

Assessment Report

New Zealand Scholarship Classical Studies 2023

Performance standard 93404

General commentary

The exam was a fair test of candidates' breadth and depth of knowledge based on their responses. Candidates who appropriately drew on wider knowledge of the classical world were suitably rewarded. Well-integrated, authentic primary sources that supported the key points of an argument were also a mark of those candidates awarded scholarship. In Section B, candidates who provided answers based on a close reading of the sources provided were similarly rewarded.

The essence of successful answers was a structured, well-communicated response that critically analysed the question.

Section A

History contexts

Successful candidates used well-selected events to aid the structure of their response. Candidates who attained scholarship often balanced ideas, such as destroyer and creator or actions and emotions, within the framework of the questions. Candidates who relied on a narrative of events, such as Alexander's battles to overthrow the Persian empire or the rise to power of Augustus, did not engage fully with the questions or provide a critical analysis.

Literature contexts

Candidates who showed a thorough knowledge of their chosen literary work, beyond aspects studied as part of course work, drew better on evidence and ideas to structure an argument. For example, a narrow focus on Dido's descent to madness ignored characters from other parts of the Aeneid, and did not fully consider the term "madness" to embrace ideas such as anger. Less-successful candidates ignored parts of the question, for example, only selecting interactions between Agamemnon and Achilles as the basis of an answer and ignoring interactions with others. Successful candidates created balanced answers to questions that posed opposing concepts, such as crude and vulgar comedy against social and political satire. However, the latter notions in several candidate responses were not always well understood.

Art contexts

Successful responses to the question often depended on well-selected works of art to support an analysis. For example, a good knowledge of the vessels associated with the symposium and their related content was needed to draw out ideas associated with the goals of the symposium. Candidates who showed understanding of concepts, such as pictorial depth or the nature of divinity in classical art, selected works appropriately and created a well-structured response. Candidates who balanced concepts in their argument, such as decorative and practical / functional elements in Roman architecture, generally produced

stronger responses. Candidates who utilised correct art-related terminology to support their analysis also benefited.

Section B

Less-successful answers in this section tended to make obvious and simplistic statements, did not fully engage with the sources, or reiterated the source instead of making a specific argument. Successful candidates identified those parts of the source that related to the key driver of the question, for example abuse of authority, and used well-selected quotes to critically analyse the sources and form their argument. These candidates did not attempt to reshape the question into a general response on religion or authority but used their wider knowledge in a targeted fashion to strengthen their answers.

Report on performance standard

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

- showed knowledge of the content of the contexts in detail
- drew on a wide range of examples accurately as evidence, sometimes using lesser-known sources that were most appropriate to their arguments
- provided a range of relevant contextual material beyond that commonly studied
- read thoughtfully and critically both primary and secondary sources, and were able to use both effectively
- gave thoughtful and cogent answers, drawing on (and often quoting) authentic relevant material
- showed a level of lateral thinking, sophistication, and creativity in their analysis
- applied a critical and balanced discussion, considered the question carefully and defined key terms
- sustained fluent and well-structured responses in Section B, analysed the resources in relation to each other and drew broader contextual conclusions from them.

Candidates who were awarded **Scholarship** commonly:

- displayed good content knowledge of the contexts and drew on a range of examples accurately as evidence
- showed awareness of the broader context and drew on it effectively in discussion
- read and understood the question and sustained their argument throughout their answer
- provided context-focused answers supported by evidence from both primary and secondary sources
- demonstrated analytical understanding in their answers
- constructed clear and coherent responses
- in Section B, analysed the resources and referenced pertinent wider knowledge.

Candidates who were **not awarded Scholarship** commonly:

- did not show sound knowledge of historical events or literary and art works, and made errors of fact or omission in their discussions
- misunderstood or did not focus on the question in their responses
- wrote a pre-prepared response that did not fit the question

- made generalised assertions that were not backed up with evidence, and / or gave anachronistic responses
- provided a response that was simplistic and / or underdeveloped
- did not understand or could not define key terms
- did not manage time well: either did not complete their responses, or did not write enough to answer questions
- in Section B, described or paraphrased the resources, rather than analysing them.