

MARK SCHEME for the October/November 2013 series

9274 CLASSICAL STUDIES

9274/43

Paper 4 (Classical Literature – Sources and Evidence),
maximum raw mark 50

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

Cambridge will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge is publishing the mark schemes for the October/November 2013 series for most IGCSE, GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Level components and some Ordinary Level components.

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Essay: Generic Marking Descriptors for Papers 3 and 4

- The full range of marks will be used as a matter of course.
- Examiners will look for the 'best fit', not a 'perfect fit' in applying the Levels. Good performance on one AO may compensate for shortcomings on others. HOWEVER, essays not deploying material over the full range of the two AOs will be most unlikely to attain a mark in Level 5.
- Examiners will provisionally award the middle mark in the Level and then moderate up/down according to individual qualities within the answer.
- Question-specific mark schemes will be neither exhaustive nor prescriptive. Appropriate, substantiated responses will always be rewarded. Answers may develop a novel and possibly intuitive response to a question. This is to be credited if arguments are fully substantiated.
- The ratio of marks AO1 to AO2 is 1:1

Level/marks	Descriptors
5 50 – 40 marks	ANSWERS MAY NOT BE PERFECT, BUT WILL REPRESENT THE BEST THAT MAY BE EXPECTED OF AN 18-YEAR-OLD. • Strongly focussed analysis that answers the question convincingly. • Sustained argument with a strong sense of direction. Strong, substantiated conclusions. • Gives full expression to material relevant to both AOs. • Towards the bottom, may be a little prosaic or unbalanced in coverage yet the answer is still comprehensively argued. • Wide range of citation of relevant information, handled with confidence to support analysis and argument. • Excellent exploration of the wider context, if relevant.
4 39 – 30 marks	ANSWERS WILL SHOW MANY FEATURES OF LEVEL 5, BUT THE QUALITY WILL BE UNEVEN ACROSS THE ANSWER. • A determined response to the question with clear analysis across most but not all of the answer. • Argument developed to a logical conclusion, but parts lack rigour. Strong conclusions adequately substantiated. • Response covers both AOs. • Good but limited and/or uneven range of relevant information used to support analysis and argument. Description is avoided. • Good analysis of the wider context, if relevant.
3 29 – 20 marks	THE ARGUMENT WILL BE REASONABLY COMPETENT, BUT LEVEL 3 ANSWERS WILL BE LIMITED AND/OR UNBALANCED. • Engages well with the question although analysis is patchy and, at the lower end, of limited quality. • Tries to argue and draw conclusions, but this breaks down in significant sections of description. • The requirements of both AOs are addressed, but without any real display of flair or thinking. • Good but limited and/or uneven range of relevant information used to describe rather than support analysis and argument. • Fair display of knowledge to describe the wider context, if relevant.

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2 19 – 10 marks	ANSWERS WILL SHOW A GENERAL MISMATCH BETWEEN QUESTIONS AND ANSWER. • Some engagement with the question, but limited understanding of the issue. Analysis is limited/thin. • Limited argument within an essentially descriptive response. Conclusions are limited/thin. • Factually limited and/or uneven. Some irrelevance. • Perhaps stronger on AO1 than AO2 (which might be addressed superficially or ignored altogether). • Patchy display of knowledge to describe the wider context, if relevant.
1 9 – 0 marks	ANSWERS IN LEVEL 1 WILL SHOW A CLEAR SENSE OF THE CANDIDATE HAVING LOST CONTROL OF HIS/HER MATERIAL. • Little or no engagement with the question. Little or no analysis offered. • Little or no argument. Any conclusions are very weak. Assertions are unsupported and/or of limited relevance. • Little or no display of relevant information. • Little or no attempt to address AO2. • Little or no reference to the wider context, if relevant.

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Drama: the idea of tragedy

- 1 Explore critically the extent to which a tragedy is effective because of its focus upon what happens to a central character.

General

Any critical exploration as an answer to a Paper 4 question will necessarily encompass differing views, knowledge and argument. Thus the mark scheme for these questions cannot and should not be prescriptive.

Candidates are being encouraged to explore, in the exam room, a theme that they will have studied. Engagement with the question as set (in the exam room) may make for limitations in answers but this is preferable to an approach that endeavours to mould pre-worked materials of a not too dissimilar nature from the demands of the actual question.

Examiners are encouraged to constantly refresh their awareness of the question so as not to be carried away by the flow of an argument which may not be absolutely to the point. Candidates must address the question set and reach an overall judgement, but no set answer is expected. The question can be approached in various ways and what matters is not the conclusions reached but the quality and breadth of the interpretation and evaluation of the texts offered by an answer.

Successful answers will need to make use of all three passages, draw conclusions and arrive at summative decisions.

Specific

Most, if not all, candidates should be familiar with the term protagonist, and at the very least they should be comfortable with the concept of a central character, given that all the prescribed plays are named after a character and the action centres around what happens to that character. It is to be expected, then, that all candidates have a basic awareness that the *Agamemnon* describes what happens to Agamemnon on his return to Argos, culminating in his death; *Oedipus the King* and *Oedipus* describe Oedipus' discovery of his past crimes and culminate in his punishment of himself; and the *Medea* describes the actions of Medea as she takes vengeance for the insults heaped upon her by Jason and Creon. In this sense all four plays derive a sort of unity from the presence of a central character around whom the actions of the play revolve.

But the fates and actions of other characters also provide a greater or lesser degree of a play's emotional impact on an audience, and the extracts provided ought to prompt consideration of this. Clytemnestra exults over the dead body of Cassandra, killed alongside Agamemnon; Oedipus addresses the citizens suffering, as it turns out, because of his earlier crime. In the other plays, too, the central characters are not the only ones who suffer, as Medea certainly inflicts more suffering than she incurs, and of course Seneca deals with the same broad storyline as Sophocles. (A weaker response may not make much clear distinction between the handling of the Oedipus story by Seneca and Sophocles, while any detailed discussion of this may, in combination with other features of the response, indicate a stronger response.)

Either basic response, that a tragedy derives its power from the central focus on one character or alternatively that it relies on the supporting characters for its effectiveness, may be argued coherently. For the former, it may be argued that the actions or sufferings of the minor characters (Cassandra, Jason, Jocasta etc.) are important only insofar as they complete the action around the central character. For example, the killing of her children by Medea illustrates the extent to which she has been 'dehumanised' by Jason's treatment of her; Cassandra's presence is a reminder of Agamemnon's hubris and the inevitability of his death; Jocasta is a living symbol of the pollution surrounding Oedipus.

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Alternatively, candidates may choose to focus on the supporting characters as alternative central characters. Jason may be pitied at the close of the play in a way that was impossible at the beginning. Without this we might question less strongly the rightness of Medea's actions; Cassandra's innocence reveals more fully the bloodthirstiness of Clytemnestra's revenge.

Candidates may also question how central the protagonists are. Oedipus is certainly the dominant figure in both the plays concerning him; Medea is also dominant, but by the end it may be argued that it is the tragedy of Jason equally. But the idea is most open to question with the *Agamemnon*, where the title character does not appear until half-way through the play and then only for one scene; the central character in truth is Clytemnestra, and stronger answers may observe that the true protagonist would have had to play this role, Agamemnon's being shared with the Herald and, perhaps to some effect, Aegisthus.

The question provides, then, for a wide variety of responses, but must maintain a focus on the nature of a central character and whether our focus is kept truly on them, whoever the candidate decides it might be.

Candidates may draw any sensible conclusions provided they are supported with critical reference to the texts.

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Gods and heroes: the importance of epic.

2 Explore critically Griffin’s assessment of this aspect of behaviour in ancient epic.

(In this question ‘this aspect of behaviour’ refers to the preceding statement from J Griffin: “Ancient literature is not much interested in forgiveness.”)

General

Any critical exploration as an answer to a Paper 4 question will necessarily encompass differing views, knowledge and argument. Thus the mark scheme for these questions cannot and should not be prescriptive.

Candidates are being encouraged to explore, in the exam room, a theme that they will have studied. Engagement with the question as set (in the exam room) may make for limitations in answers but this is preferable to an approach that endeavours to mould pre-worked materials of a not too dissimilar nature from the demands of the actual question.

Examiners are encouraged to constantly refresh their awareness of the question so as not to be carried away by the flow of an argument which may not be absolutely to the point. Candidates must address the question set and reach an overall judgement, but no set answer is expected. The question can be approached in various ways and what matters is not the conclusions reached but the quality and breadth of the interpretation and evaluation of the texts offered by an answer.

Successful answers will need to make use of all three passages, draw conclusions and arrive at summative decisions.

Specific

Candidates are also expected to discuss further examples drawn from the range of the prescribed texts. It is to be hoped that some candidates may offer examples and consider ideas from their wider reading beyond the prescription.

Griffin goes on to give two examples (which are used as the passages for comment here): Achilles’ attitude to Hector and Dido and Aeneas. He believes Dido and Aeneas to be the only example of a request for forgiveness (on the part of Aeneas which is denied by Dido).

The concept of forgiveness may be approached in more than one way. The make-up of epic heroes really precludes any show of forgiveness as a sign of weakness. There are many examples of this. Candidates may parallel the behaviour of Achilles towards Hector in this passage with the end of the Aeneid and Aeneas and Turnus. Turnus, having already returned Pallas as a corpse to his father, does not hesitate to beg for a more merciful end for himself. Candidates might also cite the encounters of Lausus and Mezentius with Aeneas.

Another area candidates may wish to explore is the lack of forgiveness in non-battle situations: Menelaus and Helen, for example, and what brings this about. There is no hint of Menelaus forgiving Helen in the stories they tell Telemachus. In a similar vein, Penelope does not forgive Odysseus, nor does he ask for her forgiveness for his prolonged absence and his marital infidelities while away. He just recounts them to her after they have made love – though this may be putting a modern overlay on a society with very different cultural and moral values. Hecuba shows no desire to forgive Achilles for killing Hector and many other of Priam’s sons but lambasts Priam for even contemplating going to see Achilles while she would rather eat his liver. Since Achilles is the focus of the first passage, candidates may wish to explore Achilles’ quarrel with Agamemnon, where there is no forgiveness, but rather it is put aside when Achilles’ wrath is diverted upon Hector by the death of Patroclus. Candidates may also explore Achilles’ accession to Priam’s later ransoming of Hector’s body, where Achilles is very clear that his yielding to this

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request is not forgiveness of Hector, but out of pity for his own father, and comes about as a result of the prompting of the gods.

In the reckoning with the suitors, there is no hint of forgiveness nor even a willingness to contemplate a 'deal'. The two men spared were not suitors and had no option but to do what they did; even the priest is killed by Odysseus. The slave girls, who would have had little choice in having sex with the suitors are also executed (though not by Odysseus himself). The poem consistently focuses on the necessity of the suitors' punishment, such that forgiveness would be to go against the clear and unambiguous wishes of the gods.

Candidates may also look at forgiveness, or the lack of it, among immortal characters: Juno relents in her pursuit of Aeneas, and Poseidon in his of Odysseus, only when prompted by Jupiter/J Zeus, not out of their own softening attitude.

There are many examples that will back up Griffin's statement. It is to be hoped that some candidates will investigate the Dido and Aeneas and Turnus and Aeneas episodes as they both seem to present an opportunity for forgiveness which is dismissed. Candidates may also sensibly choose to explore the lack of forgiveness as a theme in the poems.

Candidates may draw any sensible conclusions provided that they are supported with critical reference to the texts.