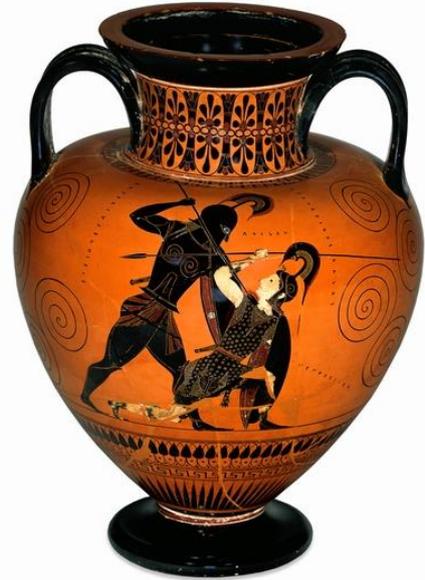


Classical Civilisations – GCSE – Course description

The aims of Classical Civilisation GCSE are to encourage candidates to:

- actively engage in the process of enquiry into the classical world so that they develop as effective and independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers
- acquire, through studying a range of appropriate sources, knowledge and understanding of selected aspects of the classical world
- develop awareness of the continuing influence of the classical world on later times and of the similarities and differences between the classical world and later times
- develop and apply analytical and evaluative skills at an appropriate level
- make an informed, personal response to the material studied.



Athens

The focus of this option is the everyday life of an ancient Greek citizen in one of the most flourishing city states in ancient times. Candidates should have a basic understanding of the concept of democracy as practised by Athens.

Candidates are required to have knowledge and understanding of the following main areas of Athenian life:

- religion – its role and importance in the lives of the Greeks, including a number of festivals
- the family in Athens – the roles and duties of its individual members and their homes
- entertainment in Athens – the symbolism and appeal of these activities in the context of Athenian society.

Candidates will be expected to respond to literary and visual sources and to draw conclusions about the values and priorities of the citizens of Athens and the image Athens portrayed to other city states in Greece.

Sparta

The focus of this unit is the unique social, political and military organisation of Sparta. Candidates will be expected to have an understanding of the ethos of the Spartans and how such attitudes were encouraged and maintained in Sparta. Candidates should also be aware of the content and difficulties

of assessing the value of non-Spartan sources on Spartan life. Some Spartan history should be studied in order to see Sparta acting as a military force in keeping with its ideals and goals.

- The Spartan State
- Sparta and other Greeks
- Social structure The Spartiatiai, the Periokoi (origins) and the Helots (origins).
- Culture/ Artistic achievements - Poetry (the nature of the content of the poems of Tyrtaios)
- Government - the Kings, the Ephors, the Gerousia, the Ecclesia (Apella) - Lykourgos
- Education of boys
- Women
- Military organisation - Training, appearance and equipment (particularly based on statuary), accommodation.
- The syssitia, krypteia

The Odyssey

This option will require candidates to have a detailed knowledge of the set books, and to analyse, evaluate and respond to them in their cultural and literary context. Homer The Odyssey, Books 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12.

Candidates should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Odysseus as a hero
- the role and characterisation of Odysseus, Calypso, Nausicaa, Alcinous, Arete, Polyphemus, the Cyclopes, Circe and Athene
- the presentation of the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis
 - the role of the gods
 - the role of women (to include Calypso and Circe as well as the mortal women)
- Xenia (the guest–host relationship) in the Odyssey
- civilisation and barbarism • Homer’s narrative and descriptive techniques
- Homer as a story-teller and the idea of epic.

Candidates may use any complete translation of the text. For the duration of these specifications, extracts printed on the question paper will be taken from: Homer, *The Odyssey*, translated by E.V. Rieu, revised by D.C.H. Rieu, published by Penguin, 1991 (2003), ISBN-10 0-14044-911-6.

Culture and Society in the Classical World

The aim of this unit is to encourage candidates to actively engage in enquiring into the classical world. Candidates study one out of a choice of six options. This unit is assessed through controlled assessment. Each year, two tasks will be set for each option. Each task will relate to one of the themes specified for that option. For more information on controlled assessment please see section 4 of these specifications. Candidates will be expected to have a detailed knowledge of the texts or material sources specified and to have an understanding of the social and cultural context of these sources. Candidates can study any translation of the texts and source materials.