

Commentary on candidate evidence

Candidate 1

Title: “The influence of music in ancient Greek and modern society.”

The evidence for this candidate has achieved the following marks for each element of this course assessment component.

Justify an appropriate complex Classical Studies issue for research (6 marks)

The candidate was awarded **4 marks** because the introduction makes clear:

- ◆ the purpose or aim of the research
- ◆ why this topic has value for Classical Studies research
- ◆ what makes this research appropriately complex
- ◆ what evidence will be examined

Thus, the first 4 marks are achieved.

Though there is plenty of factual information, the introduction does not explain the plan or approach for the dissertation in any clear way. Nor does it suggest why this particular title was chosen as opposed to alternatives on the same theme, so no further marks are awarded for justifying (from the next sector of the grid.)

Research the issue using a wide range of sources of information (10 marks)

The candidate was awarded **5 marks** because:

- ◆ at least five relevant primary sources have been used: *Theogony*, *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, *Trojan Women*, *Antigone*, Pottery.
- ◆ One secondary source has been used (though it could be argued that this is not a secondary source for the classical world, but a primary source for the modern world. However, the candidate was not penalized for this).

Analyse the issue (8 marks)

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

Analytical points will be present in abundance in most dissertations which are not merely narrative. Five well-developed analytical points are required to achieve 5 marks. If at least four of these are well developed, 6 marks can be awarded and 7 or 8 marks can be awarded if analytical points are made with effective use of secondary sources.

In this dissertation there were plenty of well-developed analytical points.

There was not any analysis of points made within secondary sources so no marks could be awarded above 6.

Compare the classical world and later times (8 marks)

The candidate was awarded **7 marks** because there were at least three points of comparison, for example:

- ◆ comparison of religious significance of music
- ◆ impact of music/chorus as soundtrack like modern movies
- ◆ music as integral to ceremonies and rites

These comparisons are well explained and are clearly derived from the sources which are being discussed and the comparisons introduce value judgements which constitute key aspects of the overall argument.

In addition, their comparisons engage effectively with sources of information which justify statements or opinions about later times and so one further mark was awarded.

Evaluate the classical world (8 marks)

The candidate was awarded **4 marks** because this dissertation has several evaluating points but only the following point is well-developed:

- ◆ The legend within the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*

Synthesise evidence to develop a sustained and coherent line of argument (10 marks)

The candidate was awarded **5 marks** because the argument is:

- ◆ coherent
- ◆ is structured appropriately to answer the question

However, it does not meet either of these criteria particularly well. The title really suggests that there will be analysis of society and that is not really presented.

This candidate has not really managed to create an argument about the influence of music on society. To respond to that title better, we may have expected to see more evaluation of how music shaped social events such as festivals. It is a creditable survey of areas of society where music featured. However, to gain higher marks it would need to exhibit better argumentation.

Overall

This dissertation was awarded **31 / 50** marks.

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Candidate 2

Title: “To what extent is the Portrayal of Socrates in Aristophanes *Clouds* accurate?”

The evidence for this candidate has achieved the following marks for each element of this course assessment component.

Justify an appropriate complex Classical Studies issue for research (6 marks)

The candidate is awarded **4 marks** because the introduction makes clear:

- ◆ the purpose or aim of the research
- ◆ why this topic has value for Classical Studies research
- ◆ what makes this research appropriately complex
- ◆ what evidence will be examined

Research the issue using a wide range of sources of information (10 marks)

The candidate was awarded **8 marks** because:

- ◆ at least five relevant primary sources have been used: one or more appropriate parts of *Clouds*, *Phaedo*, Plato's *Symposium* and Xenophon's *Memorabilia*
- ◆ at least two relevant secondary sources have been used

The sources are clearly being used to make the points which shows genuine engagement with sources.

There is some effort to evaluate the usefulness or limitations of the sources with useful comments made about the intent or personal involvement of Plato with Socrates as making his evidence partial. This gains 8 marks

Since 8 marks have been awarded, it is possible to consider awarding further marks for referencing. Unfortunately, the candidate has not consistently referenced, with many page and line numbers missing from footnotes, so no further marks are awarded.

Analyse the issue (8 marks)

The candidate was awarded **7 marks**.

Analytical points will be present in abundance in most dissertations which are not merely narrative. Five well-developed analytical points are required to achieve 5 marks. If at least four of these are well developed 6 marks can be awarded and 7

or 8 marks can be awarded if analytical points are made with effective use of secondary sources.

The analysis in this dissertation is excellent so 7 marks were awarded.

Compare the classical world and later times (8 marks)

The candidate is awarded **7 marks** because there are three instances of modern comparison which are all clearly made:

- ◆ Private schooling
- ◆ New ideas provoking conservative backlash
- ◆ Misinterpretation of philosophical ideas

There is an attempt to clearly justify the second of these with reference to the Westboro Baptists, but this seems a little inappropriate, due to the Westboro Baptists representing a modern extreme view rather than a mainstream one. And there is an attempt to discuss Freud's 'Oedipus Complex': this justification does seem valid and the candidate is awarded a 7th mark.

Evaluate the classical world (8 marks)

The candidate is awarded **6 marks** because this dissertation has at least three evaluating points and the following contain well-developed judgement:

- ◆ Aristophanes may have chosen Socrates simply because he was well-known to the audience
- ◆ Aristophanes' arguments may have been aimed at the political climate in Athens at the time rather than Socrates himself

There is not any evidence of effective evaluation of secondary sources, so the maximum mark reached for this criterion is 6 marks.

Synthesise evidence to develop a sustained and coherent line of argument (10 marks)

The candidate was awarded **8 marks** because:

- ◆ the argument is coherent
- ◆ the argument is structured appropriately to answer the question
- ◆ they provide a conclusion which shows reasoning
- ◆ the conclusion is based upon most of the points in the argument

The conclusion does not go beyond the scope of the argument as presented, however, to offer opposing interpretation — here, for example, there could have been discussion of how far Socrates' teachings *did* match those shown in the *Clouds*.

Overall

This dissertation was awarded **40 / 50** marks.

Commentary on candidate evidence

Candidate 3

Title: “Piety is that which is dear to the gods.’ How accurate was this view for ancient Greece?”

The evidence for this candidate has achieved the following marks for each element of this course assessment component.

Justify an appropriate complex Classical Studies issue for research (6 marks)

The candidate was awarded **5 marks** because the introduction makes clear:

- ◆ the purpose or aim of the research
- ◆ why this topic has value for Classical Studies research
- ◆ what makes this research appropriately complex
- ◆ what evidence will be examined

Thus, the first 4 marks are achieved.

There is a reasonable explanation of why a suitable alternative title was rejected, so the candidate has been credited with another mark. However, there is no clear plan showing the logical process of the research, so no mark is awarded for that.

Research the issue using a wide range of sources of information (10 marks)

The candidate was awarded **5 marks** because:

- ◆ at least five relevant primary sources have been used: one or more appropriate parts of *Euthyphro*, *Odyssey*, *Metamorphoses*, Apollodorus, Xenophanes, Xenophon.
- ◆ at least two relevant secondary sources have been used.

The sources are clearly being used to make the points which shows genuine engagement with sources.

The engagement does not evaluate the sources in an appropriate way, however. Most of the sources are taken as unproblematic or of equal value. The candidate may have thought that mentioning Xenophanes’ comments on Homer would count as evaluation. However, this is merely presenting what Xenophanes says. There would need to be some further comment on what this means in relation to this question, for example:

‘If the vast majority followed Homer’s view, then Xenophanes is not useful for telling us about the majority views, though does give us a sense of what may have been a view of the intellectual elites.’

It is worth observing the difference between analyzing a historical character and a fictional character or intangible beings such as gods. Whereas for the former, conflicting sources may be giving different views of a real person and there is a truth to be found – what the actual character is like would be the reality or truth which can be found. Yet, when considering the latter, there is no true character at all, only beliefs about the character and so the only reality or truth to be found or considered is what people believed. So, it follows that it is possible to ask the question ‘what was Pericles like?’ *and* the question, ‘what did most people believe Pericles was like?’ But, it is meaningless to ask ‘what was a Greek god like?’ It is only meaningful to ask, ‘what did people believe the Greek gods were like?’

So in evaluating sources in this type of question, you need to evaluate the usefulness for telling us what people believed.

So no further marks were awarded for source use. Since 8 marks have not been achieved, we do not consider awarding any marks for referencing.

Analyse the issue (8 marks)

The candidate was awarded **5 marks**.

Analytical points will be present in abundance in most dissertations which are not merely narrative. Five well-developed analytical points are required to achieve 5 marks. If at least four of these are well developed 6 marks can be awarded and 7 or 8 marks can be awarded if analytical points are made with effective use of secondary sources.

In this dissertation there were plenty of analytical points but only three were well-developed:

- ◆ on Euthyphro's dilemma
- ◆ on Athena's preference for Odysseus
- ◆ on the morality of Io's myth

The reasoning in the final section on Greek society is simplistic and seems to rely too much on facts learnt in Higher Classical Studies. Some more direct analysis of specific details of society would be needed in a section such as this in order to qualify as well-developed analysis.

Compare the classical world and later times (8 marks)

The candidate was awarded **2 marks**.

Only one point of clear comparison is made – that in a modern religion we generally expect a god to be moral. As this is the only point made, the maximum mark that could be gained for comparison overall is 2.

But it should be noted that even if there had been two points of this standard, the mark would not have risen above 4, as there is no clear description of what is

being compared – the only reference is to the Bible but this reference is not analysed. Many Christians believe that God would consider some acts sinful which the Greek gods would not. And also, the fact that Christianity has an eternal hell for those who commit such sins unlike Greek religion means that the statement is far too simplistic for Advanced Higher level. The candidate would need to describe in much more detail what aspects are being considered more or less moral.

It is worth noting that some candidates may not appreciate the difference between doctrinal beliefs based on faith, and beliefs based upon evidence. All points made in academic work must have valid reasoning to justify them. Candidate should be reminded not to compare factual details about the classical world, with unresearched assumptions about the modern world. Such assumptions are by no means only found in religious topics. For example, referring to the British empire as a trading empire, or to the American revolution as a war for freedom would be other examples of excessively simplistic statements about the modern world.

Evaluate the classical world (8 marks)

The candidate was awarded **5 marks** because this dissertation has at least three evaluating points, but only the following contained well-developed value judgement:

- ◆ Why does Odysseus deserve divine favour
- ◆ The apparent contradiction in the Io myth

Synthesise evidence to develop a sustained and coherent line of argument (10 marks)

The candidate was awarded **5 marks** because the argument is:

- ◆ coherent
- ◆ is structured appropriately to answer the question

However, it does not meet either of these criteria particularly well. The title really suggests that more historical evidence should have been covered, but the dissertation looks at literature in isolation of society and does not address how this may articulate with knowledge of society. The term Ancient Greece has been used far too simplistically.

This is a good example of where a candidate should have revised their title in light of the work they produced. For example, ‘Is Euthyphro’s dilemma evident in Classical literature and religious practice in Ancient Greece?’ would fit much better (which highlights that this is not a very focused or unified piece of work suitable for Advanced Higher level).

Overall

This dissertation was awarded **27 / 50** marks.