provided evidence of skill in close textual analysis, weaker candidates struggled to integrate the provided source material into their response. In 2013, skill in commenting on primary source evidence (text and image) will be a requirement for all candidates in Section B of the reformatted paper. Candidates are advised to spend time exploring the ideas that undergird the texts provided. They should not bypass this material, nor simply summarise its content. In general, successful candidates avoided description and/or narrative, analysing primary and secondary source material with perception. They produced thoughtful, well-structured essays, directly relevant to the questions asked. Those who failed to reach the standard tended to tell a story or pad their essay with evidence of little relevance to the question. They found it difficult to develop a convincing argument and/or write accurately in English. A small, but significant number of candidates also relied quite heavily on study guide material, rather than authoritative secondary sources relevant to the topics they have studied.

## SCHOLARSHIP WITH OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

**Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:**

- had detailed, in-depth knowledge of subject matter
- provided evidence of sophisticated thinking/analytical skill
- produced carefully planned, well-structured essays
- answered the question set directly, clarifying terms at the outset
- incorporated compelling evidence into their arguments, drawing on wide background reading
- provided a balanced discussion, recognising the strengths and weaknesses of primary and secondary sources as appropriate
- wrote fluent answers with a degree of literary flair.

## **SCHOLARSHIP**

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

- had sound knowledge of subject matter and the ability to direct evidence in support of a coherent argument
- considered the wording of questions carefully, taking all aspects into consideration
- established the direction of their argument in an introductory paragraph and stayed on topic
- cited primary source material and secondary sources with a degree of accuracy in their discussion
- wrote clearly and precisely in essay format.

## **OTHER CANDIDATES**

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

- did not answer three questions
- did not understand the intent of the question or failed to answer all parts of the question
- wrote of series of disconnected paragraphs, without linking ideas
- were neither selective nor analytical in their use of evidence, relying heavily on generalisations and narrative
- made errors of fact or definition and / or introduced subjective,
- unsubstantiated discussion.